

## Resolution to Support Responsible Food Marketing to Children

Whereas billions of dollars are spent annually on food marketing and advertising directed at children (approximately \$10 billion annually) and most of the food marketed to children is of poor nutritional quality (high in calories, sugars, salt, or fat, or low in nutrients);<sup>1</sup> and

Whereas the fundamental goal of food marketing is to influence children's food purchases and purchase requests and evidence-based research over the last thirty years has shown that food advertising influences children's food choices, food preferences, food purchase requests, and diets, and is associated with the increased rates of obesity in children and youth;<sup>1,2,3</sup> and

Whereas children are less able to understand the persuasive intent of marketing or the long-term consequences of their food choices than adults;<sup>2,4</sup> and

Whereas only 2% of children (2 to 19 years) meet the USDA's five main recommendations for a healthful diet.<sup>5</sup> Intakes of saturated fat, trans fat, and sodium by children and youth are higher than recommended and intakes of calcium, potassium, fiber, magnesium, and vitamin E are lower than recommended;<sup>6</sup> and

Whereas altering the type and amount of marketing and advertising directed to children is an important part of a comprehensive effort to make the environment in communities and schools more supportive of parents' efforts to feed their children a healthful diet.<sup>1</sup>

The Institute of Medicine report, *Food Marketing to Children and Youth: Threat or Opportunity?*, concluded that food and beverage marketing practices geared to children and youth are out of balance with healthful diets and contribute to an environment that puts their health at risk;<sup>1</sup> therefore be it resolved that

The Society for Nutrition Education:

- 1) Encourages collaboration among nonprofit and governmental organizations to develop guidelines for responsible food advertising and marketing aimed at children and adolescents, and urges food companies, advertising agencies, broadcasters, and other food marketers to follow such guidelines;
- 2) Encourages the federal government, states and school districts to implement policies to eliminate the marketing and advertising of foods of poor nutritional quality (foods high in calories, saturated or trans fat, sodium, or added sugars or low in nutrients) from schools. Such policies should include limiting sales of foods and beverages of poor nutritional quality on school campuses through vending machines, school stores, cafeteria a la carte lines, fundraisers, and other school venues;
- 3) Supports funding for media-based campaigns to promote healthful eating and physical activity to children by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and state health departments, like the CDC's VERB campaign;

- 4) Supports restoring the FTC's authority to regulate marketing and advertising to children, including setting nutrition standards for foods and beverages that can be marketed to children; and
- 5) Encourages and supports state and federal funding for the inclusion of a media literacy education component in nutrition and/or health education curricula in elementary and secondary schools. Media literate youth have the skills to recognize, analyze, and evaluate media messages, which better prepares them to interpret marketing messages for foods and beverages which are inconsistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*.

SNE is dedicated to promoting healthful, sustainable food choices and has a vision of healthy people in healthy communities. This resolution supports the goal of working to make environments more supportive of the development and practice of healthful eating habits in children and youth.

#### Addendum:

1. Title: Resolution to Support Responsible Food Marketing to Children
2. Drafted: September 16, 2005. Revised May 17, 2006.
3. Contact person for future communications: Marilyn Briggs
4. SNE members endorsing the resolution:
  1. Catherine Briggs
  2. Marilyn Briggs
  3. Isobel Contento
  4. Liz Crockett
  5. Jan Dodds
  6. Tracy Fox
  7. Loris Freier
  8. Joan Gussow
  9. Alison Harmon
  10. Melinda Hemmelgarn
  11. Karrie Heneman
  12. Arnell Hinkle
  13. John A. Krakowski
  14. Jane Levine
  15. Audrey Maretski
  16. Christine McCullum
  17. Leslie Mikkelsen
  18. Rita Mitchell
  19. Julie Schneider
  20. Judy Schure

21. Barbara Storper
22. Angie Tagtow
23. Caroline Webber
24. Jennifer Wilkins
25. Margo Wootan

5. List of people from whom input has been sought: A thorough review of the public health, medical and marketing literature was completed in drafting this resolution. This work was also informed by participation in workshops conducted by the Institute of Medicine, Federal Trade Commission and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, at which there were presentations by a diverse group of stakeholders including the packaged food industry, restaurants, children's television stations and other child-directed media, and the advertising industry.

6. Primary audience for this resolution: SNE members, SNE Board of Directors, and the SNE Advisory Committee on Public Policy (ACPP).

7. Relevancy of the resolution and its intended outcomes to SNE's mission or activities: SNE is dedicated to promoting healthful, sustainable food choices and has a vision of healthy people in healthy communities. This resolution supports the goal of working to make environments more supportive of the development and practice of healthful eating habits. The authors reviewed an enormous number of articles from the health, medical, and marketing literature and from industry trade publications. The authors have met with and discussed the issue of food marketing with many food companies, entertainment companies, other food marketers, and government officials. A wide range of view points were considered in drafting this resolution.

8. Projected outcomes of this resolution and ways it will be used: The introduction of the resolution will provide an opportunity for discussion of the issue of food marketing and advertising to children. It may also stimulate discussion of how responsible food marketing can be encouraged among food companies, broadcasters and others marketing food to children. It considers both strengthening self regulation and government actions. If passed, this resolution will be advisory to SNE's Board and Advisory Committee on Public Policy (ACPP). A discussion and vote on this resolution will help SNE and ACPP gauge the extent of support among SNE's membership regarding addressing the issue of food marketing to children and will help guide SNE's advocacy efforts around this issue.

9. Additional support requested from SNE's administrative staff or volunteers: The SNE staff will be requested to assist with the process of voting if the resolution is presented at the Annual Meeting. If the resolution passes, the staff will be asked to put the resolution on the SNE website. Other than this, any support from volunteers would occur in the course of regular Board or ACPP activities. Costs to implement this resolution would be minimal.

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<sup>1</sup> McGinnis, JM, Gootman, JA, Kraak, VI, Editors, Committee on Food Marketing and the Diets of Children and Youth. *Food Marketing to Children and Youth: Threat or Opportunity?* Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 2005, prepublication copy.

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<sup>2</sup> Koplan JP, Liverman CT, and Kraak VA, Editors, Committee on Prevention of Obesity in Children and Youth. *Preventing Childhood Obesity: Health in the Balance*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy of Sciences, 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Hastings G, et al. (Prepared for the U.K. Food Standards Agency). *Review of the Research on the Effects of Food Promotion to Children*. Glasgow, England: Center for Social Marketing, September 2003.

<sup>4</sup> American Psychological Association. *Report on the APA Task Force on Advertising and Children*. Washington, D.C.: APA, February 2004.

<sup>5</sup> Munoz K, et al. "Food Intakes of U.S. Children and Adolescents Compared with Recommendations." *Pediatrics* 1997, 100:323-329 (erratum in *Pediatrics* 1998, 101:952-953).

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). *Nutrition and Your Health: Dietary Guidelines for Americans. 2005 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee Report*. Washington, D.C.:DHHS & USDA, 2004. Available: <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines/dga2005/report/> [accessed May 17, 2006].