



Advertising Standards Canada
Les normes canadiennes de la publicité

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Leading Food and Beverage Companies Release Commitments on Children's Advertising

(Toronto Feb 6, 2008) Advertising Standards Canada (ASC) today released the details on how leading Canadian food and beverage companies are shifting the landscape of advertising directed to children under 12.

Under the terms of the Canadian Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative (Children's Advertising Initiative), first announced in April 2007, 16 leading food and beverage companies committed to shift their advertising directed to children under 12 to the promotion of healthier dietary choices and healthy active living.

Advertising by the participants represents an overwhelming majority of the food and beverage advertising in children's programming today.

"To have received the 2004 statistic that childhood obesity rates had tripled over the past twenty-five years was just appalling to me," said Health Minister Tony Clement, who attended last year's launch of the Children's Advertising Initiative. "Clearly it's time for a new way of thinking and acting, and I commend responsible industry members who are preparing to help tackle this issue."

"The Children's Advertising Initiative strengthens Canada's already rigorous framework for regulating children's advertising. The system includes preclearance of all children's commercials, a strict code of advertising standards and a robust consumer complaint mechanism," said Linda J. Nagel, ASC President and CEO. "The participants are committed to the principles of accountability and transparency. As the Children's Advertising Initiative administrator, ASC will audit their compliance and publish annual reports on the results."

The Commitments

Today's announcement sets out each participant's Commitment for the first year of the Canadian Advertising Initiative. The comprehensive Commitments cover advertising in print, on television, radio and the Internet.

- Campbell Company of Canada, General Mills Canada Corporation, Kellogg Canada Inc, Kraft Canada Inc, McDonald's Restaurants of Canada Ltd, Nestlé Canada Inc, Parmalat Canada Inc., and Weston Bakeries Limited will direct 100 per cent of their children's advertising to healthier dietary choices in accordance with standards that are consistent with scientific and/or government nutrition standards.
- Cadbury Adams Canada Inc, Coca-Cola Canada, Hershey Canada Inc, Janes Family Foods Ltd, Mars Canada Inc, McCain Foods Canada, PepsiCo Canada, and Unilever Canada Inc. will not direct advertising to children under 12.

Participating companies have also committed to:

- incorporate only products that meet the Children's Advertising Initiative criteria for healthier dietary choices in interactive games primarily directed to children under 12 years of age;
- restrict the use of third party licensed characters in children's advertising to products that meet the Children's Advertising Initiative criteria for healthier dietary choices;

- not pay for or seek to place food and beverage products in program/editorial content of any medium primarily directed to children; and
- not advertise food or beverage products in elementary schools.

Since the launch last April, the majority of companies have begun implementing their Commitments. Eleven companies have already implemented their Commitments and every company will have completed implementation by the end of 2008.

Under the terms of the Children's Advertising Initiative ASC, the national advertising self-regulatory body, will:

- publish the participant Commitments;
- audit compliance; and
- issue annual compliance reports to the public.

Participant Commitments can be found at <http://www.adstandards.com/childrensinitiative>

Canadian Framework for Regulating Children's Advertising

Canada has one of the strongest frameworks in the world for regulating advertising to children. Canada's system for regulating children's food and beverage commercials starts with government regulations under the *Food and Drugs Act*. Additionally, children's food and beverage commercials are subject to the requirements of the Canadian Association of Broadcasters' *Broadcast Code for Advertising to Children*. Adherence to this broadcast code, including preclearance of each children's commercial by a committee that includes industry and parent representatives, is a condition of broadcast license by the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission. Canada's self-regulatory system also includes a rigorous system for responding to consumer complaints about advertisements under the provisions of *Canadian Code of Advertising Standards*, which covers all media.

Advertising Standards Canada

Advertising Standards Canada (ASC) is the national advertising industry self-regulatory body committed to creating and maintaining community confidence in advertising. ASC members include leading advertisers, advertising agencies, media and suppliers to the advertising industry who are committed to supporting responsible and effective advertising self-regulation. A not-for-profit organization, ASC administers the *Canadian Code of Advertising Standards*, the principal instrument of advertising self-regulation in Canada, and a national mechanism for accepting and responding to consumers' complaints about advertising. Complaints are adjudicated by independent volunteer councils, and ASC reports to the community on upheld complaints in its quarterly *Ad Complaints Report*. Through ASC Clearance Services, ASC provides advertising copy review to ensure compliance in five regulated categories. ASC celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2007.

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