



Health coalition gives proposed legislation to protect children a gold star Senator tables public bill to prohibit food and beverage marketing to kids

Ottawa – September 28, 2016 – The Stop Marketing to Kids Coalition applauds Senator Nancy Greene Raine for introducing legislation prohibiting food and beverage marketing to children. Marketing to children in Canada (outside of Quebec) is largely self-regulated and children are exposed to unprecedented levels of food and beverage advertising – most of which is for unhealthy products.

“Industry self-regulation is a failure,” says Dr Tom Warshawski, Chair, Childhood Obesity Foundation. “Legislation will protect kids, support parents as they teach their children healthy habits, and ensure all companies have to play by the same rules. We urge the government to move quickly to make this a reality.”

As much as 90 per cent of the food marketed to children and youth on TV is high in fat, sugar and/or salt. Kids are targeted through many channels and in different venues including TV and movies, across the Internet and through sponsorships, celebrity endorsements, branded videogames, product placement, and toy giveaways in restaurants. Unhealthy eating choices are closely linked with childhood overweight and obesity, which can result in the premature onset of heart disease and stroke risk factors, such as high blood pressure.

“We congratulate Senator Greene Raine for her commitment to children’s health by sending a clear message to industry that our children are not their business,” says Mary Lewis, VP Research, Advocacy and Health Promotion, Heart and Stroke Foundation. “Marketing works. That is why industry spends billions of dollars on marketing, and that is why it has to stop where our children are concerned.”

Research shows that the nutritional quality of food advertised to children hasn’t improved and the amount of advertising has actually increased since industry adopted voluntary measures. Quebec banned all commercial marketing to children, over 30 years ago, in the 1980s. A recent study showed that the Quebec marketing ban is associated with a 13 per cent reduction in fast food purchases. Quebec also has the lowest rates of obesity among 6–11 year olds as well as the highest vegetable and fruit consumption rate in Canada.

The World Health Organization has recommended a ban on marketing to children. Other jurisdictions including Mexico, UK, Sweden and Norway have introduced restrictions on marketing to children as a means to improve population health.

The Stop Marketing to Kids Coalition has developed the *Ottawa Principles*, which recommend restricting commercial marketing of all food and beverages to children and youth 16 years and under. The restrictions would not apply to non-commercial marketing for valid public health education or public awareness campaigns.

For more information about the coalition including the *Ottawa Principles*, visit www.stopmarketingtokids.ca

Stats

- The majority – 90 per cent – of marketed food and beverage products is high in fat, sugar and salt.
- The Internet is a key venue – 85% of food brands most heavily promoted to children have websites that directly target children or have content that interests them.
- Only 45% of youth ages 12 to 19 eat at least five servings (the minimum recommended) of fruit and vegetables daily.
- 31% of Canadian children and youth ages 5 to 17 are **overweight or obese**. Of these, four in five will grow up to be overweight adults.
- Childhood overweight and obesity may result in premature onset of heart disease and stroke risk factors such as high blood pressure
- Over the past 70 years, consumption of processed and ultra-processed foods in Canada has doubled, from 30% of the average family's food purchases to 60%.

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Stop Marketing to Kids Coalition:

The Stop Marketing to Kids (Stop M2K) Coalition was founded by the Heart and Stroke Foundation in collaboration with the Childhood Obesity Foundation in 2014. The Stop M2K Coalition is made up of 11 non-governmental organizations with written endorsement from dozens of additional organizations and individuals. Our goal: to restrict all food and beverage marketing to children and youth 16 years and under.

Coalition members

- Alberta Policy Coalition for Chronic Disease Prevention
- Childhood Obesity Foundation (founding member)
- Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada (founding member)
- BC Healthy Living Alliance
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Canadian Diabetes Association
- Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada
- Dietitians of Canada
- Food Secure Canada
- Toronto Public Health
- Quebec Coalition on Weight related problems

The following groups and individuals have endorsed the *Ottawa Principles*

- Alberta Policy Coalition for Chronic Disease Prevention
- Alberta Food Matters
- Association of Local Public Health Agencies
- BC Healthy Living Alliance
- BC Pediatric Society
- Canadian Association of Cardiovascular Prevention and Rehabilitation
- Canadian Association of Social Workers
- Canadian Cancer Society
- Canadian Council of Cardiovascular Nurses
- Canadian Diabetes Association
- Canadian Medical Association
- Canadian Nurses Association
- Canadian Obesity Network
- Canadian Pediatric Society
- Capsana
- The Centre for Child Honouring

- Childhood Obesity Foundation
- Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada
- College of Family Physicians Canada
- Dietitians of Canada
- EPODE Canada
- First Call BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition
- Food Secure Canada
- Fraser Health Authority
- Health Officers Council of BC
- Key Gordon
- The Heart and Stroke Foundation
- Institut de Cardiologie de Montréal
- Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health
- Ottawa Food Policy Council
- Physical and Health Education Canada
- Quebec Coalition on Weight-Related Problems
- Toronto Public Health
- Troubadour Music
- Vancouver Island Health Authority Medical Health Officers

Individuals

- Dr Charlene Elliott, researcher and expert in food marketing, policy and children’s health
- Dr Kapil Khatter, family physician with an interest in healthy food environments
- Dr Kim Raine, public health nutrition expert and professor
- Dr Monique Potvin-Kent, researcher and expert on food and beverage marketing directed at children
- Dr Norm Campbell, hypertension expert and professor
- Raffi Cavoukian, singer, author, and founder of Centre for Child Honouring
- Dr Yoni Freedhoff, obesity expert and long-time public health advocate
- Sarah Elton, food journalist and bestselling author

About the Heart and Stroke Foundation

The Heart and Stroke Foundation’s mission is to prevent disease, save lives and promote recovery. A volunteer-based health charity, we strive to tangibly improve the health of every Canadian family, every day. Healthy lives free of heart disease and stroke. Together we will make it happen. Heartandstroke.ca

About the Childhood Obesity Foundation

The mission of the Childhood Obesity Foundation is to lead a societal shift toward healthy eating and active lifestyles to promote childhood healthy weights and the resulting physical and emotional impacts. The vision of the Childhood Obesity Foundation is children and youth of Canada free of chronic disease that ensue from unhealthy weights. childhoodobesityfoundation.ca

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