



## Improving CFBAI company pledges

November 2015

In 2014, six participating companies dominated snack food advertising to children. Campbell Soup Company, Dannon, General Mills, Kellogg Company, Mondelez Global, and PepsiCo were responsible for 71% of advertising spending in 2014 and 82% of snack food ads viewed by children on TV. Through the Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative (CFBAI), a voluntary industry self-regulatory program, these companies all promised to advertise and promote healthy dietary choices and healthy lifestyles among American children.

### The research

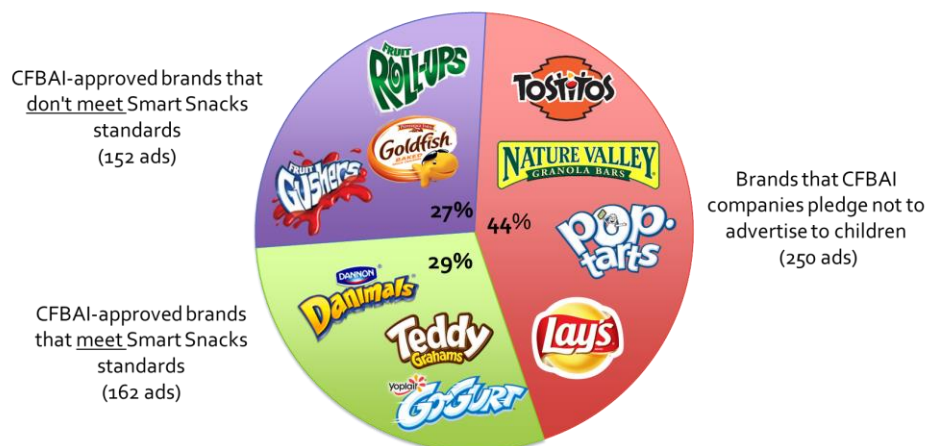
Snack FACTS examines the nutritional quality and advertising for 90 snack food brands offered by 43 companies that were marketed to U.S. children and teens on TV, internet, and in schools in 2014. Researchers analyzed healthier snacks, including yogurt, fruit, and nuts, as well as unhealthy snacks, including sweet and savory snacks such as cookies, chips, and fruit snacks, comparing 2010 and 2014 when possible. The report also examines snack food brands advertised by companies participating in the CFBAI.

### Findings

- Healthier child-directed yogurt brands represented 29% of TV ads from CFBAI companies viewed by children in 2014, including Yoplait GoGurt and Dannon Danimals.
- However, four of the five sweet and savory snack brands that CFBAI companies designated as healthy choices that may be advertised to children promoted products that did not meet USDA Smart Snacks school nutrition standards, meaning they cannot be sold to students in schools.
- Twelve of the 20 snack foods that CFBAI companies advertised most to children on TV in 2014 were not included on their lists of products that may be included in child-directed advertising, including Nature Valley Snack Bars, PopTarts, and Tostitos.
  - Children's exposure to CFBAI-company TV ads for snack food ads that were not approved for advertising to children increased 53% from 2010 to 2013.
- CFBAI participating companies pledge that they will not direct advertising for any products to children under age 6, but preschoolers viewed on average 1.4 snack food ads every day in 2014 from these companies.
  - Preschoolers' viewed just 12% fewer TV ads for CFBAI-approved products compared to children ages 6 to 11.
  - Children under age 6 saw more TV ads for Yoplait Trix yogurt from General Mills compared to older children.

Children viewed more TV ads for Betty Crocker Fruit Snacks than for any other snack food product.

2014 TV snack food ads from CFBAI companies viewed by children (6-11 years)



Recommendations

Improve CFBAI self-regulatory pledges to protect children from aggressive marketing of unhealthy snack foods.

- Loopholes in the CFBAI definitions of child-directed advertising should be closed to reduce children’s exposure to advertising for unhealthy snack foods. As recommended by a panel of experts commissioned by Healthy Eating Research, companies should
  - Define children as youth up to at least 14 years old;
  - Include all media and other places where children are the intended audience; Incorporate qualitative measures to identify advertising that appeals specifically to children; and
  - Ensure that brands marketed to children include only products that meet CFBAI nutrition standards.
- CFBAI companies should implement Smart Snacks nutrition standards for products advertised to children.
  - Companies should implement meaningful measures to protect children under age 6 from all advertising, as promised.

Foods that cannot be sold to children in schools should not be advertised to them in the media.

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The full report, *Snack FACTS 2015: Evaluating snack food nutrition and marketing to youth*, is available at [uconnruddcenter.org/snackfacts](http://uconnruddcenter.org/snackfacts)