

[Organization Logo]

Dear [Name],

Today's children are bombarded with food and beverage marketing morning, noon and night, every day of the week. Children and youth are impressionable and should be protected from marketing that are harmful to their health. As a society, we have a duty to keep children and youth safe and give them the best start for a long, healthy life.

According to the *Heart & Stroke 2017 Report on the Health of Canadians* children and youth spend almost eight hours a day in front of screens including computers, tablets, phones and television. Approximately 90% of food and beverage products advertised to children and youth online and on TV are unhealthy, high in fat, sugar or salt. "Unhealthy eating is a leading risk for death in Canada," says Dr. Norm Campbell, Heart & Stroke CIHR Chair in Hypertension. According to the Global Burden of Disease, unhealthy diets were responsible for about 50,000 deaths in Canada in 2015. Since 1979, childhood obesity levels in Canada have tripled: one in three children is overweight or obese. Obesity puts children and adolescents at risk for many health problems, including heart disease, stroke, diabetes and depression. Unfortunately, this may be the first generation of children to have a shorter lifespan than their parents as a result of premature death related to chronic disease.

Regulation on commercial marketing of foods and beverages to children and youth is a critical aspect of any comprehensive food strategy, facilitating the creation of a healthy food environment free of commercial influence from marketing to children. The World Health Organization and other leading health advisory bodies have formally recommended a marketing ban for children. The Ottawa Principles recommend restrictions on all food and beverage marketing as the best approach for effective policy. Several countries including Brazil, Chile, Ireland, Mexico, Norway, UK, Sweden, and Taiwan among others have introduced restrictions on marketing to children as a means to improve population health. Quebec has implemented restrictions on marketing to children. The Quebec advertising ban is associated with an increased probability of reductions in fast-food sales, averaging 13% per week. Quebec also has the lowest rates of obesity among 6-11 years old children and the highest fruit and vegetable consumption rate in Canada. Restrictions around marketing to children are the most cost-effective childhood obesity interventions. Research has shown that 14 – 33% cases of childhood obesity could be prevented through removing unhealthy food advertising on television.

For these reasons we would like to request to restrict the commercial marketing of foods and beverages to protect children and support parents. It is essential that the scope of marketing restrictions to children be broad and comprehensive to ensure fulsome protection of young Canadians.

Sincerely,

[Name]

About the [Organization Name]:

The [Organization Name] is a group of [ ] who work towards [ ]