What Is In-School Marketing
Teaching Our Kids?
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Preface

Voices for Healthy Kids®, a joint initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and American Heart Association (AHA), works to create communities where all young people in the United States can eat healthier foods and be more active. Nearly one in three kids and teens are overweight or obese. By engaging, organizing, and mobilizing communities across the country, Voices for Healthy Kids aims to ensure that every child has access to healthy foods and drinks at home and in school, safe streets for biking and walking, and safe places to play after school. This toolkit is designed to help coalitions educate their communities on ways to make this vision a reality.

Voices for Healthy Kids actively supports policy changes where children live, learn, and play to reduce obesity across the country. While childhood obesity affects the entire country, it does not affect all communities equally. For this reason, Voices for Healthy Kids is committed to reaching communities that suffer more from the epidemic, including communities of color, high poverty urban, suburban, and rural populations of all races and ethnicities, and Native Americans.

State and local policy change is an effective strategy to reverse the obesity epidemic. Public officials have both the right and responsibility to ensure communities have access to healthy foods and safe places to be active. Our policy priorities to achieve healthier communities are:

- Improving the nutritional quality of snack foods and beverages in schools.
- Reducing consumption of sugary beverages.
- Protecting children from unhealthy food and beverage marketing.
- Increasing access to affordable healthy foods.
- Increasing access to parks, playgrounds, walking paths, bike lanes, and other opportunities to be physically active.
- Increasing and improving opportunities for kids to stay active when they are out of school.

In this toolkit, you will find tactics to help your community create and support a healthy learning environment for kids. More specifically, the content will help you advocate for eliminating unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and on buses so that kids can develop healthy food preferences and habits to last a lifetime! Voices for Healthy Kids is excited to offer this toolkit—as well as one for each of our policy priorities—to support communities striving to live, learn, and play in healthy environments.

In order to ensure the most successful community advocacy possible, we encourage everyone using this toolkit to engage with the staff and partners of Voices for Healthy Kids. Stay connected to our work on Facebook, Twitter, and on www.VoicesforHealthyKids.org, or reach us directly at VoicesforHealthyKids@heart.org. You can also join in the conversation with others engaged in the movement across the country at PreventObesity.net.
Introduction

Childhood obesity in the United States is a widespread epidemic. Since 1980, rates of childhood overweight and obesity have tripled, and now nearly one in three young people are overweight or obese.\(^1\) This puts our youth at risk for serious health problems such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension, type 2 diabetes, and stroke. Overweight and obese children are more likely to become obese adults, at risk for a lifetime of chronic and costly diseases, disability, and premature death.\(^2\) Multiple factors have contributed to the drastic increase in childhood obesity rates, but one influence is food marketing, including in the school environment.

Although parents play a major role in shaping the eating habits and diets of their children, parents know that food marketing influences their children’s food preferences. Food marketing also affects children’s purchase requests, diets, and overall health.\(^3\) Unfortunately, the majority of foods marketed to children are of poor nutritional quality.

Companies advertise and market their food products to children on TV, via social media, and at schools. This marketing tends to promote foods and beverages low in nutrients and high in calories, sugars, salt, and fats.\(^4\) Common in-school food marketing approaches include: posters and signs, vending machine exteriors, advertisements on buses, sponsorships, incentive programs, label redemption programs, and branded fundraisers, including school discount nights at restaurants. To see other examples, go to a List of Potential Bus and In-school Marketing Mediums, which is located in the Appendix.

Schools have made significant progress in recent years, providing nutritious meals and snacks sold through vending, a la carte, school stores, and fundraisers. Allowing companies to market unhealthy foods and beverages in schools undermines these improvements. Unhealthy food and beverage advertising and marketing should be eliminated in schools and on school buses to support schools’ and parents’ efforts to feed children healthfully. Voices for Healthy Kids is dedicated to improving children’s overall health by eliminating the advertising and marketing of unhealthy foods in schools.

The following list includes potential strategies that can protect children from unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and on school buses. While this toolkit focuses mainly on policy-change strategies, there are other ways to advocate on and become involved with this issue.

1. **Policy Level:** Advocate for state and local policymakers to eliminate marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools, on school property, and on school buses.
2. **Systems Level:** Advocate for school districts to adopt a Local Wellness Policy that eliminates marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools, on school property, and on school buses.

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3. **Organizational Level:** Parents and community members can develop healthier alternatives to raise revenue for their schools, share healthy fundraising resources with the school Parent Teacher Association (PTA)/Parent Teacher Organization (PTO), and organize healthy fundraisers. Each school should also have a Wellness Policy; check to see if your individual school has one in place that the PTA/PTO can review and update.

4. **Starting at Home:** Parents can talk with their kids about marketing and how it is designed to influence their choices.

5. **Individual Pledge:** Engage students as partners in helping to market the school lunch program to make healthier food more acceptable and appealing to their peers.

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**Policy Level:** Advocate for the elimination of marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools and on school buses through state and local policy.

**Systems Level:** Advocate for school districts to eliminate marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools, on school property, and on school buses through their Local Wellness Policy.

**Organizational Level:** Parents and community members can work with their schools to remove food marketing.

**Family Level:** Parents can talk with their kids about marketing and how it is designed to influence their choices.

**Individual Level:** Students can engage in promoting healthier food and drink options at school.

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To get started:

We hope the models in this toolkit will make it easier for you to raise awareness and join with others to encourage action in your community to eliminate junk food marketing in schools. In this kit are guides for identifying and recruiting volunteers, spreading the word online, alerting local media, holding events, and meeting with state and local public officials to implement policies that create healthier environments for our children while they are in school.

- **Review the contents of this toolkit** and think about the types of activities that would work best in your community. What, if any, existing state or local laws are in place? Does your school district have a strong local school wellness policy? Does it include food marketing in schools?
- **Identify your core planning team** and think about the type of activity that will make the biggest difference for your state or community. Does your core planning team reflect the diversity of the schools most in need of eliminating junk food marketing? Would an event that features a well-
known community member attract media attention? Does it make sense to activate—and educate—government leaders, schools, and community members through social media?

- **Consult the volunteers section** of this toolkit for specific tips on recruiting, engaging, and recognizing a diverse group of volunteers from communities and neighborhoods most affected by these issues who could help you achieve your goals.

- **Customize and include any language/cultural translation of outreach materials** included in this toolkit for your activities.

We can create healthier schools for kids to learn and grow by telling marketers, “Don’t sell us short™” with unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and on buses.

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5 “Don’t sell us short” has been trademarked by the American Heart Association and is available for use by advocates supporting its mission only by way of an executed license agreement.
A Note on Lobbying

It is always important to understand whether any activities you are planning could fall under the IRS definition of lobbying. This is especially true if you receive a Voices for Healthy Kids grant to support your efforts because no Voices for Healthy Kids funds can be used to support lobbying. Generally, any activity or communication that takes a position on specific pending or proposed legislation—for Congress, a state legislature, a city council, or a town meeting—could be considered lobbying in some circumstances. Below are some examples of communications that may be considered lobbying, as well as those that are not.

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<tr>
<th>Lobbying</th>
<th>Non-Lobbying</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. “Contact your legislator and ask him/her to support bill number XXXX.”</td>
<td>1. “Ask your legislator to support healthy school environments for our children!”</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. “Click here to sign the petition to support bill number XXXX.”</td>
<td>2. “Sign the petition to eliminate in-school marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages to kids in West Virginia!”</td>
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<td>3. A communication to legislators that supports bills not yet introduced: “West Virginia should adopt Maine’s law banning unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools.”</td>
<td>3. “As a concerned West Virginia parent, I ask all my neighbors to join me in supporting comprehensive nutrition education and promotion in schools.”</td>
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Look for the following icon throughout this toolkit, which identifies areas where lobbying may come into play:

When you engage in activities that may involve lobbying, consult your legal counsel, as well as the Lobbying vs. Non-Lobbying Checklist in the appendix of this toolkit, to help determine whether you need to use lobbying funds. Lobbying efforts must be supported with other funds, and these costs must be tracked separately from non-lobbying efforts. All types of activities, both lobbying and non-lobbying, can help promote healthy lifestyles in your community; however, if your ultimate goal becomes the passage of specific legislation, you will probably need unrestricted funds to conduct some of your work.

This toolkit is written for organizations that are legally able to lobby and have lobbying and non-lobbying funds available. (Public charities are able to conduct a limited amount of lobbying, while private foundations are not. Governmental entities are subject to different rules; check with your legal counsel for details.)

In this toolkit, you will find important tips for understanding the distinctions between lobbying and non-lobbying activities, as well as when to use lobbying funds versus non-lobbying funds. We have provided examples to help you understand the distinctions between lobbying and non-lobbying activities so you can plan your activities strategically, without violating restrictions on your non-lobbying funds. Please also be aware that some states have additional rules that may be relevant to your activities, such as registration and other requirements; this guide does not address those state rules.
Campaign Phases

There are four key phases to a campaign: recruit, engage, mobilize, and evaluate. The following section outlines each of these phases; as you plan your campaign, designate time for each step.

Note that before executing any of the tactics in this toolkit, it is important to establish how you will measure the effectiveness of your communications to increase recruitment, promote engagement, and inspire mobilization. Such metrics might include: media impressions, Likes or comments on Facebook, open and click-through rates of emails, offline actions taken (such as, signing up for educational opportunities or to volunteer), or media advocacy actions (such as, op-ed or LTE placements).

Phase 1: Recruit

In the first phase of the campaign, lay the groundwork to ensure success, and recruit supporters to your cause. Think about these questions: Who can be your spokespeople? Are there families in your community who would be willing to share their story through an op-ed or an LTE? Where do members of various ethnic, cultural, socio-economic, and racial groups in the community already get together? What are the organizations in your community that advocate on behalf of different racial and ethnic groups and multicultural communities? Are there any alliances with community planners or developers, doctors, dentists, dietitians, nurses, public health professionals, researchers, school officials, chambers of commerce, school nutrition association, teachers, coaches, faith-based groups, school boards, PTAs/PTOs, media or marketing executives that could be explored? Who do you want to be your “everyday advocates,” the large group of people who support child nutrition and eliminating food marketing in schools? Do these “everyday advocates” represent the diversity of the communities that will be most affected by the issue?

Consider reaching out to specific groups that would likely be in favor of creating a healthier school environment for kids by eliminating the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages on school property. Everyone has a stake in the health of the community’s children, but parents and teachers are more likely to take interest in your cause. If you decide to recruit them first, think about reaching out to them via local parent organizations, such as the PTA or PTO. Provide them with information about your issue and intended policy goals. Food marketing has become so ubiquitous that many parents, teachers, and school officials may not be aware of its presence in schools or its impact on children’s diets and health. Talk with them about the different types of marketing tactics companies use to reach kids in schools, the types of products being marketed, and the influence marketing has on children’s food choices. Encourage them to get involved and show their support for your efforts to keep kids, parents, and our nation’s future generations from being sold short on a healthy school environment.

If you start your outreach through school boards or community-minded organizations, such as Rotary or the Delta Sigma Theta sorority, reach out to these groups by attending their meetings. Engage organizations that reflect the diversity of your audience. Tell them about the prevalence of unhealthy food marketing in schools, and the strong body of evidence documenting its impact on students.

Reach out to groups via a variety of available channels: social media, existing member databases, personal emails, blogs, paid advertisements, community outreach, tables at street fairs and festivals, public announcements at places of worship, etc. Provide culturally and linguistically appropriate materials as well. Cast a wide net to recruit a diverse audience that cares about your issues.
Once you determine who is on your side, start thinking about how to garner support from public officials and other important leaders—another form of recruitment is gathering the support of your local leaders. It is often most effective to do this through the advocates you recruit. In many cases, you can ask your supporters to share your message with their representatives or key officials. You can do that through letters, e-communications, blogs, public service announcements, LTEs, op-eds, and social media, among other tactics. Learn more about mobilization in the following pages and check the appendix of this toolkit for examples.

More information on how to implement the Recruitment Phase is found in the sections on Potential Allies, Recruitment Basics, and Recognition Plan.

Phase 2: Engage
During phase 2, send your introductory/educational email and conduct your initial media outreach (both traditional and social), and event planning.

This is the time to start building relationships. Communicate regularly with your advocates, keeping them engaged, informed, and ready to take action when needed. Start working with the media—they tend to respond best to people who are organized, clear, polite, and have newsworthy things for them to write about. Media engagement should include multicultural and mainstream press. This toolkit provides introductory language for your social media and e-communications efforts directed at advocates and media.

Additionally, start working with a diverse group of spokespeople relevant to the community in which you are working. Use the media tips in this toolkit, and familiarize your spokespeople with your talking points to ensure they are confident when speaking in public or with media. When scheduling your news conferences and events, give reporters and community members ample notice.

More information on how to implement the Engagement Phase is found in the sections on Diverse Audiences, Social Media Resources, and Using Social Media to Reach Journalists.

Phase 3: Mobilize
Now that your planning is complete, it is time to act. Reach out to your advocates, spokespeople, the media, etc., and let them know your campaign is in full swing. Keep track of your metrics of success, as well as the movement of the policy at hand, to deploy different communications methods to increase mobilization as needed.

Stay in touch with diverse community members to keep them informed and engaged. You may need them to do educational outreach at local gatherings to build popular support in the community. At other times, a social media action may be best to help bolster recruitment. Advocates may need to write letters to their legislators because a vote in the statehouse is just around the corner. (The costs of planning and conducting this last type of activity will require lobbying funds.)
In this phase, leverage the relationships you established in phase 2. By this time, you have made connections with reporters and local bloggers over the phone or via email. Communicate regularly with reporters to provide them with background information on the issue of food marketing in schools and to give them ideas for covering your campaign when you have newsworthy stories.

If you are planning media events, such as news conferences, this is the time to execute. Get your spokespeople ready to lead events and make sure those spokespeople reflect the diversity of the audience you are trying to reach. For more details on media training, take a look at the Media Training Tips section of this toolkit. Set up opportunities for new advocates to join the cause. Let media know the event is happening and give them special incentives to cover the story, such as a behind-the-scenes press pass that grants them an interview with your spokespeople and photo opportunities.

More information on how to implement the Mobilize Phase is found in the sections on Action Alerts, The Value of Phone Outreach, Hosting a Media Event, Media Training Tips, Why Op-Eds Matter, Meeting with Legislators, and Days at the Capitol.

Phase 4: Evaluate
Do not forget about evaluation—it is just as important as the rest of your campaign. Start by reviewing the metrics you put in place at the beginning of the campaign to help determine what worked and what did not, so you can make adjustments for your next campaign.

It is also important to measure the specific outcomes related to marketing in schools. Have your local schools decreased unhealthy food marketing since you started your campaign? Set these parameters before you get started so you can assess whether your tactics are achieving the objectives of the campaign, and change course if necessary.

Share your campaign successes with your advocates so you can celebrate the wins together. Advocates need to know that their efforts made a difference for the campaign, especially if they are going to help your organization or cause in the future.

Key Takeaways
• Recruiting a diverse group of advocates, especially one that represents the communities most affected by policy change, will be key to your campaign’s success.
• Educate volunteers, the community, and the local media about the issues that are important to you.
• Communicate regularly to keep advocates and media informed and engaged.
• Establish metrics for your campaign’s success and regularly evaluate your progress.
Recruit: Potential Allies
Success will depend on generating support for removing the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages from schools and buses, and working with state and local partner groups is one of the best ways to build that support. Consider the list of tips below as you begin outreach to other organizations, and consult the appendix for a detailed list of potential allies.

Who Can Help
There are many organizations working to help children achieve a healthy weight by creating a healthier school environment for kids. While there may be organizations solely focused on eliminating food marketing in schools, far more groups may work on other school food improvements, such as providing healthier school meals and snacks sold through vending machines, a la carte, school stores, and fundraisers; creating farm-to-school programs; or promoting nutrition education. While some groups may not perfectly align with your goals to eliminate unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools, it is still worth reaching out to them—they may be valuable partners for other programs you are pursuing or other long-term organizational goals. Talk with potential partners about how unhealthy food marketing undermines the improvements that many schools are working to implement.

Leaders in the following areas may be potential partners:
- Improving school foods or beverages
- Health and wellness
- Parent organizations
- School nurses, PE teachers, health teachers
- Health professionals, including physicians, nurses, dietitians, dentists, etc.
- Social justice, civil rights, and health equity
- Food justice
- Educational justice
- Faith-based organizations
- Hunger and low-income families
- Child welfare
- Chambers of commerce
- Local sports leagues
- Youth organizations such as Scout troops or 4-H Clubs

Potential Challengers
Supporting efforts to eliminate unhealthy food and beverage marketing to children in schools may be challenging for some organizations or stakeholders, especially those that rely on revenue from food marketing in schools (or perceive that the revenue is significant). Additionally, the companies that manufacture and market unhealthy foods in schools may oppose efforts to prohibit the marketing of their products. Some school officials might also have concerns about the impact of food marketing policies on revenue.

Entities that may oppose restrictions on marketing to children in schools include:
- Food manufacturers that are reluctant to reformulate their products or switch to marketing healthier products.
School officials, teachers, or parent organizations that rely on revenue from food marketing to fund school activities.

Organizations that oppose federal oversight of school nutrition standards.

Although some potential allies and opponents will speak publicly, others will take a more subtle approach. Before making a decision on any potential partner or opponent, examine their goals, mission statement, programs, and activities, and ask them their views on food marketing in school to ensure alignment with your key goals and metrics.

Key Takeaways

- Partners can come from a variety of backgrounds—from faith-based groups to groups solely committed to helping kids achieve a healthier weight. Cast a wide net to reach as many potential allies as possible.
- Understand your potential allies’ or opponents’ goals, priorities, and programs before engaging with them.
Recruit: Recruitment Basics

Deploying a campaign is not just about mobilizing your advocates to take action to end unhealthy food and beverage marketing to kids in school. It is an opportunity to draw more supporters to your cause and retain them for future campaigns to improve the health of your community. The following recruitment guidelines will help you accomplish these goals.

Note that these tips are suggestions, not requirements. Choose the approach and tactics that work best for your organization and community. Regardless of how you recruit new supporters, dedicate sufficient resources to communicate effectively with the diverse audience you hope to engage. For instance, if you are hoping to reach Latino audiences, consider the need for translators and translated materials; if your target group does not use the Internet, emphasize offline recruitment opportunities. Consider timing your recruitment of new advocates to coincide with back to school activities.

Recruiting at Events

Every event your organization initiates or attends should provide an easy way for people to join your efforts to eliminate marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages on school property in your state. There are several ways to collect information at events; a few ideas are listed below.

- **Join with your partners.** Consider joining with your partners to share a table or taking part in a larger aligned effort, such as a statewide obesity task force, where promoting healthy food and beverage marketing in schools can add value to their overall objective of helping kids eat healthier.

- **Communicate in your supporters’ language at the event.** If you do not speak the language, find another supporter who does.

- **Bring tablet computers.** Easy to use and extremely portable, tablet computers can be a simple and effective way to collect names and emails on-site.

- **Offer sign-up forms.** This option is easy and inexpensive to initiate. It’s also a natural way to combine an opportunity to sign up with an opportunity to take action. For example, asking people to fill out a pre-written postcard to an elected official or other appropriate decision maker can provide a compelling reason for people to share their contact information. However, do not assume that a person filling out the form wants you to contact them; include a box they can check to receive more information. Remember that transcribing the names of those who do sign up into a computer-friendly format will take time.
  - Asking people to write their legislator about a general policy issue is not lobbying, unless the request is tied to specific legislation or a specific legislative proposal.

- **Try business card recruitment.** The less effort it takes to sign up, the more people will do so. For example, if you are hosting an event with key business leaders in your community, ask everyone to leave their business cards behind to join the cause. You may pull in more names than with a traditional sign-up form because a business card approach is so easy for the new recruit. Later, enter their contact information into your database of supporters.

Recruiting on Issues

It is important to show potential advocates that joining your cause will make a difference. Potential recruits are much more likely to take action when they believe that doing so will have an impact.

- **Expand the ask.** When recruiting, ask for more than just a name. Ask your potential advocates to take part in an action, such as signing a petition or sending a letter to their legislators about the importance of protecting children from unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools.
Asking people to write their legislator about a general policy issue is not lobbying, unless the request is tied to specific legislation or a specific legislative proposal.

- **Address issues head-on.** Do not be afraid to use conflict or controversy when appropriate. People want to engage in topical issues.

### Recruiting Online

Do not limit yourself to recruiting at in-person events only. There may be a large pool of new advocates you can reach online.

- **Engage social media friends and followers.** If you have affiliate or state online properties, create posts asking your fans to tell their friends about your organization and how unhealthy food marketing in schools is undermining parents’ and schools’ efforts to feed children healthfully. Ask your followers to retweet invitations to join your efforts.
- **Add a sign-up form to Facebook.** If you add a sign-up tab to your Facebook page, fans will be able to take advocacy actions without leaving the Facebook platform.
- **Use Facebook advertising.** Advertising on Facebook can be inexpensive, targeted, and effective. Studies have shown nonprofits can effectively use this medium to encourage people to sign petitions, volunteer at and/or attend free events, as well as to generate awareness for a campaign. You can even narrow the ad’s reach to the city level and localize content to improve engagement.

### Recruiting via Word-of-Mouth

Are your advocates telling their friends and families that we can do something about the negative consequences of allowing junk food and sugary beverage marketing to kids in school? Healthy living is not just a volunteer opportunity, it is a way of life—so encourage advocates to mention it to the other groups in which they participate (e.g., civic organizations, fitness classes, faith-based meetings, union meetings, etc.). Include culturally and linguistically appropriate materials for these recruitment opportunities. Again, as you approach new potential supporters, communicate in their language. If you do not speak their language, find another supporter who does. In addition to some potential advocates, such as health care professionals and educators, there are several other groups to consider.

In addition to some potential advocates, such as health care professionals and educators, there are several other groups to consider.

- **Ask parents** to get their local PTA, PTO, or other parent group to support efforts to remove unhealthy food and beverage marketing from school property. Most parents will know from experience that food marketing affects which foods their children are willing to eat, but they may not realize how prevalent unhealthy food marketing is in schools or its long-term impact on their children’s eating habits, diets, and health.
- **Ask your neighbors** to mention your initiatives to eliminate unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools at their community organization meetings. People who are involved in the community may be more dedicated to bettering the community by joining your efforts to create a healthier educational environment for children to learn and grow.
- **Ask faith leaders** to get involved. Engaging leaders in the faith community is a great way to connect with community members, especially in under-resourced communities.
  - Ask these faith leaders to initiate a community discussion around fostering children’s health and well-being. Seek out faith leaders to be spokespersons on behalf of their...
faith community on the subject. Call on them to speak to influencers and legislators when the time comes to craft or influence policy.

- **Reach out through social and civic organizations** in your community. Ask to speak at a meeting or luncheon hosted by groups, such as the Junior League, Rotary Club, Kiwanis Club, ethnic and mainstream chambers of commerce, Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc., as well as other ethnic and local fraternities, sororities, or organizations.
  - Civic organizations are often made up of individuals from all sorts of industries and fields. They are also filled with community-minded individuals and leaders. Appeal to their desire to better the community for generations to come by asking them to endorse your cause or become an official partner. Additionally, look for opportunities to share resources with your partners to better execute your campaign. You may even be able to find individuals with specific recruiting, lobbying, media, or campaign organizing expertise to help your outreach efforts.

**Recruiting via Competition**
Some healthy competition among your existing advocate base can help bring new followers to your organization.

- **Challenge your existing advocates** to recruit friends and family. Then, host a celebration to welcome new advocates to your organization.
- **Offer a prize** to whoever can recruit the most new friends and followers online. Create pre-written tweets and Facebook posts in appropriate languages for your community and count shares and retweets. To reinforce the message of the campaign, make sure the prize is health-related.

**Recruiting in the Community**
What does your target audience like to do? Instead of creating new events, meet them where they already gather.

- **Attend community festivals.** Host booths at street fairs, farmers’ markets, or carnivals, and ask attendees to sign up.
- **Partner with universities.** Host a table at school fairs and encourage students to form an on-campus group in support of removing unhealthy food and beverage advertisements from the school environment. Students studying early childhood development or elementary and secondary education might have a special interest in this cause.
- **Reach out to local places of worship.** Recruit members to attend local events and organize meetings through bulletin advertisements and in-person announcements. Churches offer services in different languages; make sure to bring materials that are culturally appropriate and linguistically accurate.

**Recruiting via Politics**
Leverage the response of your state legislators to encourage advocates to recruit more friends to the cause.

- **Send emails** with subject lines or topics featuring legislator opposition or support, and encourage existing advocates to recruit their friends and family. For example, “Tell Senator Jones to stop junk food marketing in [STATE] schools!” or “Please thank Senator Garcia for supporting healthy school environments for kids!”
This email would not be lobbying unless “Tell Senator Jones to stop junk food marketing in [STATE] schools!” or “Please thank Senator Garcia for supporting healthy school environments for kids!” clearly refers to legislation pending in Senator Garcia’s or Senator Jones’s statehouse. Usually, general statements about supporting healthy changes to the school environment are not lobbying, although urging the adoption of specific aspects of eliminating unhealthy food and beverage marketing from schools and buses may be.

Key Takeaways

- There are many different ways to recruit new advocates. Use the recruitment methods that are the most appropriate for building a diverse group of supporters who can best connect with the audiences you hope to engage.
- Make the recruitment process as easy as possible for your potential supporters. Offer different ways for them to sign up and take action.
- Be sure to have materials translated to languages spoken by your potential volunteers.
- Not all potential volunteers will have regular access to the Internet, so recruit both on and offline.
- Some recruitment tactics may constitute lobbying. Make sure to check with your legal counsel before moving from educating people about the problem of food marketing in schools to referencing specific initiatives or legislation.
Recruit: Recognition Plan

Recognition: We all want it. It is no surprise that appreciated advocates are more likely to submit an LTE, sign a petition, or attend a rally. As you conduct your campaign, recognizing your advocates for their contributions to your efforts will be crucial in gaining and retaining your support base.

Volunteer Recognition

Recognize New Volunteers

A strong campaign starts with a strong recruitment push. By creating a foundation of supporters early, you will have them ready to activate when the time comes. Consider the following to grow your base of support and recognize new advocates.

- **Small gifts branded with your organization’s logo** (e.g. water bottles or USB drives) can be a reward for signing up. To stretch resources a bit further, offer incentives to the first 50 or 100 people who sign up on a specific day or give prizes to advocates for recruiting the largest number of new supporters.

Recognize Existing Volunteers

Gaining new advocates is never the end of the story. It is also important to maintain good relationships with your existing supporters, ensuring they know how valuable they are to your cause. Consider offering the following.

- **Exclusive opportunities**, such as the chance to meet with your organization’s leadership or serve on a volunteer advisory panel.
- **Certificates or trophies**, especially when presented at a public event.
- **Invitations** to attend volunteer after-hours receptions or trainings.

Choose the Right Time

Whether you are reaching out to new or existing advocates, take advantage of specific times of the year when engagement is traditionally high. For this cause, consider timing to coincide with back to school activities.

- **Leverage local festivals.** Consider creating recognition awards for use at local street fairs, farmers’ markets, or festivals with free entry or food tickets.
- **Target high fundraising times of the year.** Certain seasons just have a higher overall energy and atmosphere of volunteerism or activism, such as sports and holiday seasons. Utilize this atmosphere and ask advocates to make your cause a priority for the season.
- **Speak up when it is time to vote.** If the local government is voting on measures pertaining to wellness policy for its school district(s), this is a key time to recognize existing and potential advocates. Use lobbying resources, if they are available to you, to ask advocates to contact their legislators, and thank them when they do.
  - Depending on the government body involved, asking advocates to contact legislators may be grassroots lobbying if it is a communication to the public that reflects a view on legislation and contains a call-to-action. Asking the public to contact members or staff of a state legislature, tribal government, county council, city council, or town meeting is lobbying if you refer to and reflect a view on specific legislation (or a specific legislative proposal). Importantly, contacting school board or zoning board members or staff is not lobbying, regardless of the content of the communication. Make sure you have the resources to pay for these activities and track them appropriately.
• **Use the calendar to inspire you.** Create recognition pieces around key health observances taking place throughout the year (e.g., National Nutrition Month, National Healthy Schools Day) when you can spotlight and thank advocates for their efforts to safeguard children from in-school, unhealthy food and beverage marketing in your community. You can also use local or traditional holidays in the same way (Valentine’s Day to focus on keeping kids’ hearts healthy).

### Recognizing Staff
Volunteers are not the only people who make a campaign a success. As you thank your volunteers for their efforts, be sure to also thank the staff members who keep the campaign running every day.

• **Celebrate staff publicly.** If you hold an annual celebration, highlight the good work the staff has done over the past year. Offering awards or opportunities to publicly acknowledge hard work lets employees know their efforts are noticed and valued. Nominate staff (or volunteers) to be featured by PreventObesity.net.

• **Ask your strongest recruiters of new advocates to lead a call or webinar** to share tips with other staff members.

• **Conduct a staff contest** to see which members can bring in the most new advocates over a specified period. Offer a day off or a gift card as an incentive.

• **Highlight the diversity of your staff** to demonstrate its importance in engaging all members of the community.

### Key Takeaways
- Recognize and thank volunteers for their commitment to your cause.
- Reward new volunteers with small gifts to help increase sign-up rates.
- Do not forget about your staff—they deserve thanks, too.
Engage: Diverse Audiences

No matter the issue or the policy goals, engaging with diverse audiences should be a core part of your campaign. This is especially true if you are working on an issue that will have a direct impact on diverse communities. The most successful campaigns are often the ones that speak to and engage with as many different people as possible. Priority populations who are at risk for obesity and obesity-related diseases are particularly important to engage as partners and advocates, including people living in high-poverty urban and suburban areas, and particularly African-American and Latino individuals, people living in high-poverty rural areas, and Native Americans. For example, research shows that children of color are exposed to more junk food marketing on TV and on billboards in their neighborhoods which makes it ever more important that schools become safe havens free from unhealthy food and beverage marketing.6

Below are some questions designed to help you think about whom you are reaching out to and how. The following are intended to be thought-starters, not an exhaustive list.

• **Who is on your team?** Take a look at your volunteer base, your advisors, and your staff. Are your teams made up of people from many different backgrounds? Do they represent the communities where you want to have the most impact—particularly if the communities are historically underserved? If not, where might there be opportunities to do more?

• **How are you recruiting and engaging?** If your teams are less diverse than they could be, expand the ways you recruit and engage volunteers and staff. For instance, not everyone has access to the Internet; if your campaign is heavily based online, you may be limiting who is able to join your efforts. Pen-and-paper recruitment and offline volunteer opportunities can help get more people involved.

• **Where are you recruiting and engaging?** When it comes to getting people involved, location is just as important as technique. Are you reaching out to local faith communities and the multicultural small business community? Many faith communities have separate services in different languages. If you are not already, try setting up a table at events that draw a diverse crowd or partnering with the local multicultural organizations.

• **Whom are you talking to?** Make sure you are working with non-mainstream news outlets in your area. There may be newspapers, radio stations, or television networks geared toward specific neighborhoods or specific communities, particularly non-English speakers and people of color. Multicultural media coverage can both provide new and different angles on your campaign and encourage diverse audiences to get involved with your work. Ensure you have appropriate spokespeople available to speak to those media outlets.

• **Is language a barrier to access?** If there are non-English speakers in your area, consider having your materials translated and easily accessible at events and online. If you are planning on hosting phone banks, engage bilingual volunteers. Additionally, if you are planning on setting up a table at events where people are likely to speak other languages, make sure the people staffing your booth speak those languages.

• **Do your team members feel welcome and listened to?** Getting people to sign up or take action is one thing; fostering a welcoming, affirming environment is another. Listen to what your volunteers, advisors, and staff members say about your campaign, and strive for an environment where everyone has a seat at the table.

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• **Are you considering unique cultural and community perspectives?** Every culture and community has its own nuanced way of thinking and talking about issues. Try to learn what those issues are ahead of time so you can communicate about the issues with those concerns in mind. For instance, if you are supporting an end to unhealthy food and beverage marketing on school property, the salient issues for one neighborhood might not be helping their children maintain a healthy weight, but rather fundraising for specific school programs. By taking the time and effort to understand these concerns in advance, you will be more likely to build trust with community members.

• **What else can you do?** Throughout your campaign, keep asking yourself the types of questions listed above. There are always opportunities to open your doors wider and expand your reach further.

**Key Takeaways**

• Diversity should be a core part of your campaign, from start to finish because diverse perspectives, insights, relationships, and cultural competencies can make the difference between the success and failure of campaigns.

• Language and cultural barriers can prevent people from getting involved with your campaign.

• Think strategically about where you are recruiting and engaging. It is important to go to the communities you hope to engage and not expect people to come to you.

• There are always opportunities to create a more inclusive, welcoming community.
Engage: Social Media Resources and Tips

It is going to take broad support to eliminate unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools. Fortunately, social media platforms allow you to share your message with a wider audience than traditional door-to-door advocacy work can. With a few clicks, you can access the right people at the right moment, making them aware of the issue and garnering their support. The following tips were created to help you extend your community of advocates online to grow support for protecting children from harmful, in-school marketing. National experts may already have sample resources you can model or tailor for use in your campaign.

Using Images and Videos

Posts with multimedia drive higher engagement rates and increased reach—people like looking and clicking on images and video. Below is a quick overview of how to best use multimedia on Facebook and Twitter.

- **Ask your advocates to sign release forms.** Photos of real-life advocates resonate with the community. Just remember that anyone you spotlight online—whether in stories, photos, or videos—must sign an authorization release form. Ask your organization for the appropriate forms.

Images

- **Choose a diverse range of people.** It is important that different groups see people who look like themselves in the images you use.

- **Only use content you own.** The images, videos, or graphics you post should either be created by your team or purchased on stock photography sites. Ask your supporters to look for and photograph examples of unhealthy food marketing in their schools. If your organization has an existing photo library, search it to see if anything can be repurposed. Getty Images offers free non-commercial use of many of its stock images on social media and blog sites when you use its embed feature. To find these images and the restrictions around their use, visit [http://www.gettyimages.com/](http://www.gettyimages.com/). To find and share photos of food marketing in schools, visit: [http://pinterest.com/cspinutrition/food-marketing-in-schools/](http://pinterest.com/cspinutrition/food-marketing-in-schools/).

- **Use templates.** If you do not have access to graphic design services, there are free online resources you can use, such as canva.com, which offers templates for Facebook cover pages, Facebook ads, and Twitter backgrounds as well as free and low-cost stock images.

- **Repurpose print materials online.** The postcard, flyer, and fact sheet included in this toolkit can easily be posted or linked to on Facebook and Twitter.
  - The postcard is especially useful as a featured image to supplement your Facebook posts.
  - Invite advocates to print the flyer and post it at work or around their neighborhood.
  - Save a PDF of the fact sheet and link to it from your post, inviting advocates to read and learn more or share it with friends and family.

Videos

- **Highlight your advocates.** If you have access to a video camera or a smartphone, consider creating a video of advocates’ stories. Ask your advocates to talk about their role in the campaign and why they support eliminating unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools. Produce videos in the appropriate languages spoken in the community.
Stories of real-life advocates can be one of the most effective measures for swaying decision makers because they represent actual constituent opinions on the policies they care about.

- **Create mini-documentaries.** Consider a short film featuring the conflicting messages that surround a child in school settings. Highlight all the different marketing tactics companies use to reach kids at schools and the products they market. Contrast those examples with the nutrition education messages and food improvements being made in schools. Capture visuals of junk food marketing found in schools and on buses. Interview students, asking whether the foods they learn about in health class align with what they see advertised in their hallways or on the school’s sports jerseys. This could also be an opportunity to engage students in the process by having them submit photos from their own schools. You will likely also need releases for any students participating in videos, or contributing photos or videos, so be sure to discuss that with the school. Keep in mind that the most viewed and shared videos are less than 90 seconds.

**Facebook**

Facebook can be an excellent way to engage your existing advocates and recruit new ones, especially if you already have an established presence. Below are a few tips for spreading the word on Facebook.

- **Use your existing account.** Do not create a new page just for your efforts to eliminate unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and on buses; instead, integrate the campaign into your existing Facebook page. This way, when new people “like” your page because they support creating a healthier school environment, they will also stay informed of your other initiatives.
  - If appropriate in your community, post messages in languages other than English on your page, or create a separate page in another language, such as Spanish, if that is more relevant to your work in the community.

- **Recruit new members right from Facebook.** Consider creating a registration app on your page so users can sign up to be a part of the effort without leaving Facebook. You can point potential advocates to the registration app through Facebook ads and posts on your wall.

- **Highlight key posts.** Facebook allows you to select posts you would like to draw specific attention to and expand them across your page to catch your readers’ eyes. See the following graphic for an example.

- **Use images to help advocates identify with your cause.** The postcard in this toolkit can be repurposed to create an image advocates can use on their own profiles. Consider using the front side of the postcard to do the following:
o Make it your page’s cover photo and ask advocates to tag themselves and their friends in the image. Their tags will show up on their News Feed and in their friends’ notifications.

o Encourage advocates to make the postcard their cover photo or profile picture. Advocates’ friends will see the images on their profiles, which helps raise awareness about the issue. Give advocates a caption to go with their post that directs viewers to your site.

o Image sizing is important. To ensure image clarity and prevent distortion when posting photographs on Facebook, use photographs that are 1200x900 with an aspect ratio of 4:3. This will also help you avoid unnecessary white space around your images.

o For image measurements for additional images for your profile page, see the picture below.

- **Share the message with decision makers.** Many state decision makers have an online presence, which can be an effective venue for them to hear from advocates.
  - As advocates tag themselves in your cover photo, encourage them to tag their decision makers as well. Note that some decision makers may have set their privacy settings to restrict this activity.
  - Encourage advocates to tag their decision makers in their Facebook posts about supporting an end to unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools. Check the appendix for examples of Facebook posts.

A post that tags a legislator should be considered a direct communication to that legislator, so it will be lobbying if it reflects a view on specific legislation. A post that does not tag a legislator is public communication and will be lobbying only if it reflects a view on specific legislation and includes a call-to-action. Note that if a social media post constitutes lobbying, the staff time related to writing the post is attributable to lobbying, however small the cost of that staff time may be.

- **Ask advocates for a response.** Create posts, such as online quizzes, that encourage advocates to interact.
  - Ask questions: “Why do you think only healthy foods and beverages should be allowed in schools?”
  - Encourage story sharing: “Tell us how junk food and sugary beverage advertisements and marketing in schools are selling you, your family, or your community short.”
  - Hold them accountable: “How have you helped make limits on in-school, unhealthy food and beverage marketing a priority in your community?”
• **Actively manage your community.** Running a social media community successfully, particularly on Facebook, requires a long-term investment of time and energy that goes beyond posting content. You should be devoting a significant amount of time (at least 1-2 hours) every day to managing your social pages.
  o “Like” and reply to positive and constructive messages from your individual followers to enhance the community aspect of your page and give it a more personalized feel. These replies can also serve as an opportunity to share resources with your audience on an individual level.
  o Answer questions to create a two-way dialogue and foster constructive discussion on your messaging.
  o Ignore, or eventually ban, people who are posting consistently negative, inflammatory, or vulgar content. Engaging with them will only exacerbate the problem.

• **Highlight partners.** There may be other community organizations that are also working toward creating a healthier school environment for children.
  o Consider working with them to highlight each other’s efforts in Facebook posts. That way, your mention will show up on their channels (and vice versa), helping you to reach their community for recruitment purposes.

• **Take online actions offline.** There are many creative ways to share several items in this toolkit—the poster, flyer, fact sheet, etc.—on Facebook and encourage people to distribute them in their communities.
  o Ask advocates to print the flyers and hand them out at events in their town or post them on community message bulletin boards in parks, libraries, and coffee shops.
    ▪ Bring the action back online by asking advocates to post a picture of themselves putting up the flyers.
  o Post the decision maker fact sheet on your Facebook page so that it is available to advocates to use in meetings with decision makers. Ask them to come back to your Facebook page to report on what they are doing, and how their own meetings went.
  o In advance of offline activities, share the [Key Messages](#) with your advocates so they know how to speak about the issue.

**Ad Campaigns**

• **Promote your posts.** Promoted posts take highlighted posts one step further by elevating them in your fans’ News Feed. Promoted posts have a nominal cost and their benefits are far-reaching. Along with this toolkit, a suggested image for a Facebook ad has been provided. Use the image and then assign corresponding text, such as: “What is the real message we send children when we allow companies to market junk food on school property? Stand up and say, ‘Don’t sell us short!’ To learn more and get involved, visit [INSERT URL].”
  o Promoted posts come with a range of pricing options, depending on the number of fans and people you would like to reach with your post. You will have the option to elevate your post in your fans’ News Feeds or in both their New Feeds and their friends’ News Feeds. Also, you can target promoted posts by age, gender, and location.
  o You can promote posts directly from your Facebook page; look in the lower right-hand corner of the post you want to elevate. Click on “Boost Post,” select your dollar amount and audience reach, and then enter credit card details for payment.
Create an ad campaign. You can also turn promoted posts into a wider Facebook advertising campaign, allowing you to target specific audiences in a way not feasible from your Facebook page.

- Select the kind of results you would like for your ads. For example, you can select “Page Post Engagement.”
- Select your destination page (this should be your organization’s Facebook page).
- Select the post you would like to promote or create a new post to promote.
- Choose your audience. First, select age and gender targeting criteria, and then type in interests. Remember to include broad interest topics to reach as wide an audience as possible.
  - For targeting based on location, workplace, behavior, school, relationship status, or languages, click the appropriate button and add targeting criteria. Consider groups of people who may have a natural interest in ending childhood obesity—parents or teachers, for example—and target them based on related interests, such as local parenting groups or the PTA/PTO.
  - While you cannot select ethnicities through Facebook, you can use self-identified interests to increase the likelihood that you are reaching a specific ethnicity.
  - You can also target audiences based on whether they are already fans of your organization on Facebook.
Finally, select your budget. Even a small amount can generate results.

Twitter

It does not take a lot to share the importance of a learning environment free of harmful food and beverage marketing. Even 140 characters can make a difference! Here are some tips for using Twitter to help bring this issue to life online for advocates.

- **Set the stage with key information and creativity in your profile.** Your Twitter profile is a destination for users to learn more about your efforts to eliminate unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and on buses. It is important to make use of all its features. Consider the following.
- **Use your profile photo to identify your organization.** The recommended size for profile photos is 400x400 pixels. To avoid unwanted cropping, size your photo to 400x400 prior to uploading it to Twitter.

- **Develop a prominent header image** that depicts the ubiquity of junk food advertising in schools, such as kids surrounded by posters for sugary beverages or kids riding on a bus that is plastered with posters for unhealthy foods. The recommended size for header photos is 1500x500 pixels. Note that the header photo is cropped to a 2:1 aspect ratio on mobile. As with the profile photo, make sure you size your image approximately before uploading it to Twitter.
  - Provide a copy of your header image, correctly sized, so that your followers can use it for their header images as well. It is another way for their followers to find out about the campaign.
- **Write a concise Twitter bio**, up to 160 characters, explaining your organization’s connection to efforts that help kids achieve a healthy weight, and include a call-to-action for users to get involved.
- **Pin your most important tweet** to the top of your profile timeline in order to capture the attention of visitors.

- **Link to relevant content.** Include hyperlinks to additional information in about a quarter of all your tweets.
  - Use the links to direct followers back to the website to take action or to resources where they can learn more about how unhealthy food and beverage marketing in the school environment could be linked to childhood obesity.
- **Diversify your content.** Create a mix of tweets that both inform your followers about unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and encourage their support. Diversifying your information will help build a relationship between you and your followers.
  - Provide relevant news on policy changes or bans on marketing in schools at the local or national level.
  - Mention activities or news that occurred that day related to school nutrition education.
  - Ask followers to answer a question.
  - Share a weekly suggestion about how to fundraise without using unhealthy, branded products.
Don’t sell us short™

- Retweet interesting content or news from followers or other influencers.
- Embed videos, images, and infographics. Infographics are one of the most shared types of content on Twitter.
- Capitalize on real-time events. Use official event hashtags or other relevant hashtags like #donsellusshort.
- Monitor followers to identify new fans and leverage potential relationships with those people/organizations. You could even ask your most engaged followers to serve as spokespeople in their community.

**Engage with decision makers.**
- To reach decision makers, include their Twitter handles in your informational tweets.
- Ask followers to tweet at lawmakers, urging them to protect children from exposure to unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools.
- Share information on the different types of food marketing tactics used in schools and the impact of food marketing on children’s diets and health, so your decision makers understand how food marketing undermines healthy school environments, and take action to address the problem.
- Note that including a legislator’s Twitter handle in a tweet may mean the tweet is a direct communication to the legislator, so the tweet will be treated as lobbying if it reflects a view on a specific legislative proposal. This means the (small) cost of staff time for writing the tweet must be paid for with lobbying funds. Similarly, asking followers to tweet at lawmakers is grassroots lobbying, if you ask them to tweet about a specific legislative proposal; it’s not lobbying if you ask followers to tweet general information about school marketing at legislators.

**Join the conversation.**
- Reply to messages, questions, or ideas from followers as appropriate.
- Focus on facts and avoid entering editorial disagreements or arguments.
- Do not “feed the trolls”—avoid engaging professional critics or troublemakers.

**Build your audience.**
- Market your Twitter feed to your core audiences on other platforms, such as email.
- Add your Twitter handle to websites and other assets (online and offline).
- Begin to follow relevant influencers to stay plugged into the conversation, and encourage these influencers to follow you as well.
- Follow reporters who you want to cover your campaign.
- If appropriate in your community, post messages in languages other than English on your page, or create a separate page in another language, such as Spanish, if that is more relevant to your work in the community.
- Above all, create content that people want to share.

**Key Takeaways**
- Social media can be a powerful way to share your message with a broader, more diverse audience.
- People respond well to posts with multimedia, so include images and videos you own whenever possible.
- Use social media to encourage advocates to interact and support your offline activities.
- A small investment in paid advertising, such as Facebook ads, can make a positive difference for your campaign.
- By using appropriate languages you can conduct effective outreach to priority populations.
Engage: Using Social Media to Reach Journalists

With more than 6.9 million active users on Twitter every day and 552 million daily active users on Facebook, social media can serve as a powerful tool to amplify your message and reach highly targeted audiences.

Just as consumers are increasingly turning to social media for news, so are journalists. They use it to research stories, follow trends, and interact with their own networks.

Note: while many journalists use social media for news, sometimes a phone call or an in-person meeting is better. Some journalists may want to engage in more traditional ways.

Reach Media through Social Channels

• **Start with research.** Before you begin engaging with journalists, research their backgrounds to personalize your messages, including referencing relevant past articles, and explaining why you have contacted them. Following journalists on social media can be a great research tool and a good way to initiate a relationship.

• **Try email.** Most journalists prefer to be contacted through email, not on social media. If you do not have an existing relationship with a journalist, a well-written email may be more effective than a tweet. You can also post a comment on the news outlet’s webpage under the online version of the news story.

• **Do not begin with a pitch.** Though it is generally not appropriate to pitch over Twitter, you can use it to get on a journalist’s radar. Start by following the reporter on Twitter and retweeting or commenting on content you find interesting.

• **Be respectful.** It is important to be mindful of journalists’ time and to remember that all interactions are public. Do not mass-tweet pitches to several reporters and outlets.

• **Be careful with direct messages (DMs).** Do not ask a journalist you are not following to send you a direct message. Only people who follow one another can send each other DMs.

Sample Tweets

Below are a few sample tweets designed to build relationships with journalists and establish yourself as a thought leader on restricting unhealthy food marketing on school property. Included below are references to specific policies demonstrating how they could fit within a tweet. Note that you can use all of these tweets for any of the policies by slightly tweaking the language. The Key Messages in the Appendix can help with that.

• In response to a journalist tweeting an article on a related topic/issue: “.@[JOURNALIST] Really interesting take on marketing in schools. Love your point on how it sends mixed messages. #donsellusshort”

• Sharing an article by a journalist: “[INSERT QUOTE OR PARAPHRASED TEXT] via .@ [JOURNALIST] [LINK TO ARTICLE] #donsellusshort”

• Sharing an article by the journalist and generating discussion among your followers: “Read [ARTICLE TITLE] via @[JOURNALIST] [LINK TO ARTICLE] It’s so important that we not sell our kids’ health short.”

• In response to a journalist tweeting an article on a school district’s efforts to eliminate unhealthy foods and beverages on school property: “.@[JOURNALIST]—Loved this piece, such an important topic! Would love to chat about our program sometime. #donsellusshort”
In response to a journalist tweeting an article on the need for safe places in your community:
“.@[JOURNALIST]—Really interesting points! Ending unhealthy food marketing in schools could reduce childhood #dontsellusshort. [LINK TO SITE EXPLAINING PROGRAM]”

Social Media Engagement Tips & Tricks
• Be transparent and disclose your job, purpose, and/or association in your bio.
• Employ a conversational tone and avoid buzzwords.
• Always begin by listening to the existing conversation.
• Identify opportunities to be current, relevant, and timely.
• Be human.
• Be prepared to carry on a conversation with your followers.
• Include hyperlinks for additional information.
• Use relevant hashtags when appropriate to help your comments show up in larger conversations.
• Use handles of people (e.g., policymaker, organization, journalist) whose attention you are trying to garner.
• Focus on facts and avoid entering editorial disagreements or arguments.

Key Takeaways
• Begin with an email; then continue engaging with journalists on social media to build valuable media relationships.
• Make sure to research journalists’ backgrounds and tailor any messages you send to them.
• Do not start off with a pitch. Use social media to get to know journalists and engage with them, not to ask them for coverage.
• Always be transparent. Identify yourself and your campaign goals.
Mobilize: Action Alerts

The supporters in your database are well-positioned to become grassroots activists. By joining your email list, these individuals have already indicated they want to learn more about who you are and the issues important to you. The next step is converting their interest into a deeper level of commitment to your mission by getting your supporters to complete an action, such as signing a petition, communicating directly with policymakers and other decision makers, or attending events. Remember to develop action alerts in the relevant languages spoken in the community.

As you begin a conversation with your supporters through email, keep these goals in mind.

- **Educate them** through issue updates or updated Web content. These communications allow you to:
  - Provide advocates with information and cultivate their interest in an issue.
  - Identify the message areas that resonate best with subsets of the audience to better tailor outreach.
  - Keep individuals involved and updated during periods when critical action is not required, making it easier to engage them when the time comes.

- **Engage them** in efforts to deepen their activism through surveys, “share your story” opportunities, or social media. These activities give people actions to take that help you:
  - Learn more about what type of participation people prefer.
  - Train activists to be good stewards of issue messaging.
  - Expand your reach by amplifying your message through individuals’ social networks.
  - Reach out to diverse communities by engaging trusted messengers from those communities.
  - Show activists the importance of their participation, so they are ready to respond on occasions when urgent action may be needed.

- **Activate them** with new and varied calls to action based on the way in which their unique voices can make a difference. Your advocates can reach the public by:
  - Participating in public dialogue on key issues by commenting on news articles, blog posts, or polls.
  - Recruiting new individuals to join the cause.
  - Attending public meetings, town halls, or hearings in support of your position.
  - Contacting decision makers via email, phone, postal mail, or in person to contribute their opinions.
    - If your request reflects a view on specific legislation, asking advocates to contact their legislators will be lobbying.

Email action alerts also allow you to communicate with supporters directly, measure their interest through open rates, and track their support through clicks on the links in your email. Because email communications have the capacity to be uniquely micro-targeted to recipients, sending alerts to your audience can be one of the most powerful ways to inspire mobilization around an issue. Do not forget to send these out in all appropriate languages.

**Key Takeaways**

- There are many different ways to engage your volunteers over email—action alerts can educate, motivate, and activate.
- Surveys or requests for feedback can make your email program even stronger.
• Keep advocates interested by offering updates and new and varied ways to participate.
• Engage trusted messengers in reaching out to diverse communities.
Mobilize: The Value of Phone Outreach

Even in today’s digital era, person-to-person contact remains one of the most effective means of relationship building. Below is an overview of how to train volunteers, as well as two different types of phone outreach: phone banks and phone patch programs.

Phone Banks

Operating a phone bank connects your organization’s volunteers with potential new advocates—people you hope will want to learn more about your issues, get involved with your campaign, and act to achieve your goals. In order to host a successful phone bank, address the steps below.

Recruit and Train Volunteers

- **Enlist your team.** Find people willing to make calls on a regular or semi-regular basis. Current staff members at your organization or existing volunteers are the best resources.
- **Work with partners.** You may find a need to extend your reach beyond your own staff or volunteers in ways that would be best done through partner organizations. This is often the case when trying to connect with diverse groups that have not yet engaged with your issues and where outreach is best done by a trusted and well-known voice.
- **Identify your manager.** Designate someone from your team to manage the call center. Train them to lead the volunteers and ensure program success.
- **Train your callers.** Brief volunteers on the issues so they can discuss these topics with callers and exercise cultural sensitivity when appropriate. Conduct a training session where they can learn your talking points and practice making calls to familiarize themselves with the process.
- **Identify any unique language needs.** Does your community include non-English speakers? If so, be sure to recruit bilingual volunteers or enlist the help of volunteer translators.

Find a Location and Supplies

- **Decide where people will call.** Before moving forward in this process, determine if you want callers to work from a centralized location. People can make calls from their homes, but without supervision they might not stick to the script and could damage potential or existing relationships. Your offices could be a good location for local, targeted calls.
- **Equip yourself.** Ensure your call center has enough lines and telephones for volunteers.
- **Set time limits and provide refreshments.** Establish how long you want the call center to be open. If it is for a long period of time, provide food and drinks to volunteers.

Create a Call List

- **Develop your list.** A call list is essential to any successful phone bank, but like all communications it must be targeted. Target individuals based on a known or potential interest in eliminating unhealthy food and beverage marketing from schools and buses, such as superintendents, administrators, principals, PTA/PTO board members who organize fundraisers, nutrition education teachers, members of coalition partner organizations, health professionals, local health departments, etc. A number of resources are available to help you discover target audiences, including U.S. Census data. As you develop your list, be sure to have callers who can communicate in the relevant languages spoken in the community.
• **Start with existing advocates at your organization.** You already have their information, and they will understand why they are hearing from you because they have expressed previous interest in related issues.

• **Consider buying lists.** It is also possible to buy lists with phone numbers and other advocate information. Prices vary based on the amount of targeting and number of people on a list, but InfoUSA ([www.infousa.com](http://www.infousa.com)), Caldwell List Company ([www.caldwell-list.com](http://www.caldwell-list.com)), and Dataman Group ([www.datamangroup.com](http://www.datamangroup.com)) are good resources if you wish to purchase a list.

**Develop a Script**

• Prepare a script and one-pagers so volunteers can have effective and informative conversations. As you develop your message, test the script with someone unfamiliar with the issue to ensure your audience will understand it in the intended way. You should also develop a list of common questions and talking points for those difficult questions your volunteers may receive. Your script should include the following information.

  • **Introduction:** Provide a brief introduction of yourself and your organization. There is no need to begin explaining the issue at this point. Ask the individual if they have time to talk about the issue.

  • **Outline the issue:** If the call recipient has the time, explain the issue and why it is important. This is the point where targeting is most important. Restrictions on in-school, unhealthy food and beverage marketing will affect people differently. Know the person you are talking to, and tailor the conversation accordingly.

  • **Request for assistance:** Following the explanation of the issue, ask the call recipient for another point of contact (e.g., their email or mailing address). Having this information will allow you to follow up later and provide further details about the issue.

  • **Closing:** If someone declines to hear about the issue, ask if there would be a better time to call back. Always thank them for their time.

• Below is a sample phone banking script. You may need more than one script depending on your intended reach. Feel free to customize it to include any cultural variations for particular audiences of interest, and be sure to enlist and prepare materials for your bilingual volunteers.

  • Hi [ADVOCATE NAME]. My name is [YOUR NAME], and I am calling on behalf of [YOUR ORGANIZATION].

  • We are working to create a healthier school environment by ensuring only healthy foods are advertised and marketed in schools in [ADVOCATE CITY]. Do you have a few minutes to talk about how this initiative will help you and your family?

    • **IF YES**

      • Great! Our local schools are working hard to offer healthier school meals and snacks and strengthen nutrition education. Unfortunately, those efforts are undermined by companies marketing unhealthy foods and beverages to children in our schools. There is a lot of marketing directed at students, and the majority of that marketing is for unhealthy foods. To help children develop healthy food preferences and habits, we are working to get junk food marketing out of schools.

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• **The Ask:** If you join us, we will keep you up-to-date on all the issues and progress being made in your area and nationally. **Will you join us in this effort?**
  o **IF YES:** Wonderful. Let me get your [EMAIL, MAILING ADDRESS, ETC.], so we can keep you updated.
  o **IF NO:** Okay, thank you, and if you want to learn more about the program, you can visit [WEBSITE]. Have a great [DAY, EVENING].

  ▪ **IF NO**
  • Is there a more convenient time I can call you back? *(If yes, write when to call back and make a note. If no, then skip to...)*. Thanks for your time, and if you want to learn more about the program, you can visit [WEBSITE]. Have a great [DAY, EVENING].

  ▪ **IF ANSWERING MACHINE**
  • Hi [ADVOCATE NAME]. My name is [YOUR NAME], and I am calling on behalf of [YOUR ORGANIZATION].
  • We are working to help improve the health of families in [ADVOCATE CITY] by creating a healthier school environment for kids by limiting unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools.
  • **The Ask:** Please call us at [PHONE NUMBER] or visit our website at [WEBSITE] to learn more and to help kids develop healthy eating habits to last a lifetime.
  • Thank you and have a great day!

**Compile Data**
• Track the data garnered from these phone calls—who you are calling, how many people you reach, how many volunteers sign up, how often people are called, etc.
  o Set standards and guidelines for recording data, and be sure volunteers are trained on the proper way to record information.
  o Create a template in Excel for volunteers to record the data. Determine what you want to know about each person. You should at least have their first name, last name, phone number (home or mobile), as well as whether they picked up or you left a message, what language was spoken, and whether they wanted to talk and whether they were supportive or not. If possible, try to record their email address and mailing address.

**Maintain the Relationship**
• Phone calls are the beginning of a relationship, not the end. To keep working with these advocates, you must follow up with them, either with another call or via email.

**Phone Patches**
A phone patch, as opposed to a phone bank, connects advocates with their elected officials. In order to host a phone-patching program, you will work with a third-party organization that calls advocates, explains the issue, and asks if the advocates would like to be connected with his or her representative to voice support for a cause or issue. This is a supplemental method to the phone bank program and should target existing advocates, not new ones.
If you ask advocates to contact a legislator to support or oppose specific legislation, your phone patch calls will be considered grassroots lobbying. Make sure you budget lobbying funds to cover these costs. You can use non-lobbying funds for phone patches by avoiding references to any specific legislation, but that may dilute the impact of the calls.

Select a Vendor
Find a company that will call individuals on your behalf. Make sure to verify the vendor has the capacity to provide services in languages other than English if needed in your community. Some companies that can assist in the program implementation include:

- Mobile Commons
- Winning Connections
- Stones’ Phones
- Strategic Consulting Group

Create a Call List
As with phone banks, you will need to create a list of contacts to provide to the vendor for use during outreach.

Develop Scripts for Messages
- When individuals answer their phones, they will hear a pre-recorded message and will be connected to a representative by pressing a designated number. A script that highlights the importance of the initiative should be written to serve as this recording. There should also be an option for non-English speakers to press a number to hear the message in their language.
- An additional message could be written to record on an answering machine if the person misses the call.

  o **Script for Initial Recording**
    - Hi! I am calling on behalf of [YOUR ORGANIZATION]. Si quiere continuar en español oprima el 2. Parents and schools are working hard to cultivate healthy food preferences and eating habits in children that will last a lifetime. Unfortunately, companies are marketing unhealthy foods and beverages in our schools, undermining those efforts. In 2009 alone, food and beverage companies spent about $150 million marketing food to kids in schools. We are working to get rid of unhealthy food marketing in schools and create healthy school environments for our kids. If you would like to learn more about this issue and how you can help this effort, please press 1.

  o **Script for Leaving a Message**
    - Hi [ADVOCATE NAME]. My name is [YOUR NAME], and I am calling on behalf of [YOUR ORGANIZATION]. We are working to protect children from [ADVOCATE CITY OR STATE] unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools. Food marketing influences children’s food preferences and diets, which can have serious long-term health consequences for our children. We need your help to end unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools. Please call us at [PHONE NUMBER] or visit our website at [WEBSITE] to learn more and to protect [ADVOCATE CITY OR STATE] kids from being sold short by unhealthy food marketing in schools. Thank you and have a great day!

  o **Script for Phone Operator**
Hi. How are you? Thanks so much for agreeing to take the next step to help create healthier school environments for kids.

To achieve this change, we need advocates to speak with their representatives to support efforts to end marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages at school. Before I connect you with your legislator, what questions can I answer for you about these policies or about the process? *(Note: Advocates will have varying degrees of knowledge about this issue, so at this point it is a good idea to let them ask questions.)*

**Script for Connecting Advocates with Representatives**

Now that you have all the information, I can connect you with your representative. Just so you are aware of the process, I will transfer you to your legislator [LEGISLATOR NAME], and someone on [HIS/HER] staff will talk with you. You will need to tell the person who answers the phone your name, that you are a constituent, and that you support an end to unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and on buses in [STATE].

- As written, this phone script is not lobbying, because it does not refer to a specific legislative proposal. If, instead of referring to the general support of restricting unhealthy food marketing in schools, the script urged people to tell their legislators to support specific legislation on unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools, the calls would be lobbying and would need to be paid for with restricted funds.

- Note: Your phone bank operator will need to be trained to answer frequently asked questions and know where to refer people with questions he/she is unable to answer.

**Record the Results**

- Typically, a phone patch operator will provide a daily report with the results of the program. Collect this data and keep it for your records to strengthen future outreach efforts.

**Additional Things to Consider**

Whether you are phone banking or phone patching, below are some tips to help your process run smoothly.

- Avoid using computer or auto-dialing systems, as some states prohibit these, and federal rules restrict autodialed calls to cell phones. Instead, have people dial numbers by hand. Hand-dialed phone banks also have a higher completion rate (50 percent compared to 15 percent with automated dialing systems, according to The Voices of America).

- Hybrid systems also exist. These systems allow you to download data to the phone so that you just hit “dial.” Volunteers can record the answers to the survey on the phone, which can then be downloaded to a computer. It also allows you to record a voicemail, so the volunteer can push a button that automatically plays your recorded message after the beep without having to stay on the line.

- Try to make your calls between the hours of 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. on weekdays or 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. on weekends, as these are the hours you will most likely find people at home.

- Make sure volunteers know how to react in different situations (e.g., leaving a message on a machine or speaking with a hostile individual).

- Be sure the efforts of the campaign are not limited by do-not-call lists.
Typically, these apply only to telemarking sales calls. At the federal level, the do-not-call provisions do not cover calls from political organizations, charities, telephone surveyors, or companies with which a consumer has an existing business relationship.

Most states follow the standard set by the federal government, but state laws can vary. Check state government websites to ensure compliance with these laws.

Key Takeaways

- There are two different types of telephone programs: phone banking and phone patching. Phone banking is for recruiting volunteers, while phone patching is for connecting advocates to elected officials.
- To ensure a well-organized phone bank, brainstorm all potential questions and responses volunteers may receive, and build a script to equip your volunteers with the best ways to react.
- If your community includes non-English speakers, recruit phone volunteers who speak the relevant languages.
- Consider the hours between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends the best time to make these calls in order to reach the highest number of people.
- Check your state’s laws on phone outreach to ensure you comply with all do-not-call provisions.
Mobilize: Hosting a Media Event

Working with local media is a key way to raise awareness about your campaign, priorities, and goals. Media coverage can help you educate communities, create conversation, pressure decision makers, and recruit new advocates. But not only that; it should be a key part of your campaign strategy and message framing. To begin, you must thoughtfully develop and carefully plan how you want to present the story to reporters. Building relationships with media and pursuing media advocacy well in advance of hosting a media event will help ensure that your message is understood and the cause is well-positioned by reporters.

Start by thinking about what you want to accomplish and whom you want to reach. Do you have news to release, such as a report or study? If not, what is your media hook? Does the nightly news highlight stories about schools in your area? What about your local paper? Would you be better served by engaging with community bloggers? Consider including multicultural media in this outreach as well as other media outlets your target audiences turn to for trusted information. Once you decide what your goals are, you can start identifying media opportunities that match.

One way to engage members of the media is by inviting them to an event. A well-run media event—one with compelling speakers, stories, clear facts, and easily explained goals—will give reporters the tools they need to amplify your story in newspapers, on air, and online. Note that the most successful events are built upon existing media relations, so thoughtfully consider the timing of your event as it fits with the rest of your media strategy.

Where and Who?

To give your message more impact, choose a location for your event that will reinforce the importance of eliminating unhealthy food and beverage marketing from school property. Hold your event in a classroom or lunchroom, on the front steps of the school, or in front of a school sports scoreboard or vending machine covered with advertising. Find a place that visually illustrates the marketing kids see every day in school. Other options include a meeting room in a city hall or other municipal building, or in a place of worship where leaders are calling for healthier environments for children at school.

When assembling the elements of your event, consider speakers who can talk persuasively about the importance of eliminating marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages from schools and buses. Speakers can include executives from your organization, but do not be afraid to think outside the box.

Consider bringing in a local mother who is concerned about the conflicting messages her children receive at school and home about which are “good” foods and beverages to consume; a superintendent or school administrator who voluntarily eliminated marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages from his or her school, without the loss of income to the school districts, in order to counter the concerns that may be held by school leaders from other districts or by state level decision makers; a PTA/PTO leader who vowed to organize only healthy or non-food school fundraisers going forward; a student leader who is willing to speak out against marketing taking place in the school; or a member of a local business who can talk about the financial impact of obesity on the community.

A diverse mix of speakers who can speak fluently in all languages spoken in the community and/or are familiar with other cultures will provide your media attendees with a range of perspectives about the
marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools. If your speakers are not bilingual, consider having a translator available to facilitate interviews with the press.

Event Tips
The following tips cover some of the basics of event hosting. However, the list below is not comprehensive—every event is different, and you will need to adapt your planning to each event’s unique requirements.

- **Establish a point of contact.** Your event point of contact should manage all logistics. This person could be a paid staff member or a trusted volunteer. Whomever you choose, make sure he or she has experience with event coordination and execution.

- **Send invitations.** For some media events, such as salon dinners or news conferences where you will focus on specific issues, make sure key influencers (such as grasstops volunteers, and community leaders) are in the room. Even if they are not speakers, their presence can lend an air of credibility to your efforts. Issue personal invitations to these influencers and follow up with them if necessary to secure confirmation.

  - If someone on your staff has an existing relationship with an influencer, ask that person to call them on the phone or send a personal email. People are more likely to respond to messages from names they recognize.

- **Create briefing books.** Prior to the event, create two briefing packets, one to share with media and another to share with key influencers who will be in attendance. Share your organization’s policy position statement on unhealthy food and beverage marketing on school property, the fact sheets from this toolkit, and relevant news articles. Create a list of common questions and key talking points that include responses to opposition arguments, a list of who your partners are, and an explanation of where your coalition receives its funding.

Media Engagement

- Monitor recent media stories—newspaper articles, TV segments, radio shows, etc.—to determine which media figures or outlets might be most likely to cover issues related to school foods, nutrition, and health. Be sure to include multicultural media. Based on this research, reach out to the media you would like to cover the event.

- Think about what makes your story newsworthy. Reporters have several criteria for determining which stories they want to cover. It can vary depending on the nature of an issue, but the following are example “hooks” that will help you pitch your story.

  - **Timeliness:** the issue is being talked about, reported on, and/or action is being taken.
  - **Conflict or controversy:** there are strong opposing opinions.
  - **Proximity:** the issue is affecting the local community.
  - **Prominence:** public officials and/or celebrities have weighed in.
  - **Significance:** a large amount of people are impacted or taking action.
  - **Human interest:** the issue is engaging because it draws emotion from the viewer, is often relatable, and is told by feature stories that really “hit home.”
  - **Bizarre:** there is a strange, odd, or unbelievable tie-in.
  - **Justice:** one group or community is being treated unfairly or subject to unfair conditions.

- Once you have established your media list, you can pitch editorial board meetings. The editorial board makes significant decisions on which stories the outlet will cover, so meeting with them in advance of major stories can ensure your story is not only included, but is elevated for greater reach. This work should start at least one month prior to the event.
Distribute a media advisory to all of your selected media outlets, and pitch print and radio two weeks out from the event. While some reporters may be slow to respond to your pitch, do not be discouraged; keep following up with them until you receive a confirmation. Some will not confirm a story until the day of the event.

Distribute a press release in the days leading up to the event and include an embargo to ensure that media adhere to your event date for releasing any new data.

If you have secured interest from a TV station, follow up with the producer two days prior to the event and the morning of the event. Also reach out to unconfirmed print reporters two to three days prior to and the morning of the event.

Visuals, such as a large banner or poster that are compelling and eye-catching, are great resources to bring to events to secure media coverage. Consider bringing props that demonstrate the changes you want to make, such as examples of unhealthy marketing and fundraisers from schools or examples of healthier marketing approaches. Compelling visuals may encourage print media to feature your issues above the fold or on their home page. The place you hold the news conference can function as the visual interest, such as a school cafeteria plastered with marketing for unhealthy food or a hallway crowded with vending machines advertising sugary drinks.

Depending on media interest, coordinate media interviews onsite before and/or after the event.

Prepare an op-ed to submit to a target newspaper about the event and the news you are releasing. Take a look at the sample op-eds provided in this toolkit for ideas on how to shape yours, but also include information that is relevant to your community.

**Blogger Engagement**

- If you have local bloggers in your town or city, consider inviting them to the event, especially if they write about topics relevant to food and beverage marketing in schools, such as childhood weight, children’s nutrition, schools, or parental activism. Provide them with fact sheets and other appropriate background information.
  - Reach out to parents who blog about children’s nutrition. Share the connections between unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and kids’ food preferences, diets and health. A hit or article addressing your efforts, from a prominent blogger could be a big help. A blog post has the potential to be even more powerful when the blogger represents communities where these challenges exist.

- As with any other media, develop an outreach plan and engage bloggers accordingly. Make sure your outreach is personal and calls out direct reasons why that specific blogger should come to the event.
- Track confirmations and declines, and shape your outreach accordingly.
- Monitor for and report on any mentions of the event by targeted bloggers, both leading up to the event and after.

**Database Growth**

- If your event is media only, set up a table on the day of the event where people can sign up to learn more about your efforts to limit unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools. Because they are attending the event, they may want to join the campaign.
The sign-up can be dual purpose. For example, at the end of the event, attendees may be motivated to make some sort of commitment to help encourage restrictions on in-school, unhealthy food product marketing in their community. Combine the sign-up with a pledge where attendees can share the specific way they will help the cause.

- This will also help you keep track of the types of people in your database and the specific ways in which you can engage them based on their stated interest in efforts to eliminate unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and on buses.
- As you add new members to your database, segment them into areas of interest so that you can quickly deploy customized messages or action requests based on their diversity of interest and skills.

- Transcribe the sign-up forms and upload your new advocates to your organization’s database. Send them a follow-up email welcoming them to your email list and thanking them for their attendance. Also ask how they want to be involved in the future.

**Post-Event Activities**

- Leverage the event by posting the speeches, photographs, and videos to all relevant websites and social media platforms as appropriate.
- Follow up with local influencers and potential advocates as appropriate to gauge their interest in further involvement.
- If there are media, including bloggers, who could not attend the event, provide them with information and an event synopsis with photos so they can cover the event retroactively.

**Key Takeaways**

- Start working on media events early. Between identifying diverse speakers, inviting journalists, and coordinating the activities, a well-executed media event can take weeks to plan.
- To get the right people in the room, research journalists and their beats before inviting them to your event.
- Be sure to include multicultural media.
- The location and speakers at your event are important to its success. Hold your event in a community striving for an end to unhealthy food and beverage marketing in its school environment, and host compelling speakers on the subject.
- Once your event is over, follow up by making photos, speeches, and videos available online.
Mobilize: Media Training Tips

Speaking to the media can seem a bit daunting, but it is a prime opportunity to tell a compelling story that brings home the potential harm of marketing unhealthy foods and beverages in schools. Unlike any other tactic for your campaign, an interview with key reporters could allow you to access a wide audience in a personal manner.

In many cases, your media team will have pitched the story of unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools to local media, offering your spokespeople as experts who can weigh in on this topic. Remember to reach out to media who have natural connections with the issue at hand (e.g., education reporters, food reporters, health reporters, and statehouse reporters) because they are more likely to respond to your pitch. You will have a better chance of success with targeted mainstream and multicultural audiences when you create a pitch specifically targeted to those outlets.

With the appropriate preparation and practice, your speakers will become comfortable with your messaging and be able to speak articulately and passionately about the issue. The guidelines below will help you prepare speakers for success.

Choose Spokespeople

Develop a small cadre of spokespeople whose perspectives are especially important to the cause and who the media might be interested in interviewing. Strive for diversity that represents your community and be sure to include spokespeople who can speak in other languages as it makes sense for your community.

- Advocates, especially parents who are concerned about children’s exposure to marketing for low-nutrient, high-fat, high-salt, and high-sugar foods.
- School leaders, including teachers, principals, superintendents, school nurses, or nutrition services, who can speak about the importance of ensuring healthy school environments for all students.
- Doctors, dentists, dietitians, school nurses, or other health professionals who see the impact of obesity-related diseases on their patients will add credibility.
- Researchers who can share data on obesity’s impact on a specific city or state will add quantifiable evidence to the story.
- Finally, top-level executives from your organization are always important faces to add to your campaign. They can speak specifically about your efforts to protect children from the marketers who target them with unhealthy food and beverage marketing in school.

Reach out to these types of spokespeople, ask if they would be interested in speaking on behalf of your campaign to end unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools, and begin preparing them for the task.

Develop Content

Begin preparing your speakers for interviews as soon as possible before each event. The more your speakers prepare, the more comfortable they will be and the better their delivery will be. Before you compose your responses, answer the following questions.

- **Who is your audience?** Before developing your messages, it is important to consider the audiences you will be reaching through the media outlet conducting the interview.
  - To what media outlet will your speaker be presenting?
• What should you say? Speakers will need to be armed with talking points about the negative consequences of allowing unhealthy food and beverage brands to target kids in schools and on buses, but these core messages are just a starting point. Make your content more relevant by considering the following questions.
  o Are there specific facts you want to highlight during the interview?
  o What is the central theme you want to discuss—the core statement you return to over and over?
  o Are there values you want to be sure to express? Facts are important, but people connect to issues at the values level. Include in your statement why you care about eliminating food marketing in schools.
  o Are there any cultural sensitivities or community dynamics to be aware of when you are developing your core messages?
  o What would success look like? Provide numbers, statistics, and milestones if limits on unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools were implemented in your school district or state.
  o Can you make your messages more tangible? Consider adding examples of unhealthy food marketing from schools in the community or big brands that have agreements to advertise in local schools (e.g., exclusive contracts to sell soda pop).
  o Are there other groups or individuals taking part in the interview? What are their positions likely to be, and will you have to comment on them?
  o How would you respond to the concerns of your opponents?
  o Do you need to tailor messages to specific populations or communities?

• What matters most? Spend some time thinking about how your speakers can best portray themselves and the issue.
  o How should the interview begin and end? The most important parts of an interview are the introduction and conclusion, because they are what your audience is most likely to remember.
  o Journalists punctuate stories with “sound bites”—short sentences that communicate your message quickly and boldly. It helps them keep up the pace of their story so they can keep an audience or reader engaged. When you write talking points, use short, complete sentences and simple language. Craft punchy lines that grab attention and tell your story passionately. But don’t get hung up on being clever. Be direct.
  o Are there other ways to restate the main goal of the campaign? People need to hear things at least three times to remember them, so keep bringing the messaging back to your core points.
  o Is this still relevant? Reread talking points the day before the interview to be sure everything is still relevant. Read local news of the day and reference something that is topical.

• What questions do you expect? Spend some time anticipating questions and developing direct responses or ways to turn the conversation back to your key messages. Then practice saying the responses out loud. Consider those opposition or “gotcha” questions, because reporters often want to cover both sides of the debate.

• Where will the interview be held? Determine in advance if your interview will be held in person, over the phone, over email, or some other medium, so you can plan responses that fit best.
Rehearsal

No matter how familiar spokespeople are with your talking points, it is important to have them rehearse multiple times before the interview. Ask your spokespeople to practice talking points in the following ways—and work alongside them as they do.

- **Read the text alone silently.** Read the content with a critical eye. Do all proof points support the overall story? Is the central theme clear?
- **Read aloud alone.** Spokespeople might be surprised to hear themselves speaking aloud, especially if it is their first time participating in an interview. Watch your speakers talk and make note of places where they take natural pauses or get tripped up on words.
- **Stand and read in front of a mirror (if the interview is on television).** When spokespeople read the content aloud standing, they will begin to get a feel for their natural body movement and nonverbal cues that will help bring the content to life.
- **Stand and read in front of peers.** Gather your colleagues to listen to the spokespeople deliver their talking points. This can help increase a speaker’s confidence and provides a safe place for feedback. At this point, they should be able to deliver their content without reading directly from papers.
- **Record their delivery and learn from it.** One of the best ways to rehearse is to make a video recording of your spokespeople presenting. This allows them to see what the interviewer sees and will make speakers aware of any distracting movements or phrases they may unknowingly use.
- **Rehearse in a comparable setting to where the interview will be held.** You may not be able to take your spokespeople to the actual interview location, but try to create a setting that feels similar. Spokespeople can practice their movement in this similar space, developing a sense of how to move and talk effectively when they are in the interview.

Interview Delivery

When your spokespeople arrive for the interview, they should be friendly and engaging, greeting reporters and producers confidently. This confidence is especially important if any of the spokespeople are top-level executives from your organization.

- **Own the space.** When you are on-site in the room, remind your speakers of the movements they practiced. If it is the right setting, encourage them to move around.
- **Engage the interviewer and the audience.** Remind spokespeople to maintain eye contact with the reporter as often as possible. They are the window to the viewers who are watching or listening. If there is an audience present, make sure your spokespeople speak directly to them.
- **Relax and enjoy.** By this point, your spokespeople will have mastered their text and be comfortable with their delivery, so remind them to relax and enjoy their time in the interview.
- **Say thank you.** Thank the reporter at the end and suggest meeting at a later date for a follow-up interview.

Key Takeaways

- Identify a diverse core group of spokespeople who can consistently speak with the media about your campaign in all relevant languages.
- Develop smart, punchy talking points and customize them to be relevant for each interview. Prepare for those “gotcha” questions that may arise.
- Practice makes perfect: Ask your spokespeople to rehearse their speeches or talking points to get comfortable with their comments before they speak with journalists.
Mobilize: Why Op-Eds Matter

Public commentary has long been one of the most powerful ways to broadly communicate ideas. You will be able to convey your campaign’s essential messages to legislators, journalists, and the community through a published op-ed.

In the past few years, competition from expanded news and information sources like blogs and social media has made publication easier, but competition for attention tougher. This means that you will have to offer your best thinking and most influential voices to maximize your chances of having a newspaper print your op-ed—and have people care about who you are and what you have to say.

Op-Ed Tips and Tricks

- **Choose your signer carefully.** To ensure the best chance of earning placement on a news platform or gaining people’s attention, enlist a high-profile influencer to sign and submit your op-ed. Ideally, this influencer (e.g., doctor, researcher, teacher, school principal or superintendent, or politician) should be well-known within your community and by the audience of the publication.

- **Choose a good subject line.** Unless you have had other contacts with the editorial page editor, your subject line functions as a pitch. Be sure it communicates the seriousness and timeliness of your op-ed.

- **Ask yourself: “Who cares?”** Make sure your piece will clearly resonate with or be meaningful to the public. Start by writing from the reader’s point of view, and express a clear opinion.

- **Keep things tight.** News outlets have limited space, so keep your op-ed to approximately 500 words. Some outlets have even shorter limits, while a few will accept up to 700 words, so check your paper’s requirements before submitting.

- **Speak conversationally.** Avoid jargon, fancy words, and slang. Your op-ed must be comprehensible to the general public, including people with no knowledge of the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools or how it might touch their lives.

- **Get to the point.** Make your key points early and often, and back them up with facts and examples.

- **Offer a short, snappy headline.** A good headline gives readers a preview of what your op-ed has to say. Keep in mind that some news outlets will write their own headlines, regardless of what you submit.

- **Be prepared to be edited.** Op-ed submissions are subject to revisions, editing, and fact-checking. Editors usually do NOT need your approval to make revisions or edits to accommodate space limitations, provided they do not change the context of your position. Sources for factual statements should be listed at the bottom of your op-ed to expedite review and placement processes.

- **Include your contact information.** Be sure to include your name, title, organization (as needed), email, and phone number in case the editors want to contact you.

- **Try again.** If your op-ed is rejected, send it elsewhere or publish it on your organization’s own blog.

Two samples of op-eds are available in the appendix. A rational op-ed appeals to reason; an emotional op-ed appeals to the heart. For example, you could ask a passionate principal or a pediatrician to sign an op-ed on how teaching healthy eating habits at a young age impacts preferences and habits that can last a lifetime; this would be considered a rational op-ed. On the other hand, you could ask a local mother to write about her concern for her child’s health and the unhealthy marketing her child is exposed to in schools; this would be an emotional op-ed.
Key Takeaways

- Choose your signer carefully. Having a local leader’s signature on your op-ed can help increase its chance of being published.
- Be brief and to the point. Five hundred words is a good target.
- Op-eds can be either rational or emotional, depending on the story you want to tell.
Mobilize: Meeting with Legislators

Some advocates may be willing to visit elected officials. Whether you meet with representatives in local home offices or take a trip to the state capitol, you can have a strong impact when you can look legislators in the eye and answer their questions about the problem of unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools, as well as proposed solutions. Decision makers want to know what is important to their constituents, so when your representative is available, take advantage of that time by scheduling an in-person meeting.

What follow are some tips to make the most of your meetings.

Save the Date

Making an appointment is easy—simply call your legislators and talk to the office’s scheduler. Here are a few things to keep in mind.

- Be flexible with the date and time. Legislators have busy schedules and meetings usually last 15 to 45 minutes.
- You may end up meeting with a staffer rather than a legislator. Many legislators rely heavily on staff to keep them informed and make decisions about issues.
- Choose one or two issues to discuss so you can talk about them comprehensively, even in a short amount of time.
- Bring a colleague or an advocate (e.g. a constituent who would benefit from the change in that community—such as a principal or parent) who can also offer their insight on the issue. Be cognizant that bringing an advocate to demonstrate diversity can come across as a token appearance. Be sure to have a strong role for each person engaged in the meeting.
- Research your representative’s stance and voting history on the issues you plan to discuss, as well as opposing viewpoints, to help frame your talking points.

Essentials for Success

Nervous about how the conversation will go or what to say? Take these essentials to the meeting to help it run smoothly.

- A pen or pencil to take notes during your meeting.
- A business card to leave with your representative.
- Laptops or tablets for sharing photos of specific marketing tactics deployed in your district, or a camera so you can take a picture with your legislator while you are visiting his or her office.
- A customized version of the decision maker fact sheet in this toolkit.
- A clear “ask” for the meeting—for instance, a site visit, newspaper column, or op-ed—to move the issue forward.
  - Each of these asks could be a non-lobbying request, if your communication with the legislator focused on the general policy goal of support for eliminating unhealthy food and beverage marketing in the school environment laws, and the various ways this could be achieved, rather than discussing specific legislation. Asking the legislator to introduce or support legislation would be lobbying, and expenses related to the visit (e.g., staff time, travel), must be paid for using unrestricted lobbying funds.

Make the Most of Your One-on-One

- Dress professionally when visiting your representative.
• Introduce yourself and talk about your position on the issues you are prepared to discuss.
• Share personal stories and examples to illustrate how the issue affects you and your community.
• Listen to your legislator’s response and be prepared to answer questions. If you cannot answer his or her questions, jot a note down and get back to him or her.
• Even if you do not see eye to eye, always be respectful and polite.

Thank Your Legislator
• In a brief note or email, thank your legislator for taking time out of his or her very busy schedule.
• Remind him or her of the stories you shared, your stance on the issue discussed, and how his or her actions affect people in your community.
• Based on the response to your request or “ask,” determine the appropriate steps for following up with your legislator.

Key Takeaways
• Come prepared for your meeting with fact sheets, business cards, cameras, and—most importantly—a clear “ask.”
• Always be respectful and polite.
• Remember to thank your legislator or the member of his or her staff, and use this opportunity to reiterate your “ask.”
Mobilize: Days at the Capitol

Individual meetings can go a long way toward making a difference with your legislator, but sometimes, there is strength in numbers. If you are looking to combine a media event and a legislator meeting, you may consider hosting a day at the state capitol where advocates hold a rally and then attend scheduled meetings with decision makers.

Here are some things to think about as you plan your day at the capitol.

Choose the Right Day

Planning a day at the capitol takes a lot of time and work—it is a large investment for one short day. Therefore, it is important to make sure you schedule the rally for when it will be most effective.

- Schedule the meeting when your issue is being reviewed by your legislature. If you know when a vote is coming up or a particular committee is viewing the bill, law makers may be more focused on your issue. By talking to them at this point, you can grab their attention and remind them why this issue matters to you. If you talk about the legislation with a law maker and reflect a view on the bill, it will be lobbying.
  - If you choose to express a view on specific legislation in this type of meeting, make sure you have ample unrestricted dollars to cover the costs of both planning and hosting such an event. These activities will be lobbying expenses, because they involve communicating directly with legislators about your group’s view on specific legislation.

- The legislative calendar lends itself to slightly different opportunities for meetings. Try to attend at a time when things are slower at the capitol, not at the start of a new legislative session, so that you may secure more quality face-to-face time with your legislator. If there is an opportunity to connect your visit to an awareness day (e.g., National Nutrition Month, National Healthy Schools Day), this could lend emphasis to your visit.
  - If you focus your message more generally on creating a healthier school environment for kids, it may be possible to use non-lobbying funds for this activity. When using non-lobbying funds, stick to educating legislators about the widespread presence of unhealthy food marketing in schools, its impact on children’s diets and health, and how it undermines parents’ and schools’ efforts to feed children healthfully. You can secure legislators’ general backing for your issue, obtain support for non-legislative projects like healthy food or non-food school fundraisers, or request their support for a particular grant application to support these items. Alternatively, if you want to use your visit to influence legislators to introduce or support specific school food marketing legislation or appropriations to school district budgets, you must use lobbying dollars to pay for these activities.
  - During your day at the capitol, consider planning an activity or event that will attract the attention of the media.

Invite the Right People

When you schedule these types of events, remember that legislators and their staff want to hear from constituents and people with direct experience with the issues at hand. It is important to take advocates who have children who are exposed to unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools or experts who have a deep understanding of the influence food and beverage marketing has in the school environment.
And do not forget to take people who can talk about the positive fiscal impact, perhaps a school superintendent or principal who has voluntarily made these changes without negative financial consequences, or a business owner who can speak to the economic implications of childhood obesity. These can be key issues when it comes to health care, especially in under-resourced communities.

If you have existing relationships with your advocates, try to choose those who can effectively tell engaging stories that reflect diverse perspectives.

If you plan to include youth in your day at the capitol, be sure to have signed parental permission slips and chaperones. Consult legal counsel if you need assistance developing this plan.

Help Advocates Attend
- If you have the resources, make plans to help your advocates get to the capitol, especially those with financial limitations. Consider offering gas money or assistance in paying for plane tickets. An investment to get the right people involved can help ensure a successful visit. If the capitol is within reasonable driving distance, identify who can drive and who would like or need to carpool with others.
  - Keep in mind, however, that if you are organizing a lobbying event, the travel costs also must be paid for using lobbying funds.
- If overnight travel is necessary, settle on a hotel, and send out the booking information well in advance of the rally so people can get the least expensive rates (this may be another opportunity to help individuals with the costs, if you are able). Always ask if the hotel has group-discount rates.
- Make sure your accommodations are pleasant and have sufficient space for group training meetings. They should also not be too far from the capitol. Consider visiting the hotel in advance to make sure it is suitable for your advocates. Remember, you want people coming back next year, and comfort—even modest comfort—is important.
- Ask advocates if they have any barriers to participating, such as transportation or child care, and brainstorm ways to help overcome these challenges to ensure full participation.
- Keep in mind, however, that if you are organizing a lobbying event, the travel costs also must be paid for using lobbying funds.

Create a Schedule
Plan a clear itinerary that you distribute to advocates when they arrive; you can even place it in their hotel rooms with a welcome gift bag. An itinerary will communicate that this trip is important, purposeful, and they are going to get something out of it. On the itinerary, note the key message for advocates, emphasize what the common “ask” is, and outline next steps for follow-up. Schedule time at the end of the day to receive immediate feedback and debrief on key conversations.

Build Time for Fun
Beyond meeting with their decision makers, this is an excellent time for advocates to connect with one another. Connected advocates are often more committed and inspired to support the issue at hand. Although your advocates are connecting online, they may have few opportunities to connect in person and learn from each other. Make sure to schedule intentional times for this to happen in the form of meetings and fun outings.
Create a Leave-Behind
Arm your advocates with tools that will help further drive the point home to decision makers. These could be the decision maker fact sheet in this toolkit or something else, such as a petition from advocates in their community or a symbol of the need to eliminate unhealthy food and beverage marketing from schools and buses in their state—like an apple, the traditional symbol of health in schools. If your visit is a lobbying visit, materials you create specifically for the visit are likely to be considered lobbying materials; developing and printing the materials and must be paid for with lobbying dollars. Before creating your leave-behind, check your state’s gift restrictions to confirm you are in compliance.

Follow Up with Successes
After the day at the capitol, follow up with advocates about the meetings, reporting any successful interactions or resulting legislative movement. The important thing here is to let advocates know their efforts were worth it, so they will continue to be active for your cause.

Key Takeaways
• Look at the legislative calendar and pick a day that makes sense for your visit.
• Think carefully about who should be in the room, and make sure to invite people with direct experience about the issue at hand.
• Do what you can to make the process of traveling to the capitol as easy as possible for your advocates.
Appendix

Please note: The materials provided in the following pages are meant to be general examples for you to learn from as you create your own pieces. For each tactic, please refer to the Key Messages in the following pages, and craft your messages according to the specific policies most applicable to your community.
Key Messages: Pursuing Solutions to End Childhood Obesity

In the introduction of this toolkit, we outlined the policy objectives related to food and beverage marketing in schools and on buses. Take some time before starting your campaign to map out the specific objectives that are right for your community, according to the policies outlined.

After you have determined which policies and improvements make the most sense for your organization to pursue, it is important to fold those solutions into all external communications you produce to establish a consistent voice across all outreach.

Because you speak to different audiences at different times, the following are suggestions on how to speak about marketing in schools and why it is important to speak to various audiences. Meanwhile, you may advocate for different solutions at different times, so we have bundled potential messaging for each policy lever together here. You can then use these messages in the various communications templates—including op-eds, action alerts, and blog posts—that follow.

Overarching message for protecting children from marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools and on buses: Don’t sell us short

The following is your “go-to” messaging, or your “elevator pitch,” for speaking in your community about unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools. Use it to succinctly communicate your mission with clarity.

Sound bite

The below is your “go-to” messaging or “elevator pitch” for speaking in your community about marketing in schools. Use it to succinctly communicate your mission with clarity.

Sample sound bite: Allowing companies to market unhealthy foods and beverages in schools undermines nutrition education, parents’ efforts to feed children well, schools’ efforts to provide healthier meals and snacks, and children’s health. We sell our kids short when we permit unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools.

Key message

The key message is the center of your campaign. It encompasses the issue you are working to resolve and whom you are enlisting to help you achieve that resolution.

Sample key message: Parents and schools are working hard to cultivate healthy life-long eating habits in children. It’s not right that companies are still allowed to undermine these efforts by marketing unhealthy foods and beverages in our schools. It is time for legislators, teachers, parents, and students to tell food companies: You can no longer sell our kids short by marketing unhealthy foods and beverages in schools.

Visualizing impact

At the heart of our campaigns, we want our supporters to be able to visualize the end result: a community that has been improved by their efforts. That’s what the “visualizing impact” will help them do.
Sample visualizing impact: Students learn not only from teachers but also from what they see in school hallways, on buses, and in classrooms. Food and beverage marketing in school should promote healthy choices.

Audience matters: How to message to different audiences
For each of the policy objectives outlined in the beginning of this toolkit, there is a corresponding audience that should be targeted by your efforts. The following descriptions outline why and how each audience can be involved in your campaign. Keeping these perspectives in mind as you communicate will help you craft language that will most resonate with your audience.

Decision makers
Why: Children are the future leaders of our communities, and we should not let the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages undermine parents’ and schools’ efforts to feed children healthfully. Decision makers should work with parents and schools to ensure the health of our kids is not sold short by marketers.
How: Decision makers can adopt policies that eliminate the marketing of unhealthy foods in schools and on buses so children are not exposed to unhealthy messages.

School boards
Why: When kids go to school, it is not just the teachers who influence students. Unhealthy food and beverage marketing on signs, posters, scoreboards, sports uniforms, buses, and coupons negatively shapes children’s food preferences, diets, and health.
How: School boards can support children’s health and parents’ efforts by removing unhealthy food and beverage marketing from schools and buses.

Parents
Why: Parents efforts are undermined by companies that market unhealthy products to their kids at school.
How: Parents can work with the decision makers in their communities and their children’s schools to eliminate marketing that promotes unhealthy foods and beverages.

Kids
Why: Kids are being sold short by food companies that aggressively market unhealthy foods and beverages to them at school.
How: Students can work with their teachers and principals to identify unhealthy food and beverage marketing tactics at school and point them out to their friends, parents, and teachers.

Specific policies: Sample messaging
The following paragraphs are meant to guide you as you begin to write your own content to help you achieve your policy objectives. While every group will have different policy objectives, these are strong examples of how you should consider messaging each level of the inverted pyramid shared at the beginning of this toolkit.

Each example follows the same basic structure, which has proven effective in communicating campaign objectives. The structure is as follows.

1. Context for conflict—establishes an understanding of how things should be.
2. **Conflict**—describes the conflict; things are not as they should be.

3. **Resolution**—instructs the corresponding audience in how they can resolve the conflict.

**Messaging to decision makers: Elimination of marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools and on buses through policy**

When we send our children to school, we expect them to learn in an environment that not only supports their education, but is safe and supports their health and wellbeing. Schools have stepped up to the plate by making school meals and snacks healthier. Nutrition education and food marketing in schools should reinforce those efforts and help kids develop healthy eating habits.

But in [STATE], that is not always the case. Companies market unhealthy foods and beverages to students through posters and signs, sports uniforms and scoreboards, vending machine exteriors, advertisements on buses, sponsorships, and incentive programs that provide food or coupons as a reward. Parents are not able to guide their children’s food choices while they are in school. Food marketing influences children’s food preferences, purchase requests, diets, and overall health.

Given today’s high rates of childhood obesity and related health conditions, it is time for our community to make sure our children’s health is protected by enacting polices that restrict the marketing and advertising of unhealthy foods and beverages in our schools and on buses. Let us make sure we are sending our kids the right messages no matter where they are.

**Messaging to school districts: Voluntary elimination of marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages by school districts**

Every day, schools work to provide an environment that supports the development of children’s minds and bodies. From math class to school lunch, families trust that their children are learning and playing in a safe, healthy environment.

Yet, our schools are filled with marketing that promotes unhealthy foods and beverages, which teach our children the very opposite of what they should learn in school. It is time to make sure school marketing supports the health of students.

*Please note:* When encouraging your school districts to address marketing in schools, consider the following.

**Schools may not realize that unhealthy food marketing is undermining their school food environment:** Food marketing has become so ubiquitous that many parents, teachers, and school officials may not be aware of its presence in schools or its impact on children’s diets and health. Work with school districts to identify the different types of marketing approaches companies are using to reach kids in their schools, such as vending machine exteriors, cafeteria posters, sports scoreboards, school buses, coupon programs, sponsorships, and school sports uniforms. Identifying the prevalence of marketing is a critical first step.

**Schools may not be aware of healthier marketing alternatives:** Make sure to emphasize to school boards, parents, principals, and teachers that removing unhealthy marketing does not mean removing all marketing. In many schools, food marketing funds activities and facilities for students. Suggest working with companies to stop marketing unhealthy foods and beverages and promote their healthy food and beverage options instead. For example, if a beverage
company is marketing at your school, ask them to advertise their healthy drink options, like water, instead of soda pop.

**Messaging to parents and community groups: Parents and community groups work with schools to change what is being marketed**

When you send your children to school, you expect them to learn in an environment that not only promotes learning, but one that is safe and supports their health and wellbeing. Schools have stepped up to the plate by making school meals and snacks healthier. Nutrition education and food marketing in schools should reinforce those efforts and support healthy eating habits.

But in [STATE], that is not always the case. Companies market unhealthy foods and beverages to students through posters and signs, sports uniforms and scoreboards, vending machine exteriors, advertisements on buses, sponsorships, and incentive programs that provide food or coupons as a reward. This marketing undermines your efforts to feed your children healthfully and cultivate lifelong healthy eating habits.

It is time to stop food and beverage companies from selling our children short. You can get involved by speaking up at your PTA/PTO meeting or teaming up with other community organizations to ask your school officials to adopt a policy that ends marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages.

**Family level**

Parents know from experience that food marketing works. Cartoon characters on cereal boxes and toy giveaways with restaurant children’s meals appeal to children and influence which foods they ask for and are willing to eat.

For many children, it is difficult to recognize the marketing of unhealthy products. That is what makes them such a good target audience! Parents can try to teach their children about what food marketing is, why companies do it, and how it affects their health. While you teach them, encourage the purchase of healthy options over unhealthy options.

**Individual level (students)**

Believe it or not, you are exposed to a ton of food marketing every day. Food and beverage companies use advertisements and other marketing approaches to encourage you to eat and drink their products. Sometimes those advertisements are for foods that are good for you, like cartoon characters on baby carrots or ads for some yogurts. But too much of the time, advertisements tell you that unhealthy foods, like pizza and hamburgers, will make you happy and cool. This even happens at school and on school buses.

Tell marketers: “Don’t sell us short!” Ask your principal and other school officials to get the junk food marketing out of your school. Work with fellow students to promote healthy options to your friends. Get involved in your school’s efforts to improve their lunches and snacks. Help mount a campaign to show that healthy options are not only important for kids’ health and wellbeing, but can taste great.
Lobbying vs. Non-Lobbying Checklist

The following questions may help you determine whether your efforts might be considered lobbying under the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) rules and, therefore, must be paid for with separate lobbying-approved funding. Each organization’s lobbying requirements (and the registration rules that may apply to them) may be slightly different, so make sure you consult your legal counsel to share your plans and address any questions. In general, the IRS lobbying rules apply to communications with members of Congress, state legislators, city council members, and potentially other elected officials and their staff. In some cases, communication with the general public is considered lobbying too.

✓ Will you be communicating directly with a legislator—or to legislative branch staff, executive branch officials, or any staff involved in formulating particular legislation?

   Note: Communicating with school boards and zoning boards does not qualify as lobbying.

✓ If so, will your communications reflect a point of view on specific legislation, such as the following?
   • Bills or ballot measures that have been introduced.
   • Specific legislative proposals not yet introduced (e.g., “West Virginia should adopt Maine’s law prohibiting advertisements for unhealthy foods and beverages in schools”).
   • Budget bills

      Think strategically: If you are not conveying a viewpoint on specific legislation, your communications with public officials or their staff are not lobbying. For example, “Please help us create a healthier environment for kids to learn. Support an end to unhealthy food and beverage marketing on school property.”

✓ Will you be communicating to the general public about a view on a particular ballot measure or piece of legislation—through op-eds, social media, email newsletters, advertisements, speeches, etc.?

✓ If so, will your communications to the general public include a call-to-action, such as the following?
   • Asking the public to contact a legislator.
   • Identifying someone’s legislative representative.
   • Providing contact information for a legislator.
   • Providing a vehicle for contacting a legislator (e.g., form email, petition).
   • Identifying a legislator’s position on legislation or identifying the legislator as sitting on the voting committee

      Think strategically: In most circumstances, if communications to the general public do not include a call-to-action, they are not lobbying unless the legislation discussed is a ballot measure. For example, if you said, “Learn more about the consequences of unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools today,” the communication will not be lobbying.
Sample Emotional Op-Ed

Each morning before my kids go to school, I serve them a healthy breakfast to start their day off right. It’s usually oatmeal or eggs, and there’s always a piece of fruit. Once they catch the bus and go to school, I expect my children’s school to be an environment that not only supports learning, but also health and wellness. I expect the food, as well as any food messages, at school to reinforce the healthy eating habits I’m teaching my kids at home.

Unfortunately, my efforts and those of other parents are being undermined by the junk food marketing kids see during the school day—from the soda pop banner ad on the bus to the branded candy fundraisers organized by the soccer team. Our kids deserve better.

Like many parents, I expect schools to teach more than math and writing. Schools help students learn life skills. I want my kids’ school to teach healthy eating that helps my children avoid heart disease, diabetes, and other health problems later in life. I expect it to provide an environment where the healthy habits I teach my children at home are reinforced—not undermined.

Unfortunately, children are getting mixed messages in schools. On everything from the bus that picks them up in the morning to the materials they read in class, unhealthy food advertisements tempt my children with soda pop, doughnuts, pizza, and other junk food, undermining the lessons I taught them just hours earlier. Sometimes, I feel I’m fighting a losing battle.

But lately, I’ve been hearing about schools around our country that are taking a different approach; they’re getting rid of the junk food marketing and working with schools and companies to replace unhealthy food marketing with healthier options. If my children’s school did the same, I know it would help.

That’s why I’m urging our school district to stop selling our kids short. By getting companies to market only healthier foods and beverages in school, we can eliminate unhealthy messages that undermine children’s health and parents’ efforts without sacrificing much-needed funds for our schools. I read that more than 80% of schools get no income from the marketing of foods and beverages that do not meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards, and nearly 90% of school officials note that school programs and activities would not be reduced if advertisements of unhealthy food ceased.

We can protect our kids from today’s greatest public health woes, like obesity and diabetes. I encourage other parents and community members to join me.

Whether a parent or not, we can all agree on the importance of helping the next generation lead healthy lives. Eliminating the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in our community’s schools and on buses is a step in the right direction. Join me in urging our local leaders to remove the marketing of junk food and unhealthy drinks from our kids’ schools, so we can send our children the right message about eating healthfully and living active lives.
Note: In the last paragraph, we chose language that made this a non-lobbying communication. By referring to “local leaders” instead of “legislators,” the request to “join me in urging our local leaders…” is not a “call-to-action” under the definition of grassroots lobbying (see Lobbying vs. Non-Lobbying Checklist), because you are not urging readers to contact their legislator. Readers could contact a legislator, or they might contact other local leaders, such as school board members. Further, by using the general phrase “remove marketing of junk food and unhealthy drinks from our kids’ schools,” rather than referring to a specific legislative proposal, we eliminate an additional prong of the definition of grassroots lobbying—the requirement that it refer to specific legislation. If a legislative vote on a proposal to remove marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages from schools was imminent, you could make a strategic decision to spend lobbying funds on an op-ed that explicitly urges readers to contact their legislators to ask them to vote for the bill. Alternatively, you could save lobbying dollars by writing an op-ed like the above: one that advocates for policy without including a legislative call-to-action.
Sample Rational Op-Ed

No matter where in the United States we live, we all expect the same basic things from our kids’ schools—dedicated teachers, well-maintained facilities, and safe places for students to learn. One thing we don’t expect is companies targeting our kids with marketing and advertising promoting junk food and sugary drinks. And, unfortunately, in schools from coast to coast, that’s exactly what students are experiencing.

While there are a number of contributors to children’s poor diets and the high rates of childhood obesity, food marketing is a significant one. Since 1980, the number of overweight and obese children has tripled—now nearly one in three kids is heavy enough to put their health at risk. Studies show that food marketing works. It influences children’s food choices and shapes their future preferences for unhealthy foods.

Food and beverage companies spend $150 million per year marketing their products to children in schools. And the majority of the foods and beverages marketed in schools is unhealthy. Kids see the brands, logos, and spokes characters for pizza restaurants, candy companies, and soda pop on school walls, athletic fields, and even buses.

Things don’t have to be this way. By working together, we can ask food and beverage companies not to sell our kids short by marketing junk food and sugary drinks to them. We can ask schools to join with us and take a stand against junk food—and for healthy choices.

Parents across the country agree that unhealthy food marketing is harmful. According to a 2012 report from the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity, the majority of parents surveyed supported policies to limit food marketing to kids. They were as concerned about junk food marketing as they were about alcohol and tobacco advertising in the media.

Fortunately, we can eliminate unhealthy messages that undermine children’s health and parents’ efforts without sacrificing much-needed funds for our schools. More than 80% of schools get no income from the marketing of foods and beverages that do not meet the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards, and nearly 90% of school officials report that school programs and activities would not be reduced if advertisements of unhealthy food ceased.

Our kids deserve to learn in environments that support their health and wellness. And parents deserve to have companies and schools that work with them, rather than against them, in their efforts to feed their children well. Tell our local leaders to eliminate the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in our schools. When it comes to our kids, we won’t let junk food marketers sell us short. Visit [YOUR WEBSITE URL] to learn more and get involved.

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Note: In the last paragraph, we chose language that made this a non-lobbying communication. By referring to “local leaders” instead of “legislators,” the request to “tell our local leaders to eliminate marketing...” is not a “call-to-action” under the definition of grassroots lobbying (see Lobbying vs. Non-Lobbying Checklist), because you are not urging readers to contact their legislator. Readers might contact a legislator, or they could contact other local leaders, such as school board members. Further, by using the general phrase “eliminate the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in our schools,” rather than referring to a specific legislative proposal, we eliminate an additional prong of the definition of grassroots lobbying—the requirement that it refer to specific legislation. If a legislative vote on a proposal to remove marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages from schools was imminent, you could make a strategic decision to spend lobbying funds on an op-ed that explicitly urged readers to contact their legislators to ask them to vote for the bill. Alternatively, you could save lobbying dollars by writing an op-ed like the above: one that advocates for policy without including a legislative call-to-action.
Action Alerts
When reaching out to your advocates about a new issue area or campaign, your first message should be educational. Instead of asking people to get involved right away, spend some time sharing the facts. By laying this groundwork, you will ensure that people understand your campaign—and people who “get” your goals are more likely to take specific actions later, like signing petitions or meeting with decision makers. Please note: These materials should be translated into the languages that are relevant in your community.

Issue Introduction

Dear [NAME],

Teaching children healthy eating habits is critical to their long-term health. Parents strive to instill healthy habits at home, and schools have worked hard to improve the nutritional quality of school meals, snacks, and beverages sold in schools. Those efforts shouldn’t be undermined by unhealthy food marketing directed at children in schools.

Food marketing affects children’s food choices, and unfortunately, the majority of foods and beverages marketed to children in schools are unhealthy. Companies market unhealthy foods and beverages in schools on posters and signs, vending machine exteriors, advertisements on buses, and through the use of logos, brand names, and spokes characters on educational materials, sports uniforms, scoreboards, incentive programs, sponsorships, and coupons.

[YOUR ORGANIZATION] is working hard to protect our children from these negative influences by eliminating unhealthy food and beverage marketing in our schools, but it’s clear that we can’t do this alone.

Click here to learn more about how your efforts could help [STATE] kids: [LINK TO INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES].

With in-school junk food marketing everywhere from the classrooms to screensavers to sports jerseys, kids’ food preferences are being shaped to prefer the unhealthy foods marketed to them every day in [STATE]’s schools. There’s so much more we can do to protect our children from these unhealthy influences, and you can be a part of it. Learn how today at [LINK TO INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES AND SIGNUP FORM].

Thank you,
[ORGANIZATION LEADER OR MAIN POINT OF CONTACT]

Contact Your Legislator Action Alert
To remove in-school marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in your state, your elected officials need to know this issue is important to their constituents. The following message asks supporters to send letters to their representatives encouraging them to restrict the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools and on buses.
Dear [NAME],

Many of us have seen examples of unhealthy food marketing in [STATE]’s schools: soda pop advertised on the scoreboards of football fields and pizza banners plastered to the sides of buses. We even see it in the coupons given to students as rewards for reading books.

Schools are supposed to be safe places. They should not only teach math and science, but also health and wellness. Allowing companies to market junk food to kids in schools seems like a big contradiction to us. We plan to do something about it, but we need your help.

**Stand with us, and tell our state legislators you support the elimination of unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and on buses in [STATE].**

Protecting [STATE]’s children from these marketing tactics is key to teaching them healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime and will keep companies from undermining parents’ best efforts to feed their children well. Help do your part by asking your state legislator to keep our schools free of marketing for unhealthy food and drinks. Click here to take action today! [REPEAT LINK TO ACTION]

Thank you,

[ORGANIZATION LEADER OR MAIN POINT OF CONTACT]

Note: This alert is not lobbying, because it does not refer to a specific legislative proposal. Under the definition of grassroots lobbying (see Lobbying vs. Non-Lobbying Checklist), a public communication is lobbying only if it refers to a specific legislative proposal. If legislation restricting unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and on buses is pending in the legislature, the alert likely would be grassroots lobbying if it is clear the alert refers to that legislation. Alternatively, if an organization had lobbying funds to spend on an action alert, it could replace the second to last paragraph with the following language, which is clearly grassroots lobbying (as it is a public communication that refers to specific legislation and includes a call-to-action):

**Stand with us, and tell your legislator to support [BILL NAME], which will help eliminate unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and on buses. [INSERT LINK TO ACTION]**

**Subject Lines**
The subject line of your email can help catch your supporters’ attention and encourage them to open your email. Here are some suggested subject lines to try with your audience:

- Please help us create a healthier school environment for kids
- What are food companies teaching our kids in schools?
- How you can help reduce childhood obesity
- Take action: Eliminate junk food marketing from schools
- Update on childhood obesity
Social Media Sample Messaging

The following sample messaging can help you spread the word about your campaign on Facebook and Twitter. Some examples are considered non-lobbying messages; however, others may fall under the definition of lobbying and will need to be paid for out of your lobbying funds. Be sure to include appropriate and useful links for readers to learn more or get involved.

The examples below assume the links in the tweets and Facebook postings bring users to a web page that provides information about the issue, but does not include a vehicle for users to contact their legislators. If a landing page urges users to contact their legislators about specific legislation, then a tweet or post that drives users to that landing page may itself be a lobbying communication. Due to the low cost of posting a message on social media, many organizations will choose to use their lobbying funds on social media messages that encourage supporters to contact legislators about legislation.

Twitter

Non-Lobbying Messages

- Help change the school environment for good in [STATE ABBREVIATION]! End unhealthy food marketing in schools: [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION] #donsellusshort
- RT if you agree: Marketing unhealthy foods and beverages to kids in schools is wrong! Here’s why: [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION] #donsellusshort
- Unhealthy food marketing in schools undermines nutrition education & kids’ health. Help us stop it: [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION] #donsellusshort
- It’s important to help kids develop healthy eating habits. But junk food marketing undermines that. [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION] #donsellusshort
- Spread the word! Talk w/ family, friends & schools about ending unhealthy food marketing in schools. [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION] #donsellusshort
- #donsellusshort is about parents & kids taking a stand against unhealthy food marketing in schools! Learn more: [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]
- Marketing unhealthy food in schools sells children short of their potential. Here’s why: [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION] #donsellusshort
- Great things are happening at @[SCHOOL NAME] as they work to end junk food marketing to kids. Read here: [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]
- Schools can get rid of junk food marketing without losing much-needed funds. bit.ly/1solsOt
- Nearly 90% of school officials report that school programs and activities would not be reduced if advertisements of unhealthy food ceased. bit.ly/1solsOt

Lobbying Messages

The following tweets may be considered lobbying messages if they’re sent while the legislature is considering a bill related to the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages on school property, or if the communication refers to a specific law or program from another state. Including a legislator’s Twitter handle in a tweet may cause the IRS to view the tweet as direct communication to that legislator, rather than as a public communication. This means a tweet that includes a legislator’s handle should be treated as a lobbying cost (albeit a very small cost) if it refers to specific legislation—even if there’s no call-to-action.
Don’t sell us short™

- [@LAWMAKER’S TWITTER HANDLE], please support policies that end unhealthy food marketing in our children’s schools. [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION] #donsellusshort
- [@LAWMAKER’S TWITTER HANDLE], help children develop healthy eating habits. End marketing of unhealthy foods in schools. [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION] #donsellusshort
- [@LAWMAKER’S TWITTER HANDLE], unhealthy food marketing sells our kids short of their potential. Help end unhealthy food ads in schools! #donsellusshort

Facebook (include great photos when you use posts below)

Non-Lobbying Messages
- Our children deserve to learn in an environment free from harmful influences, including unhealthy food and beverage marketing at school and on buses. Unhealthy food and drink marketing sells our kids short: [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]
- Walk into a school in your community and take a look around. Take note of unhealthy food marketing on posters, signs, and in the curriculum. Act now and change that! [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]
- DYK that 60% of parents support policies to get junk food marketing out of schools? Do you agree? If so, learn how to help at [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]
- Feeding children healthfully depends not only on what we do as parents, but also on the world around us. Food companies that market to kids should stop unhealthy food marketing toward children in schools. Join me in supporting healthy changes: [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]
- Nearly one in three children in America is overweight. Unhealthy food marketing in schools contributes by shaping kids’ food preferences, diets, and health. Let’s stand together and stop this: [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]
- Parents try to teach kids to eat healthy, but they’re up against companies spending $150 million a year in schools to convince their kids otherwise. Let’s get junk food marketing out of [STATE]’s schools. Take action: [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]
- Schools can get rid of junk food marketing without losing much-needed funds. Nearly 90% of school officials report that school programs and activities would not be reduced if advertisements of unhealthy food ceased. bit.ly/1solSoT
- Unhealthy food marketing in schools and on buses is selling our kids short of their potential and selling parents short by undermining their efforts to teach healthy habits at home. Our children are worth more than that! Take action with me: [LINK TO ORGANIZATION WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION TO TAKE ACTION]

Lobbying Messages
The following Facebook posts are considered lobbying messages if they are sent while the legislature is considering a bill related to unhealthy food and beverage marketing in the school environment, or if the communication refers to a specific law or program from another state. Tagging a legislator in a post may cause the IRS to view the post as direct communication to that legislator, rather than as a public communication. This means a post that includes a legislator’s handle should be treated as a lobbying cost (albeit a very small cost) if it refers to specific legislation—even if there’s no call-to-action.
• Our kids deserve safe places to learn and play. So why do we let companies advertise unhealthy foods and beverages at school? Tell [LAWMAKER’S NAME] we need to stop unhealthy food marketing in schools and on buses. [LINK TO WEBSITE WITH MORE INFORMATION]
• Companies spend millions upon millions of dollars each year targeting our children with unhealthy food advertisements in school and on school buses. [LAWMAKER’S NAME], we need your help to end this unhealthy influence and teach kids to eat healthy, wholesome foods.
• Children are the most precious resource we have for the future. But harmful influences like unhealthy food marketing in schools puts children’s health at risk. Contact [LAWMAKER’S NAME] and ask them to help us put a stop to it. [LINK TO WEBSITE WITH MORE INFORMATION]
Newsletter Blurbs

Newsletters can keep your advocates engaged and up-to-date about the issues that matter to your organization. If you currently send out a newsletter on a regular basis, use it as a platform to help promote your efforts to end marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools and on buses.

Following are two sample newsletter blurbs to get you going. They should serve as teasers for the more detailed information about the potential consequences of unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools located on your website. Depending on the familiarity of your audience with this topic, you may want to provide some basic education on the issue.

Do you know just how much unhealthy marketing is in [STATE] schools? It’s a bigger problem than you think! (informational)

Unhealthy food and beverage marketing can be found in schools all across [STATE]. Food companies market unhealthy foods and beverages to kids through posters and signs, textbook covers, coupons, label redemption programs, sponsorships, and computer screensavers. This marketing undermines other school efforts to serve healthier school lunches and snacks by sending mixed messages to kids.

This practice must stop. Food and beverage companies want access to schools to attract new customers and build lifelong brand loyalty. In 2009, companies spent $150 million marketing food and beverage products in school. The majority of these products were of poor nutritional quality.

Food marketing works—it influences children’s food choices, diets, and health. Helping children develop healthy food preferences and eating habits is crucial to help them avoid diet-related diseases such as diabetes, cancer, and heart disease.

Schools can get rid of junk food marketing without losing much-needed funds. Nearly 90% of school officials report that school programs and activities would not be reduced if advertisements of unhealthy food ceased.

As a community, we should work together to create a healthy school environment for our children that is free of unhealthy food marketing.

Learn more about the consequences of unhealthy food marketing in schools and on buses today [LINK TO CORRESPONDING WEBSITE].

Tell local leaders: No more unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools (advocacy)

Nearly one in three American children is overweight or obese, putting them at risk for diseases such as diabetes, cancer, and heart disease. Food marketing is one of many factors that contribute to children’s poor diets and the high rates of childhood obesity. Companies spent $150 million in 2009 marketing mostly unhealthy foods and beverages in schools. Food companies market on everything from textbook covers to computer screensavers.
Marketing unhealthy foods and beverages in schools and on school buses sells children short of their potential to live long, healthy lives. It also undermines parents’ ability to instill healthy eating habits in their kids and schools’ efforts to serve and sell healthier food. Why do we continue to allow this to happen?

Let’s help children succeed academically and physically by encouraging healthy food choices that nourish them in every way. **Tell our local leaders to support school environments free of unhealthy food and beverage marketing.** [LINK TO CORRESPONDING WEBSITE]

Removing unhealthy food marketing will help support better food choices and eating habits that can last a lifetime. **Learn more about the consequences of unhealthy food marketing in schools** [LINK TO CORRESPONDING WEBSITE] and how you can help our community’s children develop healthy eating habits.

Note: This blurb would be non-lobbying because it talks about supporting programs generally without referring to any specific legislative proposals. Further, this example refers only to “local leaders,” not to “legislators,” so there is no “call-to-action.”
Sample Blog Post: Letters to the Editor

If your organization has its own blog, customize the following post and use it as part of your campaign. The sample post below asks advocates to write letters to the editor of a local newspaper, but you can substitute any action you would like advocates to take.

FEATURED ACTION: Help stop junk food marketing in schools by submitting a letter to the editor

$150 million is a lot of money; in fact, it’s the equivalent of 37 ads during the Super Bowl. It’s also the amount of money food and beverage companies spent in 2009 to market their products in schools.10 While some of these dollars are spent to market healthy products, far too often the products being promoted are of poor nutritional quality.

All those marketing dollars—often for products like pizza, soda pop, and burgers—undermine parents’ and teachers’ efforts to instill healthy habits in kids. They are used in marketing programs that reward kids with branded junk food for achieving in school. And they distract students from learning how to make healthy food choices at school and at home.

At a time when one-third of children are overweight or obese, we need to reinforce healthy eating habits at schools and remove unhealthy food and beverage marketing.11 We need your help to make sure more schools in [STATE] don’t let food and drink companies sell our kids short.

Please help our community get rid of junk food marketing in schools. To get involved, you could:

• Post information about the marketing of unhealthy food choices on your blog, Facebook, or Twitter page, or email your friends and family, and ask them to support this effort.
• Write to your key community leaders and public officials. [LINK TO AN ACTION ALERT]
• Write a letter to the editor (LTE) for your local newspaper—don’t forget about multicultural media in your community! Newspapers can reach thousands of people—and so your LTE could help cultivate new supporters of healthy food and beverage marketing in [STATE].

If you would like to draft an LTE, here are a few tips to keep in mind:

• Visit your local newspaper’s website to learn how to submit your LTE. If necessary, give your editor a call, and ask how he or she prefers to receive letters.
• Leave your name and contact information (including your phone number) when you submit your letter. The newspaper will need to contact you before publication to verify you truly submitted the letter.
• LTEs should be short. Try to keep your message to less than 100 words. Some newspapers may have specific length guidelines.
• Share your story! If you have a story about how marketing influences children’s food preferences and, in turn, what they eat, consider sharing it so you can make a personal connection from the

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start. A before-and-after story of a community that has made this change would be a powerful message.

- Make sure you include the purpose of your LTE: To get public officials and other community leaders to work to limit unhealthy food marketing in schools.
- Back up your intent with facts about childhood obesity and how kids are targeted by marketers pushing unhealthy foods and beverages in school.
- Make sure to direct readers to [YOUR WEBSITE URL] so they can learn how to get involved.
List of Potential Bus and In-School Marketing Mediums

Marketing has become so pervasive in our school environment that we do not always notice its presence. Yet, it is important to be able to identify marketing so that you can accurately speak to the specific instances of marketing you are trying to eliminate through your campaign.

To help you identify marketing in schools, here is a list of potential types of marketing you might see, according to an expert panel convened by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Healthy Eating Research program.

School marketing includes food and beverage advertising and other marketing, such as the name or depiction of products, brands, logos, trade marks, or spokespersons or characters, on any property or facility owned or leased by the school district or school (such as school buildings, athletic fields, school buses, parking lots, and other facilities) and used at any time for school-related activities, including but not limited to the following:

- Signs, scoreboards, and posters
- Curricula, textbooks, websites promoted for educational purposes, and other educational materials (both printed and electronic)
- Vending machines, food or beverage cups or containers, food display racks, and coolers
- Equipment, uniforms, and school supplies (such as pencils, notebooks, and textbook covers)
- Advertisements in school publications, on school radio stations, on in-school television (such as Channel One), computer screen savers and/or school-sponsored Internet sites (such as Coolmath-games.com), and announcements on the public announcement (PA) system
- Fundraisers and corporate-sponsored programs that encourage students and their families to sell, purchase or consume products and/or provide funds to schools in exchange for consumer purchases of those products, whether or not they take place on school campuses
- Corporate-incentive programs that reward or provide children with free or discounted foods or beverages
- Commercial sponsorship of materials, programs, events, and teams
- Market research activities
- Free samples, taste-tests, and coupons
Shaping Up Fundraising in Schools: Healthy Alternatives

One common marketing technique found in schools is branded fundraisers, such as branded candy bars or doughnuts. If the schools in your community use branded fundraisers to support school programs, you may encounter resistance from school officials, teachers, parents, and students that rely on those funds. While their concerns about their revenue sources are understandable, you should emphasize that many school districts have had success with non-food fundraisers that are easy to implement and profitable. For example, school districts can sell fruit, wrapping paper, or plants, or hold walk-a-thons or fun runs. These alternatives provide revenue for school programs while supporting healthy eating habits and, with some, physical activity in students.

The following fact sheet can be used to assist you as you approach schools about fundraising. Use it to inform your communications or print it as a standalone to share with school officials.

Introduction
Branded product fundraisers, school discount nights at restaurants, and sponsorships often fund school activities, such as uniforms for the soccer team, new band instruments, and field trips. Selling branded candy bars or doughnuts to students, collecting labels from parents to redeem for school supplies, or placing company logos on uniforms or athletic scoreboards in exchange for donating resources to schools are common practices that raise revenue but undermine parental and school efforts to feed students healthfully. Unfortunately, sales of sweet treats and other unhealthy foods have become the default for raising revenues in too many schools. In fact, about 80% of schools nationwide sell foods or beverages for fundraising and, most often, that food includes chocolate, baked goods, and candy. This is especially troubling given the current high rates of childhood obesity.

But there are healthy changes taking hold to campus. Schools across the country are implementing the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s new “Smart Snacks” standards for food and beverages sold in vending machines, à la carte lines, and school stores. Smart Snacks took effect for the 2014-2015 school year and set science-based criteria for limits on calories, fats, and sugars, while encouraging whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. There are no limits on the number of fundraisers that serve foods and beverages that meet the standards, while each state can set its own policy on the number of fundraisers that offer foods and beverages that do not meet the Smart Snacks standards. There are also no limits on non-food fundraising.

Healthy Fundraising Alternatives
Promoting healthy foods and beverages during meal or snack times while allowing unhealthy fundraisers and sponsorships sends students mixed messages. Schools that rely on the revenue from branded fundraisers and contracted with food and beverage companies need not worry because schools can still partner with companies that are willing to market healthy foods and beverages on campus. Branded fundraisers can be successful and fun without undermining children’s health. As your school implements the Smart Snacks standards, here are some healthy fundraising ideas:

• **Swap out unhealthy foods:** Schools can still allow an unlimited number of branded fundraisers from companies as long as the food products offered meet the Smart Snacks requirements.

• **Make it physical:** Hold an activity-based fundraiser, such as a walk-a-thon, 5K, dance, or team-sport tournament. These types of events can raise significant funds while promoting physical activity.*

• **Get creative:** Support schools while supporting the arts by hosting a talent show, craft fair, or art gallery featuring students’ work.*

• **Involve the community:** Solicit donations—including products, services, or event tickets—for a silent auction or raffle drawing. Prizes could include unique experiences such as admission to a concert and vacation packages, or everyday items such as a carwash.

• **Promote healthy food:** Charge admission to a “healthy eating” event featuring a local chef who can provide samples of healthy meals or a registered dietitian who can share simple nutrition tips. Try hosting a friendly “healthy cooking competition” between students.

Parents, schools, and community leaders have a shared responsibility to create school environments that support healthy eating habits. Healthy fundraisers ensure that we don’t sell our kids short.

*Remember:* If you want to serve snacks at the event, go with fruits, vegetables, and water, instead of baked goods, chips, and soda pop. See [http://www.healthymeeting.org](http://www.healthymeeting.org) for tips.
Case Studies
The following case studies spotlight successful initiatives to eliminate unhealthy food and beverage marketing in schools and on buses across the country. They can help serve as models for your own program or provide inspiration for new ways to approach your work.

Maine’s Law Banning Food Ads in Schools
Understanding the Law
By National Policy & Legal Analysis Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity

In many schools, foods and beverages are advertised everywhere—in hallways and cafeterias, in classrooms and athletic facilities, on paper products and scoreboards, and in teaching materials and school publications. Study after study has shown that food and beverage advertising influences children’s food preferences and purchases—and their diets and health.13

In 2007, the Maine legislature passed the first state law prohibiting brand specific advertising of certain unhealthy foods and beverages in schools. To help Maine schools comply with the law, the National Policy and Legal Analysis Network to Prevent Childhood Obesity (NPLAN) has developed this fact sheet.

Background
Since 1985, federal law has prohibited the sale of “Foods of Minimal Nutrition Value” (FMNV) to students during school meal times.14 Federal law also permits states to impose more rigorous regulations.

In 2005, the Maine legislature enacted a law directing the Maine Department of Education (DOE) to adopt rules to establish standards for foods and beverages sold on school property outside of school meal programs.15 (The law stated that the rules would not apply to community events and fundraisers held outside the normal school day.16) Later that year the DOE adopted rules that, with some limited exceptions, prohibited the sale of FMNV at any time on school property.17

16 Id.
17 Maine Admin. Code Ch. 51 § 2 appears to prohibit more than just the sales of FMNV. Section 2 states, in pertinent part: Beginning July 1, 2005, any food or beverage sold at any time on school property of a school participating in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs shall be a planned part of the total food service program of the school and shall include only those items which contribute both to the nutritional needs of children and the development of desirable food habits, and shall not include foods of minimal nutritional value as defined in Section 1 above . . . . (Emphasis added.)
In 2007, the Maine legislature amended the law, prohibiting brand-specific advertising on school grounds for foods that are not allowed to be sold to students (i.e., FMNV). In 2011, the Maine legislature further amended the law to specify that the DOE’s nutrition standards do not apply to foods prepared in culinary arts programs provided by career and technical schools and programs.

To comply with the law, schools need to eliminate all brand-specific advertising of FMNV. To do that, NPLAN encourages schools—with assistance from students, teachers, parents, staff, or community volunteers—to thoroughly survey school facilities and grounds for brand-specific advertising of FMNV. In the event such surveys locate advertising that should not be displayed, administrators should remove the advertising. In addition, administrators should review their contracts with vendors to ensure that the contracts are consistent with state law and that vendors are in full compliance. If a contract contains a provision that violates state law, that provision is unenforceable. Administrators should work with legal counsel to amend the contract. Finally, a school may have obtained, before 2007 (when the law was enacted), a scoreboard or similar large piece of equipment that advertises a brand-specific FMNV. If the school lacks the funds to replace the equipment, the school may simply cover up the existing advertising. NPLAN will be providing more resources to help schools comply with the advertising ban. NPLAN has a wealth of resources to help schools create a healthy nutrition environment. Visit www.nplan.org for more information.

Center for Science in the Public Interest: Healthy School Fundraising Success Stories

No-Bake Bakesale

Mount Airy – Parr’s Ridge PTA, Mount Airy, MD

Let’s face it. For many people, “school fundraising” is synonymous with “school bake sale.” However, more and more schools and PTAs are reconsidering whether bake sales are an effective and appropriate way to fundraise. Mount Airy – Parr’s Ridge PTA is one of them. In 2011, instead of asking parents to make, sell, or purchase unhealthy baked goods, the PTA decided to have a “No-Bake Bakesale.” Using clever flyers, letters to parents, and an easy online donation portal, students and PTA members asked parents and community members to support the schools by simply donating the equivalent of what they might have spent buying or making baked goods (or how much they might have spent at the fundraiser). This fundraiser was a huge success, raising nearly $35,000 for programs, supplies, and field trips at the school.

Contact: Twilla Zirkle, rossandtwilla@msn.com

Fruit Sale Success

Windsor High School, Windsor, CO

The highlighted phrases seem to impose a higher standard than simply prohibiting the sales of FMNV, by requiring the foods to contribute to the nutritional needs of children and the development of desirable food habits. It appears, however, that the DOE interprets section 2 as merely prohibiting the sales of FMNV. The Department of Education issued “Frequently Asked Questions and Answers,” with Chapter 51 to “clarify the requirements put forth in the rule.” Available at: www.maine.gov/education/sfs/chapter51.html. The Department’s answers in that document indicate that it it interprets Chapter 51 to prohibit only the sales of FMNV. See, e.g., Answers no. 2, 5.

Every August, the Windsor High School After Prom Committee holds a fruit sale to raise money for the high school’s after-prom party in the spring. While the fundraiser had always been a big hit in the community, 2012 was its biggest year yet. With the help of parent volunteers and members of the school’s Future Farmers of American (FFA) club, the committee organized the sale of nearly 12 tons (960 boxes) of fruit, raising almost $8,000. According to the fruit sales’ chairwoman, the fruit sale is not only important from a fundraising perspective, but it also shows the community that Windsor High School is doing all it can to provide students with safe, fun places to go after prom. Visit [www.whs.weldre4.k12.co.us](http://www.whs.weldre4.k12.co.us) for more information.

Breakfast Cart

**Williston Junior High School, Williston, ND**

Once upon a time, students at Williston Junior High School could purchase candy bars and other sweets from the student council’s “Candy Cart” every morning before class. But a group of parents and nutritionists sought change. They met with the student council and offered suggestions for healthier options. They also allowed the student council members to taste a variety of items, including “Grip n’ Go” milks, 100% juices, and multigrain bars. The students decided to sell the healthy alternatives, and renamed their fundraiser the “breakfast cart.” To increase sales of the new items, the parents provided stickers, flying discs, and pencils as promotional incentives. Sales at the new breakfast cart remained the same as previous sales with the candy cart, and students now have the opportunity to start the school day with more nutritious options.

*Contact: Sue Grundstad, sgumdhu@yahoo.com*
Content Articles
The following articles are examples of media coverage around food and beverage marketing in schools. Read on to learn more about these programs, as well as the types of articles some journalists have written about initiatives to eliminate the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages in schools.

USDA hearing public comment about junk food marketing in schools
Blog.heart.org
April 25, 2014

Kids who meander down the halls of Stonewall Jackson Elementary in Dallas see banners and posters about healthy eating. They get to dig in a garden that produces food they can eat. Their pocket-change goes to fund-raisers that feature “fruit kabobs” and yogurt.

For Principal Michele Hill, these are all signs of healthy food marketing – and part of the larger tide of change, prompted by new federal rules, that has been washing over school systems across the country. It aims to reduce junk food and the marketing that promotes it.

“We need to take care of kids and empower them to make decisions for themselves, as they grow and outside the school environment,” Hill said. “As a school and as parents, we need to give them the tools to make their choices.”

Read more here.

Obesity advocates praise White House’s food marketing proposal
PreventObesity.net
By Elizabeth Brotherton-Bunch
February 27, 2014

Public health and childhood obesity advocates offered nearly universal positive feedback on proposed guidelines unveiled at the White House on Tuesday by First Lady Michelle Obama and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that would limit food and beverage marketing in schools.

The proposal is the next step in the effort to improve the school food environment. Schools already have implemented strong nutritional standards for meals and will soon implement stronger standards for snacks and drinks. Restrictions for food and beverage marketing will provide a boost to those efforts, ensuring that industry will no longer be able to market products in schools that students no longer can purchase in schools, USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack said.

Schools will then send a consistent message when it comes to eating healthy.

“I think we can all agree that our classrooms should be healthy places where our kids aren’t bombarded with ads for junk food,” Obama said. “And these guidelines are part of a broader effort to inspire food companies to rethink how they market food to kids in general.”

Read more here.
New rules would curb how kids are sold junk food at school

NPR
By Maria Godoy
February 25, 2014

If you want to teach kids to adopt healthier eating habits, it's probably unwise to give them coupons for fast food chains at school.

And those advertisements for sugary sodas on the gymnasium scoreboard? Seems like another mixed message schools are sending kids.

That's why the White House and U.S. Department of Agriculture proposed new school wellness guidelines Tuesday aimed at cracking down on the widespread marketing of less-than-nutritious foods to kids on campus during the school day. Even though 90 percent of school districts are now meeting the overhauled nutrition standards for school lunches, students are still being flooded with advertising for junk food in schools, according to first lady Michelle Obama.

Read more here.
Index of Potential Allies

Berkeley Media Studies Group
Alliance for a Healthier Generation
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network
American Public Health Association
Bridging the Gap
The California Endowment
Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood
Center for Science in the Public Interest
ChangeLab Solutions
The Food Trust
MomsRising
National Council of La Raza
National PTA
The Pew Charitable Trusts
The Praxis Project
Prevention Institute
Public Health Law Center
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity
Salud America!
YMCA of the USA
Potential Allies

Berkeley Media Studies Group (BMSG) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding advocates’ ability to improve the systems and structures that determine health. BMSG is a project of the Public Health Institute. BMSG conducts research to learn how the media characterize health issues. Through media advocacy training and consultation, BMSG helps advocates harness lessons from that research and develop the skills they need to shape journalists’ coverage of health issues so that it illuminates the need for policies that improve the places where people live, learn, work and play.

2130 Center Street, Suite 302
Berkeley, CA 94704
(510) 204-9700
www.bmsg.org

Positioning
BMSG stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in policy related to nutrition, childhood obesity, and public health
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in schools for children, adolescents, and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely public health officials, community leaders, and state and local governments
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between nutrition-related diseases and food marketing in schools
  - Developed toolkits with accompanying videos in English and Spanish to help advocates eliminate junk food marketing to kids
  - Co-convenes the Food Marketing Workgroup, a network of 220 organizations and experts who are concerned about the proliferation of the marketing of unhealthy foods that targets children and adolescents
  - Released a statement in support of the USDA guidelines on in-school food marketing
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids
Owned Media

Food marketing to children is not improving rapidly enough, Lori Dorfman tells White House audience
By Carolyn Newbergh
BMSG Blog
September 27, 2013

Lori Dorfman, DrPH, director of PHI’s Berkeley Media Studies Group, addressed the First Lady and the White House Domestic Policy Council at a meeting that discussed food marketing and junk food. Dr. Dorfman noted that more needed to be done to help curb digital marketing practices of food and beverage companies to children.

Five years on, mixed progress by the U.S. government and schools to improve food marketing practices influencing children’s and adolescent’s diets
BMSG Blog
February 14, 2012

Recent research found that the US government and schools made mixed progress to comprehensively address food and beverage marketing practices to children and youth. A report by the American Journal of Preventative Medicine found that the public sector failed to fully integrate Institute of Medicine recommendations to promote healthy eating in children and adolescents.

Alliance for a Healthier Generation Healthy Schools Program

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation is a catalyst for children’s health. The Alliance works with schools, companies, community organizations, healthcare professionals, and families to transform the conditions and systems that lead to healthier kids. The goal of the Alliance is to reduce the prevalence of childhood obesity and to empower kids to develop lifelong, healthy habits. Founded by the American Heart Association and Clinton Foundation, the Alliance works to create a nation where children thrive. The Alliance’s Healthy Schools Program is currently building healthier school environments for more than 16 million students in nearly 27,000 schools across the United States and Puerto Rico.

5 Thomas Circle NW
Washington, D.C. 20005
1-888-KID-HLTH
www.healthiergeneration.org

Positioning

The Alliance stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to childhood obesity and school nutrition
• Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
• Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in schools for children, adolescents, and young adults
• High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, Congress, the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and regional school administrators
• Strength of communication channels
• Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  o School Health Index self-assessment and planning guide provides school administrators with tools to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their schools’ health policies, to develop plans for improving student health, and to track their progress against the CDC’s School Health Index program
  o Action Plan programming tool provides implementation strategies, case studies, and online databases that school administrators can utilize when developing health policies for their schools
  o National Healthy Schools Awards recognize schools that achieve excellence in student health policy, and provide winners with promotional materials to assist in spreading the word and celebrating their successes

Media Coverage

Atherton schools administrators share nutritional advice at national event
MLive.com
By Sarah Schuch
March 5, 2015

Elementary students start their days with walks in the gym and grab-and-go breakfast in the classroom. Vending machines in the junior and high schools now sell healthier options. From October 2013 to October 2014, the district saw a 14 percent increase in breakfast participation and a 4 percent increase in lunch participation.

Atherton schools are members of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation’s Healthy Schools Program, and has made these changes with the support of the program. Atherton Elementary School received the Alliance’s National Healthy Schools Award in 2014. It was one of 34 across the nation to receive the award at the Silver level.

Millville elementary schools honored by Alliance for a Healthier Generation
NJ.com
By Don E. Woods
September 19, 2014
"I am proud of all of our schools for trying to help our students live a healthier lifestyle," said Dr. David Gentile, superintendent of Millville Public Schools. "The two schools recently awarded have worked very hard and are setting the path for others to follow."

All 250 schools participate in the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's Healthy Schools Program — along with conforming to U.S. Department of Agriculture nutrition standards.

Owned Media

USDA’s Recently Proposed Wellness Policy Rule

Alliance for a Healthier Generation
By Kathy Wilbur
March 17, 2014

A new provision of the rule focuses on food and beverage marketing and advertising in schools. On July 1, 2014, the USDA Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards will be in place for all foods and beverages sold outside of the school meal such as vending machines, school stores and snack bars. The marketing provision within this rule simply states, if you can’t sell it, don’t market it. This is an excellent chance to update signs, posters, vending faceplates and other branding around the school building to align with the Smart Snacks nutrition standards.

Effective school policy makes physical activity and healthy eating sustainable practices while including students and families to make sure the diverse needs of your community are met. While the federal requirements for school wellness policies are being finalized, it is a perfect time to get a jump start on shaping up your school wellness policy with the help of the Alliance’s expert advice and resources.

American Academy of Pediatrics

The mission of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is to attain optimal physical, mental, and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents, and young adults. To accomplish this, AAP supports the professional needs of its members. AAP works to advance child health and well-being with the understanding that pediatricians are the best qualified to provide child health care.

141 Northwest Point Blvd.
Elk Grove Village, IL 60007
(847) 434-4284
www.aap.org

Positioning

AAP stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in health care, health education, and health policy for children
• Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
• Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
• High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely leaders in pediatrics and health care industry influencers
• Strength of communications channels
• Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  o Institute for Healthy Childhood Weight urges schools to offer and promote only healthy foods and beverages to students
  o “Children, Adolescents, and Advertising” provides research on in-school food advertising
  o Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media
AAP Takes Stand on Marketing to Children and Adolescents
The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools

Advertising in schools. Ads now appear on school buses, in gymnasiums, on book covers, and even in bathroom stalls. The educational TV Channel One consists of 10 minutes of current-events programming and 2 minutes of commercials. Channel One now plays in 25 percent of the nation’s middle and high schools and generates profits estimated at $100 million annually.

Perspectives on Marketing, Self-Regulation and Childhood Obesity
By Donald Shifrin, MD
AAP Task Force on Obesity
July 2005

While many obstacles seem insurmountable, the Academy recommends early recognition and guidance in office-based encounters, increased physical activity, decreasing sedentary activities including screen time, and providing tools and continuing education for its members on this critical issue.

This article includes highlights of the Academy’s positions on advertising and marketing issues specifically as they related to childhood obesity.
American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan sister organization to the American Cancer Society. ACS CAN works to make cancer a national priority. Specifically, it advocates for better access to care, cancer prevention and early detection programs, cancer research funding, regulation of tobacco, better quality of life for cancer patients, and attempts to raise awareness of and reduce cancer disparities. Members include cancer survivors, caregivers, patients, volunteers and students, including Colleges Against Cancer.

555 11th Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20004
(202) 661-5727
www.acscan.org

Positioning

ACS CAN stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in policy related to physical activity, childhood obesity, and public health
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely health care professionals, community leaders, and state and local governments
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - Advocated for increased nutrition labeling and regulation of food marketing to children
  - Submitted written testimony to support the Interagency Working Group’s proposed principles for food marketing to children
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media

USDA Survey Shows Schools Nationwide are Improving Meals

By Chris Hansen
Cancer Candor
October 17, 2013
ACS CAN is dedicated to ensuring we continue to see these types of positive trends. That’s why we’re advocating for universal implementation of the USDA’s updated nutritional standards for school meals and snack foods and beverages, which take effect next school year; a continued reduction in unhealthy food and beverage marketing to youth and adults; adoption of strong physical education programs and incorporation of rigorous physical activity opportunities into the school day. We hope you’ll join us in this effort.

**Food Marketing and Our Kids**

*By Chris Hansen*

*Cancer Candor*

*January 14, 2013*

The Federal Trade Commission issued a report which looked at how much money the food and beverage industry spends on marketing its products to children and teens. The ACS CAN advocates for a continued reduction in the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages to youth and adults, and this report supports ACS CAN’s work in this field, as well as, provide additional evidence backing the importance of this work.

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**American Public Health Association**

The American Public Health Association (APHA) works to advance the health of all people and communities. As the nation’s leading public health organization, APHA strengthens the impact of public health professionals and provides a science-based voice in policy debates too often driven by emotion, ideology, or financial interests. APHA is at the forefront of efforts to advance prevention, reduce health disparities, and promote wellness. The mission of the APHA is to improve the health of the public and achieve equity in health status.

800 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
(202) 777-1741
[www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org)

**Positioning**

APHA stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in policy related to public health and public health research
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
• High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely Congress and Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA)
• Strength of communications channels
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  o Center for School, Health, and Education provides resources on student health and well-being, the school environment, hunger, and obesity
  o National Public Health Week addresses topics of interest to childhood obesity, including food marketing to children in schools and fast food restaurants

bridging the gap
Research informing Policies and Practices for Healthy Youth

Bridging the Gap
Bridging the Gap (BTG) was created in 1997 to assess the impact of policies, programs, and other environmental influences on adolescent alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drug use and related outcomes. BTG examines these factors at multiple levels of social organization, including schools, communities, and states. In recognition of the high rates of obesity among children, adolescents, and adults, BTG expanded its efforts in 2003 to include research on the policies, programs, and other factors that contribute to physical activity and inactivity, dietary behaviors, and obesity.

1747 West Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL 60608
(312) 413-2367
www.bridgingthegapresearch.org

Positioning
BTG stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.
• High impact in policy related to research, education, and public health
• Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
• Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
• High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and academia
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local schools and state and local governments
• Strength of communications channels
• Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  o Released new research on the nutritional content of food and beverage products in television advertisements aimed at children
  o Published research on children’s exposure to food advertising and snacking
  o Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media
Nutritional Content of Food and Beverage Products in Television Advertisements Seen on Children’s Programming
By Lisa Powell, Rebecca Schermbeck, and Frank Chaloupka
Bridging the Gap
March 2014

TV ratings data for children 2-5 and 6-11 years of age were used to examine the nutritional content of food and beverage products in advertisements seen by children on all programming and children's programming. A total of 46.2% of 2- to 5-year-olds’ and 43.5% of 6- to 11-year-olds’ total exposure to food and beverage TV advertising was for ads seen on children’s programming. Most food and beverage products in TV ads seen by children do not meet the IWG nutrition recommendations and less than one half of such ads are covered by self-regulation.

Youth-Focused Food Marketing: Examining the Spending Trends
Bridging the Gap Issue Brief
August 2013

U.S. food and beverage companies spend nearly $2 billion each year to market their products to kids, and most ads promote unhealthy foods and drinks. Research shows that marketing influences what children eat and drink and links the marketing of unhealthy products to overweight and obesity.

The California Endowment
The California Endowment is a private, statewide health foundation with a mission to expand access to affordable, quality health care for underserved communities, and to promote fundamental improvements in the health of all Californians. The Endowment supports strong nutrition standards for school meals and snacks. As a matter of principle, the Endowment believes that schools should never serve or sell junk foods or soft drinks.

1000 N. Alameda Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 928-8800
www.calendow.org
Positioning
The California Endowment stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in children’s health and school food policy in the state of California
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely the California Legislature
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - Food and Beverage Marketing on California High School Campuses Survey: Findings and Recommendations provides research on commercial activities in U.S. public elementary and secondary schools, and evaluates their impact on consumption habits

Media Coverage
California Teens Drinking More Sugary Drinks: Report
By Mary Elizabeth Dallas
HealthDay News (via The Philadelphia Inquirer)
October 18, 2013

“Soda and other sugary drinks contribute half a billion empty calories a day to California’s costly childhood obesity crisis,” Dr. Robert Ross, president and CEO of the California Endowment, which funded the study, said in the news release. “We have to redouble our efforts to protect our children, especially adolescents and children of color, from the unbridled marketing of high-calorie drinks that is drowning our kids in sugar.”

Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood
The Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood (CCFC) is a national coalition of health care professionals, educators, advocacy groups, parents, and individuals who care about children, and is the only national organization devoted to limiting the impact of commercial culture on children. CCFC helps support parents’ efforts to raise healthy families by limiting commercial access to children and ending the exploitive practice of child-targeted marketing.
Positioning
CCFC stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in policy related to children’s health and food industry advertising practices,
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely the USDA and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC)
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - Consuming Kids Summit convenes researchers, parents, educators, health professionals, and activists committed to reclaiming childhood from corporate marketers
  - Implemented a campaign to urge Scholastic to disband its in-school marketing division
  - Published a fact sheet on advertising in schools
  - Filed comments to urge the USDA to strengthen its guidelines on the marketing of foods and beverages on school campuses

Media Coverage
Electric Youth: Why Susan Linn and her Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood Terrify Child Advertisers
By Catherine Elton
Boston Magazine
January 2012

Kids today are subjected to an avalanche of digital media—TVs, computers, tablets, smartphones—and the advertising that comes with it. As researchers try to figure out what that’s doing to our children, Susan Linn and her tiny Boston nonprofit have become a child marketer’s worst nightmare. Just ask Disney, Hasbro, Scholastic, and Kellogg.
Center for Science in the Public Interest

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) is a consumer advocacy organization whose mission is to conduct innovative research and advocacy programs in health and nutrition, and to provide consumers with current, useful information about their health and well-being. CSPI’s primary goals are: to provide useful, objective information to the public and policymakers and to conduct research on food, nutrition, and other issues related to science and technology; and to represent the citizen’s interests before regulatory, judicial and legislative bodies on food, health, and other issues.

1220 L Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 777-8352
www.cspinet.org

Positioning

CSPI stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in policy related to nutrition and public health
- Long-time proponent of restrictions on unhealthy food marketing to children, including in schools
- Co-convenes the Food Marketing Workgroup (FMW), a network of 220 organizations and experts who work to reduce the marketing of unhealthy foods that targets children and adolescents; coordinates a subcommittee in the FMW on food marketing in schools
- Co-founded and coordinates the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA), a coalition of more than 450 national, state and local organizations that work on a range of issues including healthier school foods, food marketing in schools, local wellness policies, and school fundraising
- Worked with the White House on development of the national policy on food marketing in schools and coordinated with AHA and other NANA member on development of a model policy in support of the USDA proposed regulations on in-school food marketing
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children and adolescents
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, including Congress, Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and FTC
- Strength of communications channels
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - Produced fact sheets to address in-school food marketing and identify ways for schools to raise revenue through practical, profitable options
- Developed a fact sheet on the financial implications of limiting unhealthy food marketing in schools
- Convened a webinar in conjunction with ChangeLab Solutions to address in-school food marketing and USDA guidelines on Smart Snacks
- Developed model school wellness policies with other members of the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity for use by state and local lawmakers
- Report Card on Food-Marketing Policies analyzes industry practices regarding food marketing to children

**Media Coverage**

**In a first, Agriculture Dept. plans to regulate food marketing in schools**

*The Washington Post*

By Lyndsey Layton

February 25, 2014

“Basically, this means no junk-food marketing in schools,” said Margo Wootan, nutrition policy director at Center for Science in the Public Interest, which supports the ban. “Addressing food marketing is so important because it’s so pervasive. It helps define for kids what they want to eat and even what they think of as food.”

**Nick Targeted in Fight Over Food Marketing Guidelines**

*By Katy Bachman*

*Adweek*

December 3, 2012

The fight over whether the government should regulate food ads targeting children has been fought bitterly, and food manufacturers have tightened self-regulation to keep such proposals in draft stage. But nutritionists and health groups haven’t given up.

The [Food Marketing Workgroup (FMW)], led by the Center for Science in the Public Interest, has been keeping close tabs on the business and particularly Nickelodeon, which places about 25 percent of the ads during children’s programming, including recent ads for Cocoa Puffs, Air Heads candies, Chuck E. Cheese’s, Fruit Roll-Ups, Kraft Macaroni and Cheese, Pez candy, Cheese Nips crackers, and popsicles.
ChangeLab Solutions believes that, to achieve the common good, everyone must have nourishing food; safe places to live and play; opportunities to bike, walk or take transit; fresh water and clean air. Throughout the nation, ChangeLab Solutions works with neighborhoods, cities and states to transform communities with laws and policies that create lasting change. ChangeLab’s unique approach, backed by decades of research and proven results, helps the public and private sectors make communities more livable, especially for those who are at highest risk because they have the fewest resources.

2201 Broadway, Suite 502
Oakland, CA 94612
(510) 302-3380
www.changelabsolutions.org

Positioning
ChangeLab Solutions stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in policy related to nutrition, childhood obesity, and public health
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely state and local school districts and governments
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - National Policy and Legal Analysis Network (NPLAN) to Prevent Childhood Obesity is a project of ChangeLab Solutions that provides leaders in childhood obesity prevention with focused legal research, model policies, fact sheets, toolkits, training and technical assistance to explain legal issues related to public health. NPLAN’s goal is to create strong childhood obesity policy interventions that will reverse the epidemic by 2015.
    - Restricting Unhealthy Food and Beverage Advertising on School Buses fact sheet promotes USDA recommendations on food marketing on school buses and explores their implications, revenue, and free speech
    - Marketing Unhealthy Food to Children white paper addresses the dangers of exposing students to unhealthy food and beverage advertising
  - Developed specific policy samples to prevent food marketing in schools
o Created briefs, workshops, and other tools in support of restrictions on food marketing to children
o Convened a webinar in conjunction with The Center for Science in the Public Interest to address in-school food marketing and USDA guidelines on smart snacks
o Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media

Model Statute Limiting Food Marketing at Schools
ChangeLab Solutions
November 2013

The marketing of foods of poor nutritional value to American children contributes to the rise in obesity by affecting children’s food preferences, choices, and diet. While strong efforts have been made to improve the nutritional quality of food sold and served at schools, less attention has been focused on food marketing at schools.

First Amendment Implications of Restricting Food and Beverage Marketing in Schools
ChangeLab Solutions
January 2008

By allowing junk food and soda companies to saturate the school atmosphere with their products and messages, schools may be not only undermining their efforts to teach students about good nutrition but also fueling the American childhood obesity epidemic.

The Food Trust

The Food Trust was founded 20 years ago with a simple idea: healthy change. Its mission is to ensure that everyone—especially underprivileged individuals—has access to affordable, nutritious food and information to make healthy decisions. Working with neighborhoods, schools, grocers, farmers, and policymakers, The Food Trust has developed a comprehensive approach to improved food access that combines nutrition, education, and greater availability of affordable, healthy food.

One Penn Center, Suite 900
1617 John F. Kennedy Boulevard
Philadelphia, PA 19103
(215) 575-0444, ext. 124
www.thefoodtrust.org
Positioning
The Food Trust stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in policy related to nutrition, childhood obesity, and public health
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences and thought leaders
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely state and local school districts and governments
- Strength of communications channels
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - **School Nutrition Education** initiative provides more than 50,000 children annually with education on healthy eating and related fun learning activities, as well as monthly nutrition educational materials and lesson plans for teachers to incorporate nutrition into their curricula
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Funder’s Collaborative on Youth Organizing
The Funders’ Collaborative on Youth Organizing (FCYO) is a collection of national, regional, and local grant-makers and youth organizing practitioners dedicated to advancing youth organizing as a strategy for youth development and social transformation. FCYO’s mission is to cultivate resources for young people taking action to build healthy and equitable communities. The organization bridges funders and organizers to support youth organizing and its commitment to systemic change and social justice. Since its inception, FCYO has been focused on increasing philanthropic, intellectual, and social capital necessary to strengthen and grow youth organizing.
Positioning

FCYO stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to youth development, social justice, and community organizing
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at promoting healthier meals and snacks in schools
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely community leaders, and youth health advocates
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - ReGenerations Healthy Communities initiative provides grants for youth organizing groups that address childhood obesity with a specific focus on improving access to healthy, affordable, and culturally relevant food in schools and communities

Owned Media

FCYO Launches Healthy Communities Phase II
Funders’ Collaborative on Youth Organizing
By Monica Cordova
November 11, 2014

With support from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Healthy Communities II (HC II) initiative seeks to support young people from low-income families and young people of color organizing to address the root causes of childhood obesity. Building on the success of Phase I, young people from across the country are organizing to help promote healthier meals and snacks in schools, safe places to play and exercise, wellness centers in schools, and more. Through the summer of 2016 Phase II will support their efforts, connect them to each other, and help build a national youth movement for healthy schools and communities.
National Council of La Raza
The National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States, works to improve opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Through its network of 300 affiliated community-based organizations, NCLR reaches millions of Hispanics each year in 41 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. NCLR develops and implements health education and prevention programs and conducts health advocacy activities in partnership with its affiliate network to protect the health and well-being of the Latino community. NCLR works to improve nutrition in the Latino community by increasing access to federal food assistance programs, resources and education to ensure families can meet at the dinner table for a healthy meal.

1126 16th Street, NW, Suite 600
Washington, D.C. 20036-4845
(202) 785-1670
www.nclr.org

Positioning
NCLR stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to education, health and nutrition in the Latino community
- Proponent of restrictions on food marketing to children in schools
- Activism aimed at reducing exposure to food marketing in schools for children, adolescents and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely Congress, the FDA and leading food manufacturers
- Past public support of restrictions to food marketing to children in schools
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - Received a grant by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for Improving access to affordable foods and reducing exposure to unhealthy-food marketing in the Latino community to reduce childhood obesity
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media
**With Obesity Rates in Decline, It’s Time Reduce the Risk for Latinos**
By Carla Plaza
We are also interested in how food and beverage advertising can reduce childhood obesity rates. There is considerable scientific evidence demonstrating that marketing and advertising to children has definitive effects on taste, preferences, and consumer behavior. For example, in 2005, the Institute of Medicine conducted a literature review examining the impact of food and beverage marketing on youth. The ensuing report held that marketing and advertising not only shape children’s direct spending on foods and beverages but also indirectly influence their parents’ and family members’ purchasing decisions. Furthermore, it was identified that high-calorie and low-nutrient food and beverage products are predominantly advertised and marketed to youth.

Given that one in five children in the United States is Hispanic and that Hispanic children are the fastest-growing segment of the child population, it is important to understand how the advertising and marketing of products are influencing the health of our children. NCLR applauds the Children’s Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative, which has developed category-specific nutrition criteria for 10 different product types that governs the foods and beverages marketed to children under the age of 12. Eighteen companies participate in this initiative, many of which are NCLR’s corporate partners.

MomsRising
MomsRising is a transformative online and on-the-ground multicultural organization of one million members and more than one hundred aligned organizations working to increase family economic security, to end discrimination against women and mothers, and to build a nation where both businesses and families can thrive. MomsRising addresses critical issues facing women, mothers and families, by mobilizing massive grassroots actions. The group strives to bring the voices and real world experiences of women and mothers straight to the nation’s leaders, and to amplify women’s issues in the national dialogue and in the media. MomsRising also accelerates grassroots initiatives on Capitol Hill and at state capitols across the country and is committed to holding corporations accountable for fair treatment of women and mothers, and for ensuring the safety of their products.

Positioning
MomsRising stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.
• High impact in policy related to nutrition, childhood obesity, and healthy food access
• Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
• Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
• High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely state and local school districts and governments
• Strength of communications channels
• Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  o Good Food Force! coordinates volunteer activities in schools, communities, and online networks to educate others on healthy school foods, junk food marketing to kids, and strategies to reduce childhood obesity
  o Participates in the Food Marketing Workgroup’s subcommittee on target marketing to address mom’s concerns about predatory food and beverage marketing to kids of color
  o Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media

No More Junk Ads!
By Monifa Bandele
MomsRising Blog
April 21, 2014

Unfortunately, there are still no national standards about what can, and cannot, be advertised to kids in schools. That’s right: None. This means that in some cases, kids are offered one snack while being encouraged through marketing to eat another junkier one.

Providing healthier snacks at school has been shown to help kids make healthier choices all day long. However, advertisements are powerful. So having a school offer healthier choices in vending machines and a la carte lines while at the same time promoting unhealthy choices through junk food marketing can be confusing to say the least.

Three Ways to Protect Kids from Junk Food Ads at School
By Sabrina Adler
MomsRising Blog
October 31, 2013

Marketing in schools takes many forms, from fast-food logos plastered on scoreboards, to coupons for free desserts provided by companies and handed out by teachers, to sugar-sweetened beverage logos on vending machines, to themed “educational” materials provided by food and beverage companies. Even as new federal regulations ensure improvements to the nutritional content of school food, such marketing undermines parents’ and educators’ efforts to encourage healthful eating.

According to a recent Federal Trade Commission report, companies spent $149 million on food marketing in schools in 2009. This represents 8.3 percent of all advertising directed at kids, and probably still underestimates the total amount of money spent marketing in schools.
National PTA

National PTA (PTA) comprises millions of families, students, teachers, administrators, businesses and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of parent involvement in schools. PTA prides itself on being a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities and a strong advocate for public education. The goal of PTA’s health and safety programming is to be a resource for PTA leaders in partnering with schools to create safe environments that encourage healthy, safe choices and social and emotional support for all students.

1250 N. Pitt Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 518-1200
www.pta.org

Positioning

PTA stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to childhood health, nutrition, and education
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely Congress and the U.S. Public Health Service
- Strength of communications channels
- Past public support restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - Member of the Food Marketing Workgroup Committee, which takes efforts to reduce children’s exposure to food marketing in the school environment

Owned Media

National PTA Chief Executive Testifies on Child Nutrition at Senate Committee Hearing
National PTA
March 31, 2009

Byron Garrett, Chief Executive Officer of the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA), testified before the Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry at a hearing titled, “Beyond Federal School Meal Programs: Reforming Nutrition for Kids in Schools.” The hearing featured a panel of other child
health and education organization representatives, as well as representatives from the food and beverage industry.

Before listing the recommendations, Garrett cited several advocacy and legislative efforts that the National PTA has championed since its founding in 1897 and noted the organization’s involvement in successfully including language mandating the creation of local school wellness policies in the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004.

The Pew Charitable Trusts
The Pew Charitable Trusts (Pew) helps states ensure that all foods served in U.S. schools are healthy. With a long history of informing policy, Pew supports states in improving the nutrition of meals, snacks and beverages available to students across the country. Pew applies a data-driven, analytical approach to developing strategies that make government more effective. The institution’s initiatives have delivered results at national, state and local levels.

One Commerce Square
2005 Market Street, Suite 2800
Philadelphia, PA 19103-7077
(215) 575-9050
www.pewtrusts.org

Positioning
Pew stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in food policy and public health
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely Congress, FDA, and leading food manufacturers
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - Kids’ Safe and Healthful Foods Project provides nonpartisan analysis and research to ensure that all foods and beverages sold in U.S. schools are safe and healthful
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids
The new standards, which could be in place in the 2014-15 school year, also affect the foods sold through vending machines, snack bars and a la carte in cafeterias. So, branded images for sugary sodas on vending machines, posters and cups would no longer be allowed.

Some areas already have acted. Several school districts, including Seattle and San Francisco, have adopted broad commercial-free policies that address marketing across the board—not just of foods and beverages.

“We are moving in the right direction,” said Jessica Donze Black, director of the Kids’ Safe and Healthful Foods Project, a partnership between The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The group is spreading the word about the rules, and making sure agencies and schools have enough resources, materials and training necessary to carry it out.

The Praxis Project

The Praxis Project is a nonprofit movement and an institution of color that supports organizing efforts and change work at local, regional and national levels. Focused on movement building for fundamental change, the Project’s mission is to build healthy communities by changing the power relationships between people of color and the institutional structures that affect their lives.

In addition, The Praxis Project’s Communities Creating Healthy Environments (CCHE) program is a national funding and capacity building initiative to support diverse, community-based organizations and tribal groups in the development and implementation of effective, culturally competent, policy initiatives to advance food and recreation justice. CCHE provides training and technical assistance to support policy advocacy and organizing in the field at large.

7731 Alaska Ave. NW
Washington, D.C. 20012
(202) 234-5921
www.thepraxisproject.org

Positioning

The Praxis Project stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
• Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
• Strength of communications channels
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  o Endorsed a letter of support for the White House initiative to protect children from data manipulation and negative food marketing in schools
  o Member of the Food Marketing Workgroup Steering Committee, which takes efforts to reduce children’s exposure to food marketing in the school environment
  o Member of the Food Marketing Workgroup’s subcommittee on target marketing bringing expertise from working with communities of color to combat predatory marketing in a variety of fields, including tobacco, alcohol and food
  o Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Media Coverage

Target marketing soda & fast food: Problems with business as usual
Berkeley Media Studies Group
December 7, 2010

Philosopher Marilyn Frye says structural racism is like a bird in a birdcage. We like this image because it illustrates the way racial inequalities operate in our society. The bars work together to trap the bird. Each bar is connected with others -- it is the system of bars that traps the bird, just as our system of education, housing, food, and employment interact to form unjust structures that privilege some and hinder opportunities for others. Viewed from this perspective, structural racism is not simply intentional decisions by racist individuals, but the product of overlapping systems and institutions that create and reproduce racial inequalities.

The soda and fast food industries target their marketing towards mothers of color
Berkeley Media Studies Group
This publication was prepared for Communities Creating Healthy Environments (CCHE).
December 1, 2010

Some people think of target marketing as innocent promotion of products to certain groups. For example, Coca-Cola created Coke Zero so that the company could target men who were uncomfortable choosing a product that said "diet" on the label. But there is also another type of target marketing that focuses on communities of color. The industry often calls this "multicultural marketing." The industry does target marketing by using carefully chosen language and visual cues, such as popular celebrities, designed to resonate with the specific community so that this group responds favorably to their product and brand. The problem with target marketing is that it exploits cultural ties and values to create a demand for some of the unhealthiest foods and beverages that contribute to the obesity epidemic that disproportionately affects communities of color.
Public Health Law Center

The Public Health Law Center (PHLC) is a national non-profit organization of law and policy specialists that help health leaders, officials, and advocates use the law to advance public health. Founded in 2000, PHLC is a preeminent authority in U.S. public health policy and a respected legal resource for local, state, national and international health organizations. The Public Health Law Center’s mission is to improve public health through the power of law.

William Mitchell College of Law
875 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, MN 55105
(651) 290-7506
www.publichealthlawcenter.org

Positioning

PHLC stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to public health, nutrition and obesity
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local, state and federal health policymakers
- Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - Network for Public Health Law provides legal technical assistance and resources on a wide-range of public health topics, including in-school food marketing
  - Five Steps to Food and Beverage Success is designed to support healthier food and beverage options for school administrators and meal planners
  - Tips for Better Vending provides guidance on selecting healthy vending options at schools, parks and other locations that are frequented by school-aged children, and provides best practices for marketing healthy snack options to make them more appealing
  - Using Local Authority to Create Healthier Child Care Settings case studies demonstrate how local communities leverage regulatory authority over child care services to improve nutrition and physical activity standards within child care settings
Owned Media

PHLC and PHLP Comments to Interagency Working Group on Food Marketed to Children
Public Health Law and Policy
By Julie Ralston Aoki
July 14, 2011

With the obesity epidemic threatening to make the youth of this generation the first to have shorter lifespans than their parents, and the food marketing industry thus far unable to develop uniform and effective guidelines for marketing to children, there is great urgency to the work of the IWG. This is no time for chasing chimeras. The First Amendment and antitrust law clearly do not stand in the way of the IWG’s work on voluntary principles for food marketing to children. The questions may, and should, be put to rest.

Promoting Fruits and Vegetables in Schools
A Policy Options Brief by the Public Health Law Center
January 2009

Until momentum builds for statewide solutions, it will remain incumbent on school districts to rein in competitive foods. In addition to the policy approaches noted above, school districts, and some states, have pursued other options, including: allowing only healthy foods to be sold or served at fundraising events; eliminating open campus policies; limiting or banning commercial advertising, and prohibiting the use of foods or beverages as rewards. Whether enacted at the state level or implemented by school districts, the elements of sound policies are much the same.

Prevention Institute

Prevention Institute is committed to preventing illness and injury, to fostering health and social equity and to building momentum for community prevention as a component of a quality health system. Prevention Institute synthesizes research and practice; develops prevention tools and frameworks; helps design and guide interdisciplinary partnerships; and conducts training and strategic consultation with government, foundations and community-based organizations nationwide and internationally.

221 Oak Street
Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 444-7738
www.preventioninstitute.org

Positioning
Prevention Institute stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following:

• High impact in policy related to community prevention and public health
• Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
• Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
• High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
• Member of the Food Marketing Workgroup Steering Committee, which takes efforts to reduce children’s exposure to food marketing in the school environment
• Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely local governments and national public health advocacy organizations
• Strength of communications channels
• Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
• Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
• Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  o We’re Not Buying It video explores the tactics employed by the food industry to promote unhealthy food to children
  o Strategic Alliance Promoting Healthy Food and Activity Environments shines a light on the role that corporate and government practices have on the food and activity environments where people live, work, play, and learn

Media Coverage

We’re Not Buying It: Stop Junk Food Marketing to Kids
By Larry Cohen
The Huffington Post
October 10, 2011

The fact is, food companies have a poor record when it comes to monitoring themselves. Prevention Institute’s study, “Claiming Health: Front-of-Package Labeling of Children’s Food,” looked at packages with front of package labeling—symbols that identify healthier products and could be marketed to kids—and found that 84 percent of products studied didn’t meet basic nutritional standards.

Owned Media
Setting a New Academic Standard: Getting Junk Food Out of Schools
By Phebe Gibson and Lily Swartz
Prevention Institute

A healthy nation starts with healthy kids, and experts and parents agree that junk food is a huge contributor to skyrocketing rates of diabetes and other chronic diseases. But the food and beverage industries spend billions of dollars promoting unhealthy foods virtually everywhere kids go—including schools. And it’s working: sugary beverages and nutritionally poor snacks are more available to students than ever before. It’s time to set a new academic standard by supporting school policies that put the health of kids first, and keep the junk out.

The food industries deceive families and kids—in and outside of schools—by promoting unhealthy foods using packaging that misleads parents, ads that directly target kids, and engaging in behind-the-scenes lobbying to thwart any oversight.
Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) focuses on the pressing health and health care issues facing the United States. As the nation’s largest philanthropy devoted exclusively to health and health care, the Foundation works with a diverse group of organizations and individuals to identify solutions and achieve comprehensive, measurable and timely change. For more than 40 years, the Foundation has brought experience, commitment and a balanced approach to the problems that affect the health and health care of those it serves.

P.O. Box 2316
Route 1 and College Road East
Princeton, NJ 08543
(877) 843-7953
www.rwjf.org

Positioning
RWJF stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in health and wellness and public policy
- Proponent of healthier in-school food marketing to children
- Supports research examining food marketing in school
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely Congress, FDA, and beverage manufacturers
- Strength of communications channels
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools

Owned Media
Please see articles on food marketing here.
Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity
The Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity is a non-profit research and public policy organization devoted to improving the world’s diet, preventing obesity, and reducing weight stigma. The Center serves as a leading research institution and clearinghouse for resources that add to our understanding of the complex forces affecting how we eat, how we stigmatize overweight and obese people, and how we can change. We are a leader in building broad-based consensus to change diet patterns, while holding industry and government agencies responsible for safeguarding public health. The Rudd Center pursues its bold goals through strategic science; interaction with key players in media, industry and government; and mobilization of grassroots efforts. Standing at the intersection of science and public policy, we develop innovative measures to combat obesity and improve health.

Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity
University of Connecticut (UConn)
One Constitution Plaza, Suite 600
Hartford, CT 06103
(860) 380-1000
www.yaleruddcenter.org

Positioning
The Rudd Center stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in nutrition, food marketing, and public health
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, including federal, state, and local decision makers and public health departments
- Strong, coordinated, and effective communication in all forms of media
- Past public support of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - Rudd Roots Parents website provides information for parents on how food and beverage companies target children in schools, as well as ways in which they can advocate and take action to stand up to these harmful practices
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids
owned media
researchers urge policy markers, school leaders, and parents to address food marketing in schools
rudd radar
january 14, 2014

citing evidence that shows that food and beverage marketing in schools is a public health concern, jennifer harris, phd, mba from the rudd center and tracy fox, mph, rd, from food, nutrition & policy consultants, llc, urge policy makers, school district leaders, and parents to take action in a recent editorial published in jama pediatrics.

harris and fox cite evidence that the full range of in-school marketing practices is even broader than reported and includes initiatives like branded fundraising sponsored by food companies, visits by ronald mcdonald to elementary schools to teach children about healthy eating, and ads on educational websites such as coolmath-games.com and channel one tv.

pairing vegetables with a liked food and visually appealing presentation: promising strategies for increasing vegetable consumption among preschoolers
Danielle C.S. Correia, MPH, Meghan O’Connell, MPH, Melinda L. Irwin, PhD, MPH, and Kathryn E. Henderson, PhD
February 2014
Childhood Obesity

Preschool-aged children in the United States fail to meet recommended dietary guidelines. Specifically, children are consuming more added sugar and fat than is recommended and not enough nutrient-rich whole fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy. The preschool years are a crucial time for fostering healthy eating habits, because development of attitudes toward food and overall taste preferences during early childhood persist throughout life3 and track well with later dietary patterns and bmi.

food marketing to youth: serious business
H. Mollie Grow, MD, MPH; Marlene B. Schwartz, PhD
American Medical Association
November 12, 2014

full text available here.
**Salud America!**
The RWJF Research Network to Prevent Obesity Among Latino Children

**Salud America! (UT Health Science Center San Antonio)**
Salud America! is a national online network of researchers, community group leaders, decision makers, and members of the public working together to support healthy policy and environmental changes that can help reverse the Latino childhood obesity epidemic. Salud America! serves as a clearinghouse—with news, research, maps, videos, resources, and successful stories of change—on making healthy changes in Latino communities across the nation.

The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
7411 John Smith, Suite 1000
San Antonio, TX 78229
(210) 562-6500
www.salud-america.org

**Positioning**
Salud America! stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.

- High impact in policy related to health education and nutrition for Latino communities
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical stakeholders, namely Latino communities and organizations
- Strength of communications channels
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - *“Green is Go” marketing campaign* simultaneously highlights healthy food options in school cafeterias and stigmatizes less healthy options
  - Growing Healthy Change website provides information on promoting healthy school snacks
  - Member of the Food Marketing Workgroup committee, which takes efforts to reduce children’s exposure to food marketing in the school environment
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

**Owned Media**
Please find healthy marketing resources here.
YMCA
The Y is one of the nation’s leading nonprofits strengthening communities through youth development, healthy living and social responsibility. Across the U.S., 2,700 Ys engage 21 million men, women and children – regardless of age, income or background – to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve the nation’s health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors. Anchored in more than 10,000 communities, the Y has the long-standing relationships and physical presence not just to promise, but to deliver, lasting personal and social change.

101 N. Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60606
(800) 872-9622
www.ymca.net

Positioning
YMCA supports the Voices for Healthy Kids’ stance on food marketing to children in schools based on the following.
- High impact in policy related to childhood wellness, nutrition, and public health
- Proponent of restrictions on in-school food marketing to children
- Activism aimed at reducing daily exposure to food marketing in school for children, adolescents, and young adults
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, including 21 million members, thought leaders, and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely local school districts and state and local governments
- Strength of communications channels
- Alignment of organizational mission with the American Heart Association’s policy statement on food marketing to children in schools
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to raising awareness of the link between childhood obesity and food marketing in schools
  - Healthy Eating Strategy—To Reduce Availability of Less Healthy Foods and Beverages focuses on removing unhealthy items and related advertisements from schools
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

Owned Media
Healthy Eating Strategy #6: Reduce Availability of Less Healthy Foods and Beverages
YMCA
Research has shown that removing unhealthy items from schools increases the likelihood that children will consume healthier beverages and foods. An increasing number of schools have adopted nutrition guidelines for competitive foods. Studies show that school food policies that restrict the sale of unhealthy foods and beverages lead to decreased availability of unhealthy food and beverage items and increased availability of healthy options. In turn, this change can result in healthier snack, food, and beverage consumption and can be effective in reducing childhood obesity. A study predicted an 18 percent reduction in prevalence of overweight or obesity in schools that prohibit the sale of unhealthy food during school meals.