Engaging Young People in Countermarketing Unhealthy Food: A Toolkit from the CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute and the East Harlem Youth Food Educators Project

Working with youth to develop countermarketing campaigns, advocacy and public speaking skills, and apply design techniques to create original artwork for campaigns.
APPENDIX A:

Handouts
Handout 1: Eight Key Elements of Tobacco Countermarketing Campaigns

Tobacco countermarketing campaigns have been shown to decrease youth and young adult tobacco use. These campaigns include eight elements that make them successful. The eight elements are listed below. Can you apply them to the food countermarketing campaigns you will develop?

1. **Communicate the negative health effects of smoking.** For more than 40 years, tobacco campaigns have shown that talking about the health consequences of tobacco use can be effective. While the main message of early programs in California and Florida were to expose the dishonesty and manipulation of the tobacco industry, more recent countermarketing campaigns, like the truth campaign, clearly discuss the negative health impacts of smoking.

   ![The Marlboro man feels sorrow for his horse killed by second hand smoke.](image)

2. **Mention industry manipulation of consumers.** Campaigns that discuss the misleading practices tobacco companies use have been successful. By making others aware of what the tobacco industry does, (for example tobacco companies have: denied that tobacco is addictive, provided misleading research on the harms of tobacco, and marketed their products to youths and other at-risk populations) countermarketers challenged the honesty of tobacco companies.

   ![This early truth billboard features a tobacco executive wearing a bikini.](image)
3. Spark negative emotions. Tobacco countermarketing campaigns that spark emotions such as outrage have been successful, especially those focusing on teens.\(^4\) Magazine ads from the *truth* campaign showing stitched mouths, eyes and ears of youth send the message that tobacco companies prevent young people from seeing, hearing and telling the truth about the marketing strategies tobacco companies use.

![Truth ad](image)

This *truth* ad encouraged young people to speak the truth about the tobacco industry. [Credit](#)

4. Mock popular brands. Campaigns used messages and images that challenged, mocked or weakened the branding of tobacco companies. For many national companies, their brand is their most valuable strength. Changing the associations people have with the brand, which the tobacco industry spent billions of dollars to create, can be a powerful influence.

![Truth campaign ad](image)

A *truth* campaign ad showing a Marlboro man with mules carrying body bags. [Credit](#)

5. Tailor campaigns for specific groups. Research shows that tailoring campaigns by race and ethnicity\(^5\) and peer group\(^6\) can be effective in reaching many. The Commune Campaign, which reduced smoking among young adult “hipsters” in San Diego, is an example.\(^7\)

![T-shirts](image)

T-shirts designed by Commune Project for “young hipsters”. [Credit](#)
6. Disapprove the tobacco industry aiming their marketing to at-risk groups.

Some tobacco countermarketing campaigns target at-risk populations such as children, Latinos, African-Americans or immigrants. For African-Americans and other groups, the desire to protect their community has shown success in organizing them to fight against tobacco marketing.⁸

![A truth ad tailored for African-American youth Credit](image)

7. Establish a distinct countermarketing campaign brand. Some countermarketing campaigns include design elements such as a logo which makes them stand out.⁹ The truth campaign created a brand logo that has a memorable and specific color scheme.¹⁰

![The truth logo. Credit](image)
8. Engage users in all phases of campaign. Another key lesson from tobacco countermarketing is the value of engaging the people the campaign hopes to reach in all phases of the campaign. Young people can be believable communicators with their peers and family. Often they are more effective than adults in reaching their own peer group. Three stages of engagement have been used a lot: 1) meaningful input on campaign design, 2) peers as spokespeople for the campaign, and 3) interactive peer participation in message delivery. However, the truth and Commune campaigns went beyond just showcasing youth and young adults in their campaigns; they engaged their audience throughout campaign development and execution. 11,12
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Handout 3A: Food &amp; Beverage Marketing Strategies</strong></th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adapted from Global Health Foundation’s Health Trek, 2015</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideal Kids</strong></td>
<td>Why do all the teens in this ad have perfect hair, perfect teeth and perfect skin?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Family Fun</strong></td>
<td>Is this family really having that much fun because of that food or meal?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Excitement</strong></td>
<td>Can this meal or food actually create the excitement shown?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Star Power</strong></td>
<td>Will you magically be transformed into your favorite celebrity, or be just like them, just by eating the same thing?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bandwagon</strong></td>
<td>Everyone else is doing it, so why not me?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Heartstrings</strong></td>
<td>What a warm feeling this food or drink creates. Sign me up!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cartoon Characters</strong></td>
<td>If Sponge Bob likes, it's got to be awesome.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cool Factor</strong></td>
<td>The music, feel and vibe of the ad hits home. I'll be cool and popular if I eat or drink this product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jingles or Slogans</strong></td>
<td>With a catchy song or phrase like that, how can I resist?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Handout 3B: 5 Steps to Create a Countermarketing Campaign
Adapted from SAMSA, Developing a Social Marketing Campaign, 2015

Step #1 Who is Your Audience?
- Is your target audience youth between the ages of 14-16, or youth in a specific community? Choose your target audience and tailor your campaign for them.

Step #2 What marketing channels will use for the campaign?
- You can choose many ways to market your campaign. Choose a channel where your campaign is most likely to be seen by your target audience. Some channels are blogs, magazine articles, print ads, posters, billboards, websites, social media (i.e., Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat), television, email blasts, etc.

Step #3 How will people benefit from your campaign?
- What do you want your campaign to do? Do you want your campaign to inspire others to make healthier food choices, or to be more aware of the strategies used by big food companies to make unhealthy food appealing? Make sure people get something out of your campaign!

Step #4 What is your main message?
- What do you want your target audience to do after they see or hear your campaign? Your campaign’s main message should be very clear and relate to the behavior change you want to see.

Step #5 Test your campaign, get some feedback and make it better.
- Once you have some materials ready, test it out with some friends and peers. Find out what they liked and didn’t like, and take note of any suggestions they may have. Testing your campaign is a crucial step in making it better!
Handout 4: YOFE Campaign Guide

Directions: Answer the questions below to help you organize your campaign and think through what you want your campaign to look like.

Group Members:

Campaign Topic:

Campaign Name:

1. What are the goals for your campaign?

2. What is your campaign’s message?

3. Who is your audience? How old are they? Where do they live?

4. Emotional Response: How do you want the audience to feel when coming across your campaign?

5. Where will your campaign be delivered (schools, specific location/area, different youth organizations, etc.)? Why?

6. Medium(s) for delivering campaign (e.g. social media, poster, video, shirts, stickers, etc.)?

7. Resources (websites, books, etc.) that you will use to gather facts for your campaign?

8. Will you use any hashtags? If so, what will it be?

9. Supplies that you will need to carry out your campaign?
Handout 5: YOFE Exploring the Community!

The purpose of this activity is to make you more aware of the food landscape of your community. During your exploration, you will take note of the types of food service businesses and food ads you see in the neighborhood. If there are a lot of youth, we suggest dividing them into groups to explore different parts of the community.

Directions: Pick a specific area in your community to explore as group. Answer the questions below as you explore. Once you are all done exploring, discuss the answers to the questions.

1. How many fast food restaurants did you notice? What are the names?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

2. How many “healthy” food stores and/or restaurants did you notice? What are the names?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

3. How many supermarkets did you notice? What are the names?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

4. How many stores sold fresh fruits and vegetables?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

5. How many unhealthy food ads did you notice? From which food stores/restaurants?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________

6. Did you notice any ads in the community that countered the unhealthy food ads you saw? If yes, briefly describe the ad. Were there any ads promoting healthy foods? What were their messages?
   __________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________
Handout 8A: YOFE Tips for Public Speaking

✓ **Visualize yourself speaking confidently**
  Who do you think of when you think of a good public speaker? Write their name down. Now picture yourself speaking confidently like your favorite public speaker. Practice speaking and presenting the way they would deliver a speech.

✓ **Control your nervousness**
  Relax by taking slow deep breaths. Go back and forth, squeezing each of your fists tightly for five seconds—this can help calm you down. Practice self-talk by encouraging and telling yourself “I got this!”, “I am going to do great!”, “I am confident!”. Think of one of your favorite places and imagine yourself being there when you give your speech/presentation. Pause if you need to, take 5-30 seconds to regain your thoughts and/or composure. Lastly, you can always picture the audience wearing something funny to help calm your nerves.

✓ **Grab the audience's attention**
  Use the first 20-30 seconds to start with an exciting or interesting story, fact or picture (if you are using slides) to grab the audience's attention. Include interaction in your presentation to keep your audience engaged—you can do this by asking a simple question. Also don't forget to make eye contact with your audience to draw them in and make them feel involved. Hold your glance 3 seconds at a time.

✓ **Structure your talk**
  Draw a stick figure person with feet. Think about your presentation as a stick figure. It should have 3 parts: introduction (head), body (body), and conclusion (feet). Make sure your presentation clearly has all three!

✓ **Stay on message**
  Have one main message and theme and stick to it! You can confuse your audience if you drift off topic too much, or if your presentation has more than one message.

✓ **Remember that you have an important voice**
  Whether you are speaking to the President of the Unites States or a room full of preschoolers, you should be confident. As a youth, you have a unique point-of-view so be excited to share your message. Relax, smile and have fun!

✓ **Practice, practice, practice!**
  Practice in front of a mirror and look at your facial expressions and body language. You can also record a video of yourself practicing your presentation. Are you saying 'um' or 'like' a lot? Are you staring at your feet and/or swaying back and forth? Take notes of what you'd like to change.
Practice some more and improve your public speaking skills. You can even practice in front of your family and friends and ask them how you can improve.

Handout 8B: YOFE Countermarketing Campaign Presentation Guide and Checklist

Directions: Use this guide to prepare for your presentation. Listed below are elements that your presentation should have. You can choose to create a PowerPoint presentation, or present in another way, but make sure to be as creative as you can! Some tips are to include humor, make your presentation interactive by involving the audience, present your campaign like a skit, and have an aspect that the audience will remember.

Put a “✔” next to the element once you have added it in your presentation.

- Title of campaign
- Main message
- Target audience
- Location where campaign will be implemented
- Evidence/research/facts that supports your campaign
- Emotional response (how do you want the audience to feel when seeing your campaign, and why)
- Medium(s) for delivering campaign and why you decided to use them
- Ultimate goal for countermarketing campaign
- Present final product (e.g. if making a video show it to audience; if making t-shirt, sticker, etc. show to audience)
- Conclusion and take-away message (i.e. thoughts you want to audience to leave with and think about after your presentation)
- Resources/references (tell us where you got your facts from)
Handout 10: YOFE Countermarketing Campaign Presentations Feedback

Thank you for attending the YOFE countermarketing campaign presentations! By offering feedback, you can help the youths fine-tune and enhance their campaigns. Please complete one questionnaire for each campaign that is presented.

Campaign Name: ____________________________________________________________

1. Did the youths clearly present their campaign? □ Yes □ No

   1a. If no, what was unclear?
       __________________________________________________________
       __________________________________________________________
       __________________________________________________________
       __________________________________________________________

2. What did you like about the campaign?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

3. How can the youths strengthen their campaign?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________

4. Any additional comments about the campaign?
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________
APPENDIX B:
Evaluation Tools
YOFE Program Pre & Post Survey

Thank you for participating in the Youth Food Educators (YOFE) Program! This survey will help us understand your thoughts about community health issues, food and food marketing. Your answers will help us improve the program. All responses are confidential and no one outside the program will see your responses.

Your name (please print): _______________________________
Today’s date: _______________________________

Part A: What you do
Directions: Please circle the choice you feel is most appropriate for your response.

In the last 30 days, how often have you:

1. ...talked about healthy eating with family.
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)

2. ...talked about healthy eating with friends.
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)

3. ...talked about healthy eating with other young people in your school or community.
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)

4. ...talked about food advertising with family.
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)
5. ...talked about food advertising with friends.
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)

6. ...talked about food advertising with other young people in your school or community.
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)

7. ...talked about the role of food companies in encouraging people to eat unhealthy food with family.
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)

8. ...talked about the role of food companies in encouraging people to eat unhealthy food with friends.
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)
9. talked about the role of food companies in encouraging people to eat unhealthy food with **other young people in your school or community.**
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)

10. talked about finding alternatives to unhealthy food with **family.**
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)

11. talked about finding alternatives to unhealthy food with **friends.**
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)

12. talked about finding alternatives to unhealthy food with **other young people in your school or community.**
   a. Never (0 times)
   b. Seldom (1-3 times)
   c. Sometimes (4-6 times)
   d. Often (7-9 times)
   e. Very often (10 or more times)

**Please write your response for the next two questions.**

13. When you see ads for soda (for example, Pepsi, Coca Cola, Mountain Dew), what does it make you think? (Write as many thoughts as you can):

   __________________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________________
   __________________________________________________________________________________
14. When you see ads for fast food like McDonald’s, Burger King or Taco Bell, what does it make you think? (Write as many thoughts as you can):

__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

Part B: What you believe
Directions: For the next two questions, please put a check mark “✓” in the box you feel is most appropriate for your response.

1. How confident do you feel that you can...:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very confident</th>
<th>Confident</th>
<th>Somewhat confident</th>
<th>Not very confident</th>
<th>Not at all confident</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Influence your friends to eat healthier foods?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence your family to eat healthier foods?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence other young people in your school or community?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design health messages that discourage people you care about from eating unhealthy foods?</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take actions that will make Harlem a healthier place?</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create ad campaigns on health that will attract the attention of young people in your community?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create ad campaigns on health that will attract the attention of adults like your parents in your community?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talk about health to other people?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. How important do you think the following influences are on what young people like you choose to eat or drink?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influence</th>
<th>Very Important</th>
<th>Somewhat Important</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Not very Important</th>
<th>Not at all Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What local food stores sell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TV advertising</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Online advertising</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

2a. What other influences are important?
____________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________

Directions: Please put a check mark “✓” in the box you feel is most appropriate for your response.

3. How much do you agree with the following statements about big food companies such as McDonald’s, Red Bull, Pepsi, and Hostess?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Neither agree or disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Big food companies are trying hard to sell healthier foods.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big food companies have the responsibility to tell us about the health effects of their products.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big food companies only want to make money, they don't care about the health effects of their products.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big food companies care about the health of people like me.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big food companies advertise to people like me because they think they can easily mislead us about their products.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If my friends or I eat too much unhealthy food, it's our fault, not the fault of big food companies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in my community trust big food companies to do the right thing.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
4. Before joining YOFE, have you participated in any type of food program in your school, youth organization, church, community, or elsewhere?  
No ______ Yes ________

If you answered “yes” to question 3, answer questions 3a and 3b. If you answered “no” for question 3, go to Part C.

4a. **If yes**, what is the name of the school, youth program or organization?  
______________________________________________________________________________

4b. If you participated in a food program, how often were the following topics discussed in the food program? (Please put a check mark “✓” in the box you feel is most appropriate for your response below.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How food influences health</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthy food and unhealthy food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ways to prevent obesity &amp; other diet-related illnesses</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role of food companies in food choices</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Food choices in the community</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Hunger and food insecurity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How young people can change food policy</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

4c. What other topics were discussed?  
______________________________________________________________________________
Part C: Who You Are
(Your answers to these questions will be kept private. The information is for research purposes only.)

Directions: Please put a check mark “✓” in the box that best describes you

1. Are you: ☐ Male    ☐ Female
2. What is your age? ☐ 13    ☐ 14    ☐ 15    ☐ 16    ☐ 17    ☐ 18
3. What grade are you in? ☐ 5th grade    ☐ 6th grade    ☐ 7th grade    ☐ 8th grade    ☐ 9th grade    ☐ 10th grade    ☐ 11th grade    ☐ 12th grade    ☐ Not in school
☐ Other (please specify): _________________________
4. What is your race/ethnicity(s)? (You may check more than one box)
   ☐ White    ☐ Black or African American    ☐ Asian
   ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
   ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native ☐ Other (please specify): _________________________
5. Are you Hispanic or Latino? ☐ Yes ☐ No
YOFE Program Feedback Questionnaire

1. On a scale of 1-5 where 1 is poor and 5 is excellent, how would you rate the YOFE program overall?
   - □ 1-Poor
   - □ 2-Fair
   - □ 3-Good
   - □ 4-Very good
   - □ 5-Excellent

2. What do you wish the YOFE program included more of? (Check all that apply.)
   - □ Longer sessions
   - □ More trips
   - □ More guest speakers
   - □ Visits to other youth food justice programs/organizations
   - □ More sessions on the same topics
   - □ More sessions on different topics (please list topics): __________________________
   - □ Other (please explain): __________________________

3. What did you like most about the YOFE program?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

4. What did you like least about the YOFE program?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

5. How do you think we could improve the YOFE program for the next group of participants?
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
APPENDIX C:

Resources
Selected Resources on Food Marketing to Children and Counter Advertising Campaigns


This article discusses reviewed documents that reveal the most common persuasive techniques on television to promote unhealthy food to children. Some of these techniques include the use of premium offers, promotional characters, nutrition and health related claims, the theme of taste, and the emotional appeal of fun. We believe learning about these persuasive techniques will give us insight into some of the ways unhealthy food and beverage advertisements aired during Hispanic children programming and adult programming capture the attention of their targeted audience.


This systematic review finds that current voluntary pledges by food and beverage industry to reduce the amount of marketing to children has only a small or no impact on children’s exposure due to differences in what is being measured; furthermore company definitions will often favor their own products. This study suggests that industry-led self-regulatory pledges are ineffective and in order to have a significant reduction of children’s exposure to the marketing of unhealthy foods, stronger government oversight is suggested.


This article examines data that reviews the impact of unhealthy food and beverage advertisements on the food related behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs among adults. It also explores the comparison and strong association of advertising exposure and its effects on food-related behaviors between adolescents and adults. The information from this article can be used to elaborate on the comparison of advertisement exposure between Hispanic children and adults and explain why exposure to unhealthy food advertisements affects one group more than the other.


This content analysis of food and beverage advertisements on Spanish language television that aired in the after-school hours found that most of the food commercials are for unhealthy foods with fast food
representing almost half of the food advertisements and sugary drinks representing more than half of beverage advertisements. This study suggests that because of the high risk of overweight and diet-related health issues among Latino children, creative strategies need to be developed to promote healthy food and beverages that counteract unhealthy advertisements.


This study found that beverage and fast food advertisements were more frequently shown on Hispanic television than on mainstream television. It also found that Hispanic network television advertisers are significantly more likely to use health and nutrition claims on mainstream network television. The Spanish-speaking population may be more susceptible to the influence of such information, which demonstrates the potential in using television advertising to raise awareness about health issues and nutritional information.


This study found that fast-food represented a significantly higher proportion of food and breakfast cereal ads on Spanish language television as opposed to English language television. Hispanic preschoolers were also found to view unhealthier food ads on Spanish language television than Hispanic adolescents. Younger children may not have the cognitive ability to recognize the persuasive intent of advertising, which is troubling for the Hispanic preschool age population.


This study examines the nutritional quality of foods advertised on Spanish language children’s programming in comparison to foods advertised on English language children’s advertisements. Reviewing this study provided ideas on what criteria should be used to measure the advertisements observed during Hispanic children programming.

This research brief provides a wealth of useful research results about how Latino youth have more hours of media use than their Caucasian counterparts, and also discusses the direct relationship between television viewing and increased consumption of low-nutrient foods which are most advertised on television. Furthermore, it mentions that Latino youth in particular are an important target among fast-food and soda companies as they are using more culturally relevant messages. This report also notes the potential effectiveness of culturally specific media campaigns focused on healthy eating and physical activity.


This article examines how food and beverage industries are using digital media to target Hispanic youth with advertisement campaigns. According to this article, marketing that targets Hispanic youth has become a promising and lucrative field. This article provides insight to why marketers are targeting Hispanic youth.


This article examines the food advertised on television networks serving children. It examines what proportions of the advertisements are for food, what types of food are being promoted, and what time these commercials are being aired. This article also compares ads on English language networks with ads on Spanish networks. Bell and Cassady’s work provides guidance on how to categorize the commercials observed from Hispanic adult and children programming.

This thesis is a content analysis of Spanish-language food advertisements targeted toward children. It codes data to determine if advertisements are adhering to advertising guidelines. This paper provides a model for content analysis of Spanish language food advertisements, and an excellent introduction on the impact of food advertising on Hispanic youth.


This study demonstrates that Hispanics prefer both Spanish language media content and content that is visual in nature. It makes note that not all Hispanic individuals are “homogenous in their media attention.” It also found that cultural identity strongly contributes to the use of media.


This paper is helpful in understanding themes observed in the Spanish language advertisements and how they influence consumer decisions regarding food.


This study closely examines the effect of advertising on food choice for children and the role literacy could potentially play in combating this effect. The study thus generates suggestions for future policies and advocacy efforts. This paper can inform the creation of an anti-advertising toolkit that can be shared and utilized by the public.


This study is a content analysis of food advertisements targeted toward children and adolescents. This project is designed to dissect the nutritional content presented in commercials. The in-depth analysis of nutritional content can help decipher the unhealthy versus healthy messages found in the food advertisements.

This study evaluated the effects of the VERB Campaign in 2002 to 2006. The VERB Campaign was launched by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to encourage children ages 9 to 13 years to be physically active every day.


This article discusses how targeted marketing techniques is the core form of marketing and is very effective in promoting unhealthy products to at-risk and vulnerable populations. It stresses that professionals in public health and related fields should be mindful of the influence targeted marketing can have on the health of children, adolescents, ethnic minorities and other populations.


This study examines the impact the truth campaign had on US youth in grades 8, 10, and 12. The study found that that campaign contributed to a significant decline in smoking among youths (22%), and proved that countermarketing geared towards youth is effective.
Additional Web Resources


Food Marketing, F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America's Future. Available at: http://fasinfat.org/foodmarketing/

East Harlem Children Learn to Shop for Healthy Food. Available at: https://www.dnainfo.com/new-york/20101028/harlem/east-harlem-children-learn-shop-for-healthy-food-at-afterschool-program

Youth Curricula
Children’s Aid Society Food Justice Program Curriculum. Available at: http://www.childrensoldsociety.org/gohealthy/food-justice-program

National Institutes of Health, Media-Smart Youth Curriculum. Available at: https://www.nichd.nih.gov/msy/materials/Pages/default.aspx
