Food Marketing and Health:

The overwhelmingly unhealthy food-marketing environment that surrounds young people is a significant contributor to the dramatic increase in childhood obesity.

- Institute of Medicine, 2006
- White House, 2010

Food marketing increases children's preferences and requests to parents for advertised products, likely contributes to less healthful diets, and may increase negative, diet-related health outcomes and risks.

- Institute of Medicine, 2006

Food marketing studies show:

- Exposure to television food advertising increases children's consumption of any available snack food.¹
- Prior exposure to soft drink and fast food advertising is associated with greater consumption of these products.²
- Exposure to television food advertising is associated with poor diet and higher childhood obesity rates.³

1. Halford, Gillespie, Brown, et al., 2004; Halford, Boyland, Hughes, et al., 2007; Harris, Borth, & Brownell, 2009
2. Andreyeva, Kelly, & Harris, 2011; Dalton, Longacre, Drake, et al., 2011
3. Zimmerman & Bell, 2010; Kelly, Freeman, King, et al., 2015
The **unfair** nature of advertising to children:

Advertising to children younger than 8 is unfair. Young children lack the cognitive ability to understand the persuasive intent of advertising, a necessary skill to counteract its influence.

- *American Psychological Association, 2004*

It may be virtually impossible for any child or adolescent to defend against the most common food marketing practices.

- *Food Marketing Defense Model, 2009*

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**What can be done?**

Although government regulation of food advertising in the media faces barriers due to the First Amendment in the U.S. Constitution, which protects commercial speech, **legal scholars propose that restrictions on food marketing to children do not conflict with the First Amendment.**

**Government can intervene**

The Federal Trade Commission also has the authority to regulate food advertising to young children.

*State attorneys general* can take action against unfair marketing practices.

Public health advocates, the food and beverage industry, parents, teens, and policy makers can also play a role in **supporting policies that decrease unhealthy food marketing to children.**

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4. *Pomeranz, 2010; Pomeranz, 2011*