

Email title: It's time for a ban on marketing to children!

Dear [Name],

We as parents today have enough to worry about without our children being bombarded by marketers trying to sell them unhealthy food. I have read the [Heart & Stroke 2017 Report on the Health of Canadians](#) and am very concerned about the present and future health of Canadian children.

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. They are vulnerable to marketing since they have not yet reached the stage of mental development where they are able to distinguish between marketing, entertainment and reality. Our children and youth are targeted through multiple channels and settings: online, on TV, at school, rec centres and in restaurants. The average child watches about two hours of TV a day and sees four to five food and beverage ads per hour. Canadian 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.

We know how important nutrition is and yet our children's health is threatened. Children who eat an unhealthy diet enter adulthood predisposed to develop chronic disease. 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 diabetes, depression, heart disease and stroke.

I ask you to support strong legislation to restrict the commercial marketing of food and beverages to children. This is an important step that puts the health and well-being of our children ahead of company profits. Once companies step back, parents will be able to more effectively take charge of their children's nutritional development. Food and beverage marketing restrictions make it easier for educators, health professionals, and parents working hard to promote healthy habits. The time has come to protect children and to support parents in making healthy decisions for their families.

Sincerely,

[Name]