

V. WHAT CAN SCHOOL DISTRICTS DO?

School districts, with support from parents, health authorities, and other stakeholders, can promote healthful diets for children and youth by limiting commercial influences throughout the entire school environment, including through curriculum, commercial sponsorships, activities and events, and school meals and snacks.²²

Given the intensity and pervasiveness of marketing to children and youth, parents alone cannot shield their children from the potentially harmful effects of a billion dollar food industry. Youth are a vulnerable group that should be protected from commercial influences that may adversely impact their health—especially while in the entrusted care of the school.

"We have a \$15 billion industry that is undermining parents and targeting children with junk—junk food, junk values...Somebody's got to stand up and say it's wrong!"

–Susan Linn, Ed. D.

**Co-Founder
Campaign for a Commercial-Free
Childhood**

A growing number of national and state organizations are calling for tighter restrictions on advertising unhealthy foods and beverages to children and youth. These organizations include the American Academy of Pediatrics; American Public Health Association; American Psychological Association; Center for Science in the Public Interest; Strategic Alliance for Healthy, Active Environments; and the Center for Public Health Advocacy. Others, such as the California State Parent-Teachers Association, are opposed to commercial advertising in the classroom.



A nationwide survey reported that a majority of the public (78 percent) believe youth are harmed by marketing directed toward them.²³

- Eighty-five percent believe the current practices of the youth marketing industry are unethical.
- Ninety percent oppose marketing of junk food and soda in schools.
- Eight-four percent oppose the placement of advertising on buses and school book covers.
- Eighty-one percent believe schools should be commercial free zones.
- Respondents were overwhelmingly in favor of prohibiting marketing that targets children 8 years and under.