Childhood obesity is rising globally and is predicted to affect 254 million children by 2030 - a 100 million increase in the course of a decade.*

Countries worldwide have committed to a zero increase in obesity by 2025. To meet this commitment, governments are encouraged to promote healthy behaviours and reshape obesogenic environments through a variety of population-wide policies.

Limiting children's exposure to the marketing of unhealthy foods and beverages is one such measure. Currently, over 30 countries have some form of mandatory marketing restriction in place.

While other reviews investigated the effectiveness of marketing restrictions for preventing obesity, the current review assessed the cost and cost-effectiveness, equity and acceptability of interventions to limit child exposure to unhealthy foods marketing.

Cost and cost-effectiveness
Policies to minimise child exposure to the marketing of unhealthy foods are low cost and highly cost-effective.

Some global estimates find that marketing restrictions can lead to a $6.6 saving for every $1 invested. Out of 13 child-oriented obesity prevention policies, marketing restrictions were found to be the most cost-effective in the long-term.

Equity
A social gradient may exist in child exposure to unhealthy product marketing. Children from lower socio-economic groups appear to watch more television and are therefore more exposed to food advertising than children from higher-income groups.

Moreover, students from lower-income groups tend to eat more unhealthy snacks and more total calories after being exposed to unhealthy food advertising.

This observation is also mirrored in the finding that marketing restrictions would result in 1.4 times higher total cost savings and 1.5 times higher health benefits for the most disadvantaged socio-economic groups.

Acceptability
The general population mainly supports marketing restrictions to protect children, with some concerns raised regarding possible limitations to free speech.

Health and consumer groups are strongly in favour of legislative controls. Mandatory regulations are opposed by commercial stakeholders as they prefer voluntary measures.

Overall, the review concluded that there is sufficient evidence for policy makers to adopt policies to limit the exposure of children to unhealthy food marketing in order to tackle obesogenic food environments.


Find out more about the STOP project here: stopchildobesity.eu
MARKETING RESTRICTIONS SAVE $6.6 FOR EVERY $1 SPENT. IT IS THE MOST COST-EFFECTIVE CHILD-ORIENTED OBESITY PREVENTION POLICY.

Mandatory restrictions on unhealthy food marketing are:

- **HIGHLY COST-EFFECTIVE**
- **MODERATELY FAVOURABLE FOR HEALTH EQUITY**
- **STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY HEALTH PROFESSIONALS and CIVIL SOCIETY**
- **MODERATELY TO STRONGLY SUPPORTED BY PUBLIC**
- **MODERATELY TO STRONGLY OPPOSED BY COMMERCIAL ACTORS**

More research needed on:

1. Different household income and parental education levels and ethnic groups
2. Integrated marketing (use of multiple platforms)
3. Linking marketing and consumption especially amongst children
4. Short-term cost impacts

STOP (Science and Technology in childhood Obesity Policy)
stopchildobesity.eu/

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