



BAN JUNK FOOD ADS TO CHILDREN

CARING FOR KIDS HEALTH

A Greens' preventative health plan to tackle childhood obesity

Children are a prime target for advertisers and kids are constantly bombarded with ads for unhealthy food when they watch TV. Caring for our kids means stopping these harmful ads which would have real impact on the health of our children.

Parents are sick and tired of the constant barrage of ads to their children promoting sugary food and drinks. Advertisers pay top dollar to market to children because they know it works. Marketers of unhealthy food are among the top advertisers to kids. It's no coincidence that we have seen an explosion in childhood obesity in recent years. Parents want these ads to stop – and the Greens are the only party prepared to stand up to the junk food marketers and put an end to them.

> STOPPING THE BOMBARDMENT

Television advertising has been shown to influence children's thoughts, feelings, preferences and purchasing requests. Australian children's exposure to television advertising is amongst the highest in the world, with children on average watching 20 hours or more of television per weekⁱ. We must reverse this trend.

The Greens will take the issue of harmful advertising to children head on by:

- Setting enforceable, national standard times for child-friendly TV ads that would **ban junk food ads on commercial TV between 6am and 9am, and 4pm and 9pm on weekdays; and between 6am and 12pm, and 4pm and 9pm on weekends and during school holidays.**
- Pay television channels dedicated to children's programming would be banned from showing junk food at any time.
- Companies using emails and smartphones to target underage customers would be prevented from sending material promoting unhealthy foods.

> THE NEED FOR ACTION

The rise in obesity poses a serious challenge to Australian health. The rise is particularly startling amongst children, 25% of

whom are now overweight or obese compared to just 11% 20 years ago.ⁱⁱ

Part of the reason kids are eating less healthy foods is the demand created by marketers who have developed a sophisticated understanding of child psychology and have used it ruthlessly to drive sales in sugary and fatty junk food.

Industry codes that govern junk food advertising are weak and the enforcement is toothless, allowing no meaningful penalties against repeat offenders who break the rules.ⁱⁱⁱ

The Greens believe that a focus on preventative health is crucial to Australia's future. We need to care for our children's health by standing up to the marketers and broadcasters who are profiting by peddling them harmful snacks.

> HELPING PARENTS, HELPING KIDS

Parents face an uphill battle to get their kids to eat healthy food. Almost no money is spent promoting healthy choices while billions is spent advertising junk food meals, soft drinks and unhealthy snacks. From TV and magazines, at sporting events and in supermarket aisles, packaging and advertisements are everywhere and they are aimed squarely at impressionable young children.

The Greens will start by banning TV advertisements. This will help parents in the battle to instil healthy eating habits in their children and potentially save them a struggle with obesity later in life. It's a move Australian parents support and is a prudent investment in our nation's future health.

ⁱ Department of Health and Ageing, Preventative Health Taskforce, Technical Paper 1, *Obesity in Australia: a need for urgent action*

ⁱⁱ Obesity Policy Coalition: A comprehensive approach to protecting children from unhealthy food advertising and promotion

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