

Subregional Workshop on the use of law to address  
Noncommunicable diseases in the Caribbean  
Miami, Florida, 3-5 March 2020

# Restricting Marketing of Foods to Children

*Audrey Morris*  
*PAHO Decentralized Regional Advisor – Food and Nutrition*



**PAHO**

PAHO/WHO

# Regulation of marketing of foods and beverages to children



## Advertising

Broadcast: including TV and radio.

Print media: including newspapers, magazines and comic books.

Online: including on-search engines, social networking sites, news sites and blogs, as well as television programmes, films and media clips watched online.

Outdoors: including billboards, posters and moving vehicles.  
Cinemas.



## Product placement and branding

Product placement, e.g. in TV, radio, films, computer games.  
Publicity.

Branded books, e.g. counting books for pre-schoolers.

Branded toys e.g. fast food store as a playhouse.

Branded computer games.

Interactive web sites, e.g. with puzzles and games.

RECOMMENDATIONS  
on the marketing of foods and  
non-alcoholic beverages to children



## Sponsorship

TV and radio programmes.

Events: including community and school events and contests.

Educational materials and equipment.

Programmes: including public health campaigns and school breakfast or lunch programmes.

Venues.

Sport teams.

## Direct marketing

Promotional emails.

Promotional sales by telephone.

Text messaging to mobile phones.

Home catalogues, leafleting and canvassing (also known as “doorstep selling”).

Contests or sweepstakes.

“Money off” vouchers.

Promotion and sampling schemes in schools, e.g. chocolate drives.

## Point-of-sale

On-shelf displays.

Displays at check-outs, pay-points, end-of-aisles in supermarkets.

Special offers and pricing incentives.

Vending machines in schools and youth clubs.

Loyalty schemes.

Free samples and tastings.

## Product design and packaging

Product design: colours and shapes, e.g. dinosaur-shaped products.

Packaging design: imagery, colours, playshapes.

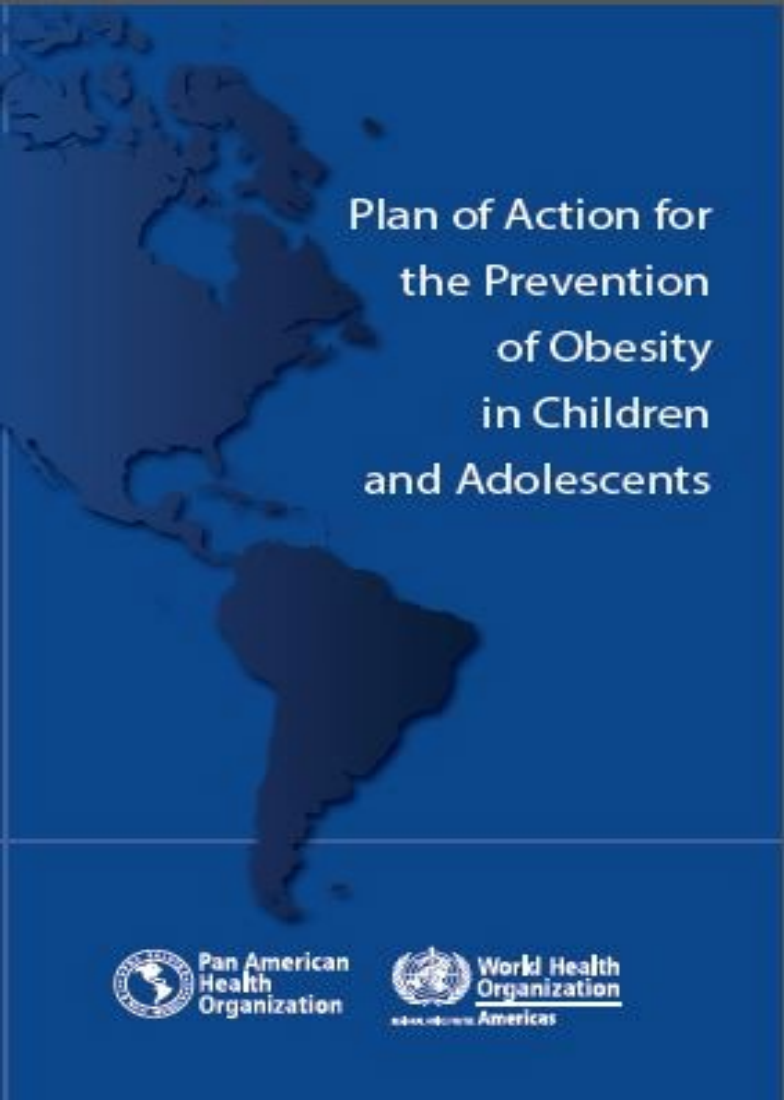
Product portions: e.g. king size, duo packs.

In-pack and on-pack promotions: e.g. gifts, puzzles, vouchers.

RECOMMENDATIONS  
on the marketing of foods and  
non-alcoholic beverages to children



# Plan of Action for the Prevention of Obesity in Children and Adolescents 2014-2019



Plan of Action for  
the Prevention  
of Obesity  
in Children  
and Adolescents

## Objective 3.2:

To enact regulations to protect children and adolescents from the impact of marketing of sugar-sweetened beverages, energy-dense nutrient-poor products, and fast foods.

## Indicator 3.2.1:

No. of countries that have implemented regulations to protect children and adolescents from the impact of marketing of sugar-sweetened beverages, energy-dense nutrient-poor products, and fast foods in line with the *Recommendations from a PAHO Expert Consultation on the Marketing of Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages to Children in the Americas*.

# Why regulate food marketing?



- Advertising Influences children's:
  - Food preferences
  - Requests
  - Consumption patterns
- The types of foods and beverages marketed to children are out of line with dietary recommendations:
  - Salty snacks
  - Sweets
  - Soft drinks
  - Fast foods

# How complementary foods are inappropriately promoted

- Promotion of such products as suitable for infants under 6 months of age
- Promotion as equivalent or superior to breastmilk
- Promotion as a replacement for breastmilk
- Promotion by using brands/labels/logos that are the same/similar to those used for breast-milk substitutes

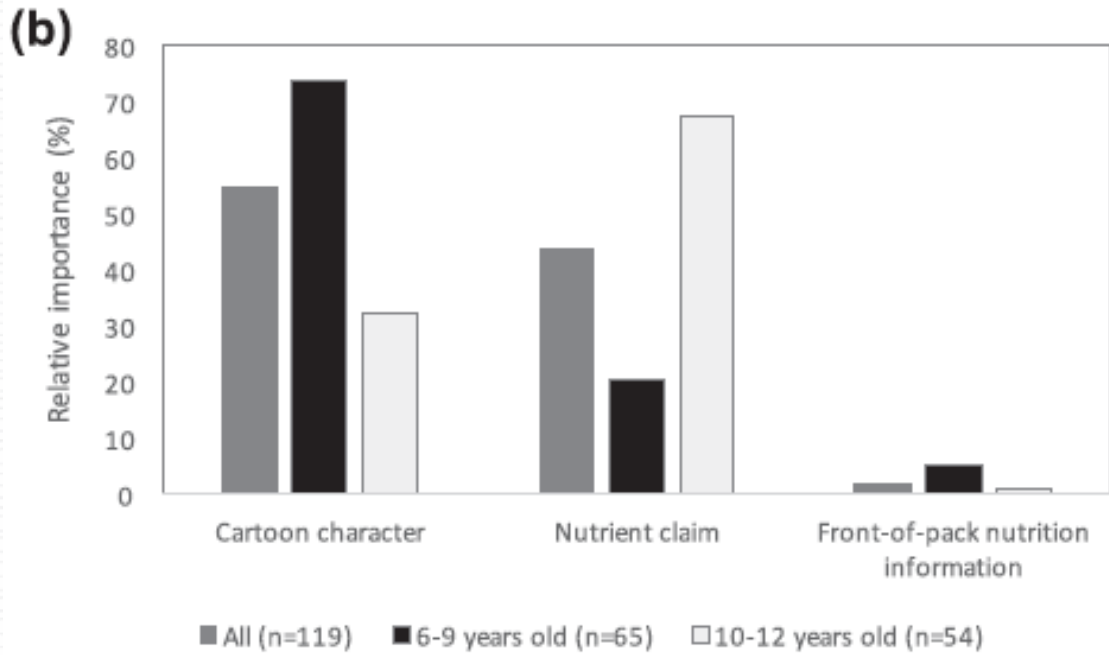
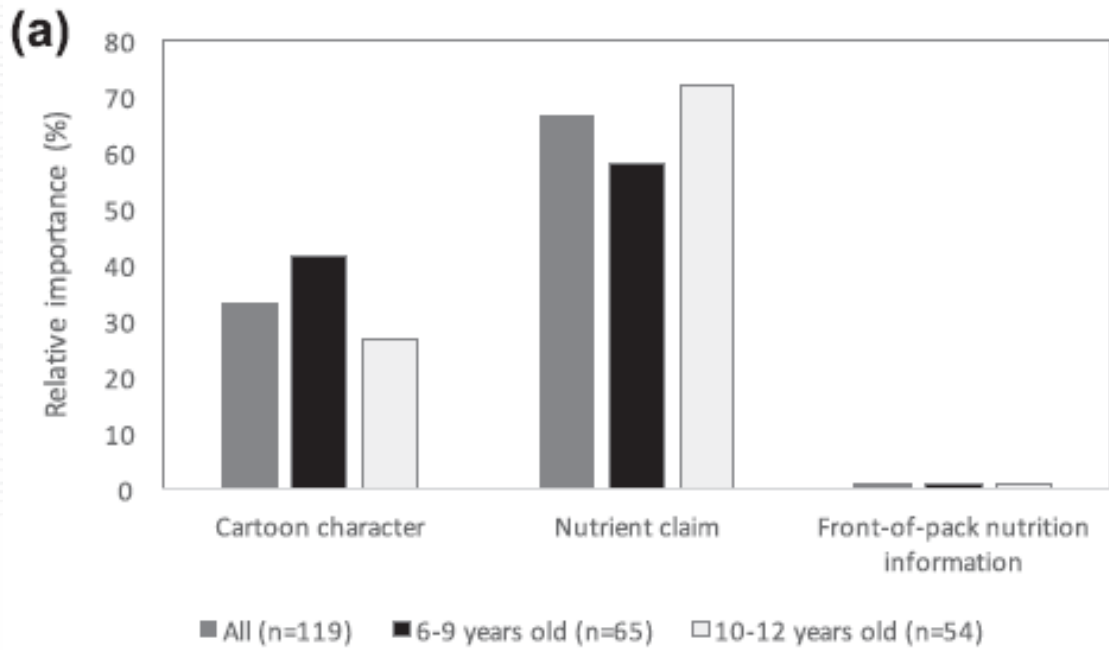


# Evidence



## ***Marketing* increases the *Purchase* and *Consumption* of food and drink products**

- How Advertising Affects sales: Meta-Analysis of Econometric results [Journal of Marketing Research; Vol XXI \(February 1984\), 65-74](#)
- Television Advertising to Children: A Global Perspective  
[Am J Public Health. 2010 September; 100\(9\): 1730–1736.](#)
  - Food ads comprised 11-29% of advertisements.
  - Foods high in undesirable nutrients/energy featured in 53-87% of food ads.
  - Rate of showing these ads was higher during children’s peak viewing times

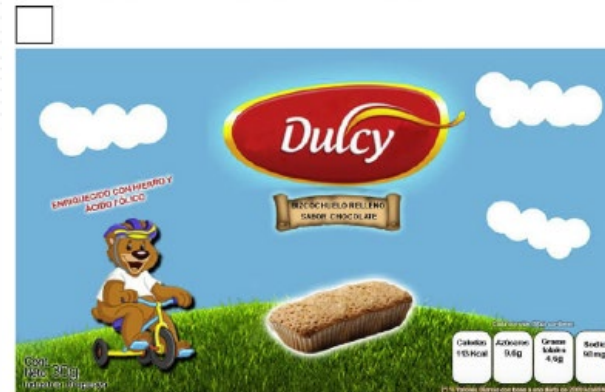


How much would you like this yogurt?

1  2  3  4  5  6  7

I would not like it at all I would love it

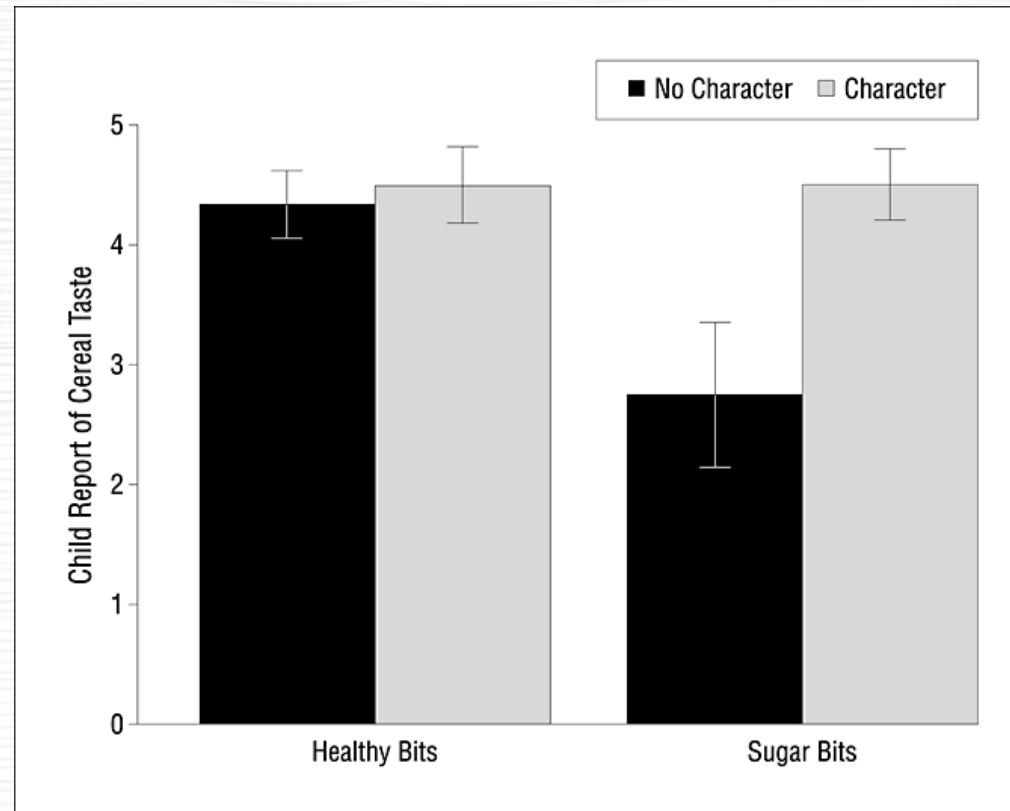
Which of the two sponge cakes would you like the most?



# Influence of Licensed Spokescharacters and Health Cues on Children's Ratings of Cereal Taste

Matthew A. Lapierre, MA; Sarah E. Vaala, MA; Deborah L. Linebarger, PhD

Children (5-6 year old)



# Food Marketing Regulation (Voluntary/Self-regulation Schemes)



- Voluntary/Self-regulation schemes are not effective
- Many countries have tried and the evidence is also robust on showing such schemes are ineffective (e.g. Australia, Canada, UK, USA)

Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity (2011)

American Journal of Public Health 100:240-246

Medical Journal of Australia 195:20-24

International Journal of Pediatric Obesity 6:e433-441

# Food Marketing Regulation (Mandatory Schemes)



- The law which took effect in Chile in 2016 has reached expected outputs including, for example, the removal of toys/gifts from packages. The Ministry of Health is monitoring 24/7 advertisement in all media vehicles.
- Mexico also has banned the marketing to children of a list of unhealthy food and drink products and is also monitoring the compliance regularly.

# Examples from action in Chile – Removal of cartoon figures from the boxes of sugary cereals.



# Food Marketing regulation

**Policy option 3.1** Regional guideline to reduce children's overall exposure to unhealthy food advertising through all channels

*Objective:* To reduce children's overall exposure to unhealthy food advertising.

*Links to existing commitments:* NCD Global Monitoring Framework Indicator

- + **PAHO Plan of Action for the Prevention of Obesity in Children and Adolescents**
- + **CARICOM Commitment** (Communiqué - The 37<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting of the Conference of Heads of Government of the CARICOM, 4-6 July 2016)

# What needs to happen



- Agreement at CARICOM Level (COTED/COHSOD) – set regional minimum standard
- Implementation at country level
  - Development and implementation of regional standards (via CROSQ)
  - Legislation
- Enforcement and Monitoring
- Sanctions (e.g. financial, administrative, socio-cultural)



# Summary of Policy Recommendations



- Link to school nutrition standards and guidelines
- Restrict promotion around schools
- Restrict advertising at sports and community events
- Develop guidelines to reduce in-store promotion of unhealthy foods and beverages
- Develop standards to restrict broadcast advertising to children (where and when – vehicles of communication and time)

# Summary of Policy Recommendations



- Incorporate lessons from international experiences,
  - including TV advertising restrictions, and framework regulation for comprehensive approach to restricting marketing to children [as recently developed in Chile (Law of Food Labeling and Advertising), Mexico (Food marketing norms), and Peru ('Promoting Healthy Food for Children Act')].
- Target food product categories that are high in critical nutrients (PAHO Nutrient Profile Model)
- Target all forms of marketing (ref: WHO Framework for implementing the set of recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children)

PAHO/WHO

# Acknowledgment



Dr Fabio Gomes and Dr. Anselm Hennis

Department of Non-communicable Diseases and Mental Health, PAHO

PAHO/WHO



THANK  
YOU!

[www.paho.org](http://www.paho.org)