

Tekst 6

Online junk-food ads ‘targeting children’

Adapted from an article by Jerome Taylor

1 Children are continuing to be targeted by junk food companies advertising their products over the internet or through “viral” promotions, despite a ban on television adverts promoting unhealthy food to the under-16s. Companies that manufacture products high in salt, fat and sugar are still using tried and tested tactics to promote less healthy foods to children whilst simultaneously exploring “backdoor” advertising routes to circumnavigate the regulators, according to a report by the consumer group ‘Which?’.

2 Adverts depicting “unhealthy foods” are not allowed on TV during shows aimed at children under 16 on account of concerns about the growing number of obese children in Britain. Campaigners are concerned that companies, apart from using traditional techniques to target a younger age group – such as cartoon characters, film tie-ins and celebrity endorsements – have become increasingly savvy at finding ways to target children through other means.

3 The researchers at ‘Which?’ singled out a campaign for the soft drink Fanta which sent a free branded¹⁾ mobile phone game to anyone entering its “Want It, Win It” competition. Although the competition was aimed at children over 16, younger children could still access the website by lying about their age. Other companies using non-television-based advertising techniques include Cadbury, which publicised its chocolate Creme Eggs on the social networking website Bebo, and McDonald’s which continues to



have a “Kid Zone” on its website with a variety of games alongside adverts for the restaurant’s Happy Meals products. The report also noted that only Kentucky Fried Chicken had stopped giving out free toys with its children’s meals.

4 Sue Davies, chief policy adviser at ‘Which?’, said: “We’re not against treats and we’re not against marketing, but we are against irresponsible company practices. You just have to walk around any supermarket to see the wealth of cartoon characters persuading children to pick the less healthy option. Tackling the obesity problem demands action to make healthy choices easier. It’s time all food companies started to focus their creative and persuasive marketing techniques on selling healthier foods to children.”

5 Although Britain has some of the toughest laws regulating when and how companies can advertise their products to children, branded websites are free to run games and promotions appealing to children, as they are classified as editorial content. Moreover, many health campaigners said the Government should have

banned all junk food adverts before the 9pm watershed²⁾ because an estimated 18 out of the 20 shows most popular with children are not covered by the ban as they are classified as adult shows.

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A spokesman for the Department of Health said: “If we do not see significant progress in the nature of food promotion, then we will look at how we can make faster progress.”

The Independent, 2008

noot 1 a branded product: a product that has a well-known manufacturer's logo on it

noot 2 the 9pm watershed: before 9pm programmes unsuitable for children are not to be shown on TV

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- 1p 19 "a ban ... under-16s" (alinea 1)
Waarom zijn deze advertenties verboden?
Citeer uit de alinea's 1 tot en met 3 het zinsdeel dat de reden voor dit verbod aangeeft.
Schrijf het eerste en het laatste woord van dit zinsdeel op.
- 2p 20 "tried and tested tactics" (alinea 1)
Geef van elk van de volgende manieren van adverteren aan of deze wel of niet tot bovengenoemde tactieken gerekend kan worden.
1 "backdoor' advertising routes" (alinea 1)
2 "film tie-ins and celebrity endorsements" (alinea 2)
3 "Want It, Win It' competition" (alinea 3)
Noteer het nummer van elke manier van adverteren, gevolgd door "wel" of "niet".
- 1p 21 Which of the following companies is mentioned as a positive example with regard to junk-food advertising in the article?
A Fanta
B Cadbury
C McDonald's
D Kentucky Fried Chicken
- 1p 22 Which of the following becomes clear from paragraph 4?
Sue Davies wants
A advertisers to use their expertise to encourage buying wholesome products.
B food manufacturers to acknowledge that their products contain too much fat.
C food stores to end promoting their wares by displaying TV-show figures.
D parents to stop giving in to their children's preferences for certain food products.
- 1p 23 What does paragraph 5 make clear about the ban on advertisements aimed at children?
A Loopholes in the ban allow companies to continue targeting children.
B Making the ban stricter than it is now may have undesirable effects.
C The ban should have been publicly discussed before being put into use.
- 1p 24 "If we ... faster progress." (paragraph 6)
What does the spokesman make clear with his remark?
He wants to
A dismiss critical remarks.
B indicate trust in the food industry.
C remind the public of the ban's ineffectiveness.
D warn companies advertising food.