

FACT SHEET

MARKETING IN SCHOOLS

Why is it Important to Limit Marketing in Schools?

Marketing and advertising of unhealthy foods and beverages influence children's attitudes, preferences, food purchase requests, diets, and health. Labeling and signage on school campuses affect students' food selections both at and away from school. Marketing and advertising of unhealthy products conflict with the educational mission of schools to teach children about good health and proper nutrition. Advertising unhealthy foods also creates mixed messages as it creates the appearance that the school supports students eating these foods/beverages.

What are the Challenges Around Marketing in Schools?

- ❖ Schools may be unaware of the influence of marketing on student health behaviors and health.
- ❖ Schools may have exclusive contracts with food/beverage companies that they are hesitant to break; some contracts allow these companies to market on campus.
- ❖ Schools may fear potential loss in revenues/products (such as free books, scoreboards, school supplies) if they do not allow companies to market on campus.

What is the Ideal Situation?

- ❖ No commercial influences on campus, at school events, in district curriculum, or in classroom materials that promote unhealthy foods and beverages.
- ❖ A school marketing policy that supports the above.

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What does your LSWP say about marketing?
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What is Marketing in Schools?

Marketing in schools takes many forms. Marketing in schools includes product sales (such as foods/beverages sold on campus or items sold through fundraising), direct advertising (such as signs, billboards, scoreboards, book covers, and buses), and indirect marketing (which includes corporate-sponsored curriculum and contests in return for funds/products). The majority of the foods and beverages marketed in schools are of poor nutritional quality.



What Can Parents Do?

- ❖ Work with the School Wellness Committee and other concerned stakeholders to educate parents, community partners, school administration, students, and staff about the impact of food marketing on youth.
- ❖ Conduct a marketing assessment on your child's school campus.
- ❖ Determine if the foods/beverages that are marketed/advertised on the school campus meet your state's policy on foods/beverages that are allowable for sale on school campuses and that they are aligned with the LSWP.
- ❖ Draft a sample marketing policy to share with the school board, school wellness committee, or principal and consider adding it to the LSWP.
- ❖ Set guidelines for business partnerships that restrict marketing and advertising of unhealthy foods and beverages.
- ❖ If a school has exclusive food/beverage contracts, find out when the contracts expire and advocate for the school not to renew the contract to allow companies to market unhealthy foods and beverages at school.
- ❖ Conduct periodic evaluations of the marketing/advertising on campus.
- ❖ Ensure that fundraising practices are not selling/marketing unhealthy food/beverage choices.

Additional Resources

Captive Kids: Selling Obesity at Schools: An Action Guide to Stop the Marketing of Unhealthy Foods and Beverages in Schools,
California Project LEAN

This toolkit addresses the issue of marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages on California school campuses and includes an easy-to-use marketing assessment tool.

www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org

Food Marketing to Children and Youth: Threat or Opportunity, The
National Academies of Science

This report offers the most comprehensive review to date of the scientific evidence on the influence of food marketing on diets of children and youth.

www.nationalacademies.org

Raw Deal: School Beverage Contracts Less Lucrative than They Seem, Center for Science in
the Public Interest

A report looking at school beverage contracts.

[www.cspinet.org/
beveragecontracts.pdf](http://www.cspinet.org/beveragecontracts.pdf)