April 2014 Newsletter

Did you know that the average American child sees between 12 and 16 food and beverage ads every day? Even at school, children are exposed to a variety of food marketing, primarily promoting products low in nutrients and high in calories, sugars, salts and fats. Research shows that exposure to food marketing increases children's risk for obesity.

African American and Latino youth are especially targeted by food marketers. On Spanish-language TV, more than 82 percent of kid-focused food and beverage ads promote unhealthy foods. Similarly, African American youth see at least 50 percent more fast food ads than Caucasian youth.

Voices for Healthy Kids is working to protect children from advertising for unhealthy foods and beverages. Marketing Matters is one of the six policy-change strategies Voices for Healthy Kids believes will have the greatest impact on reversing childhood obesity epidemic.

Learn more about Marketing Matters on the Voices for Healthy Kids website. Get the most recent news on marketing to youth from our team of experts at Berkeley Media Studies Group and the movement to make schools free of junk-food advertising from our friends at PreventObesity.Net.

Visions of Voices

"As a mom and a public health advocate, Voices for Healthy Kids is important to me because I want my kids - and all kids in this country - to grow up being surrounded by healthy choices that become part of their regular habits, including access to healthy foods and water in school, and safe sidewalks and play spaces that make it easy to walk and bike every day."

- Debbie Hornor, Senior Manager Field Consultation
Learn more about Voices for Healthy Kids Grant Opportunities

Are you working to prevent childhood obesity in your community? If your organization is seeking state, local or tribal level policy change that is aligned with one of the six Voices for Healthy Kids advocacy priorities, you could be eligible for funding. Grant opportunities include:

- **Open RFA**: Aim to fund strategic issue advocacy campaigns focused on fighting childhood obesity through state, local, and tribal public policy campaigns. The duration of these grants will vary but will generally be one year or less. Awards can be made up to $90,000.

- **Rapid Response**: Aim to fund short-term, reactive projects expected to be pushing policies for passage in the next three to six months. Awards range from $15,000 to $100,000 and project duration is anywhere between two weeks to six months.

- **Strategically Directed Tools**: Intended to support lobbying activities related to a strategic issue advocacy campaign. Funding requests may range from $20,000 to $80,000 maximum, and the duration of the grants will vary.

Learn more about grant opportunities [here](#).

More than 25 million Americans lack access to a grocery store

A desert is not what you'd expect to find when you move an hour north of New York City. But that's exactly what Lisa Berrios and Albert Rodriguez discovered years after moving to the mountain-bound village of Highland Falls.

Read the entire story [here](#).
National Walking Day: Success Stories from the Field

On April 2, 2014, advocates across the United States laced up their shoes to celebrate National Walking Day. Did you know walking has the lowest drop-out rate of all forms of physical activity? Research has shown that the benefits of walking include reduced risk of coronary heart disease and enhanced mental well-being. Start walking today with these resources from the American Heart Association.

The Fort Worth City Council proclaimed April 2nd National Walking Day in Fort Worth, Tex. Sporting red shoe laces given to her by the American Heart Association, Mayor Betsy Price read the proclamation. Tarrant County Board members Carl W. Langley and Dr. Mo Sathyamoorthy spoke about the work the American Heart Association has done in Tarrant County to raise awareness about heart disease and stroke.

In Denver, the American Heart Association hosted a mini lobby day to celebrate National Walking Day. They worked with LiveWell Colorado and Bicycle Colorado to educate legislators and staffers about a Safe Routes to School bill and the importance of walking and physical activity.

Governor Mike Beebe proclaimed National Walking Day across Arkansas, while Council members Sheryl Cole and Laura Morrison presented the American Heart Association with a proclamation declaring National Walking Day in Austin, Tex.

Read more success stories from National Walking Day on the Voices for Healthy Kids Facebook page!

Raise Your Voice

Nearly 55,000 people took action and told the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) they support the proposed guidelines to limit unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools! Originally, PreventObesity.net set a goal of collecting 30,000 comments to send to the USDA. They increased the goal to 40,000 halfway through the campaign and were thrilled to see that more people kept signing on!

Learn more about becoming a leader on PreventObesity.net and the USDA’s proposal to ban the marketing of unhealthy food and drinks in our nation’s schools.
Advocates Vow to Revive Navajo Junk-Food Tax  
*The Associated Press, April 22*

A proposed 2 percent sales tax on chips, cookies and sodas failed in a Tribal Council vote. But the measure still has widespread support, and advocates plan to revive it, with the hope of making the tribe one of the first governments to enact a junk-food tax.

Missouri Senate Approves Healthy Food Purchase Incentives  
*KTVO, March 26*

A bill to incentivize healthy purchases by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants was approved yesterday by the Missouri Senate. Under the terms of the legislation, SNAP beneficiaries would be reimbursed up to $10 per week for buying fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets.

Boston Creates Bike Program  
*BetaBoston, George LeVines, March 27*

A new "Prescribe-a-Bike" program will allow Boston Medical Center doctors to prescribe bicycle sharing memberships for five dollars.

Cardio Exercises May Aid Brain Health  
*WCVB.com, April 2*

According to a new study, physical activity in young adults may help preserve memory and thinking skills later in life.

Childhood Obesity Rates Leveling Off, Despite Long-Term Increases  
*blog.heart.org, April 7*

Childhood obesity rates leveled off during a 14-year period between 1999 and 2012, according to research published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association: Pediatrics*. But the rate of severe obesity increased, especially in Hispanic girls and black boys, according to the study.

Don’t miss...

Fast Food Facts: Evaluating Fast Food Nutrition and Marketing to Youth

A new report from Yale’s Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity finds that children as young as two are seeing more fast-food ads than ever before, and that fast-food restaurants rarely offer parents the healthy kids’ meal choices.
Updated Policy Options for Childhood Obesity Legislation Released by the National Council of State Legislators

In March, the National Council of State Legislators (NCSL) released updated information about policies that have been enacted or adopted by state legislatures in 2013 to address childhood obesity. The report will help inform public health advocates about policy options that can help prevent and reduce childhood obesity.

Join Voices for Healthy Kids at the 2014 National Soda Summit this June!

Carter Headrick, the Director of State and Local Obesity Policy for Voices for Healthy Kids, will be presenting at the 2014 National Soda Summit in Washington, DC. Attend the conference to learn more about the latest policies and strategies to lower the consumption of sugary drinks and the latest science on sugary drinks and health.

From the Twitterverse

May is American Stroke Month! Did you know overweight children and teens have higher long-term risk of chronic conditions such as stroke?

Find out more about the link between childhood obesity and stroke through a series of American Stroke Association Twitter chats throughout the month:

- 2:00-3:00pm CST May 14th. Topic: Prevention
- 2:00-3:00pm CST May 21st. Topic: Treatment
- 2:00-3:00pm CST May 28th. Topic: Beating Stroke

Use #StrokeChat to join the conversations and remember to follow us at @Voices4HK!

Did you know?

The Federal Trade Commission found that food and beverage companies spent at least $149 million in 2009 marketing to kids in the school environment.


Voices for Healthy Kids, a joint initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and American Heart Association (AHA) works to help all young people eat healthier foods and be more active. Nearly 1 in 3 kids and teens are overweight or obese. We seek to reverse the nation's childhood obesity epidemic by 2015. Learn more about the epidemic and how you can help turn it around at Voicesforhealthykids.org