

## It's Child's Play:

## Advergaming and the Online Marketing of Food to Children



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

July 2006

# It's Child's Play: **Advergaming and the Online Marketing of Food to Children**

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## INTRODUCTION

Over the past 20 years, rates of childhood obesity in this country have increased dramatically. In this context, policymakers and others have raised questions about the impact of food marketing on children. Despite widespread attention to the rapid growth of the Internet as an advertising and marketing tool, very little empirical evidence has been available as to the nature and extent of online food marketing to children. The study presented here is an attempt to fill that gap.

This study is the first systematic analysis of the content of online food marketing to children. It covers topics such as advergames, viral marketing, branded entertainment, promotions, downloads, and media tie-ins.

Within the past year, a number of efforts have been initiated by business, government, and consumer advocacy groups to review the practice of online food marketing to children. However, to this point these groups have had to rely primarily on anecdotal evidence in their treatment of the issue. The purpose of this research is to obtain an accurate depiction of one key aspect of online food marketing to children: corporate or branded websites that either target children directly or contain content that would likely appeal to children age 12 and under.

## METHODOLOGY

Using data from Competitive Media Reports (CMR), researchers identified the top food brands advertised to children on TV, and then searched for corporate or brand websites for those food products. Any child-oriented brand that was in the top 80% of advertising spending in its product category was included in the study. A total of 96 brands were identified through this process.

Websites for these brands were included in the study if they had content for children age 12 and under. In most cases, these were sites whose primary audience was children; in some cases, the primary audience appeared to be either teens or all ages, with content or separate sections likely to appeal to children 12 or under.

Only websites sponsored by a food manufacturer and dealing with the specific branded products identified through the process described above were included in the study; food ads on sites such as nick.com or neopets.com were not included. A total of 77 unique websites were identified through this procedure. Given that some sites contained multiple brands included in the study, and that some brands appear on multiple sites, the final sample included a total of 107 brand/site pairs.

More than 4,000 unique web pages were reviewed and coded for this study. Every page of the identified websites was independently coded by two trained coders. Screenshots were captured for all pages on each website. The average level of inter-coder agreement across all items was 96%.

Data purchased from Nielsen NetRatings indicates that the sites included in the study received a total of 12.2 million visits from children ages 2–11 during the second quarter of 2005.

cool

“Sign into your Passport for cool prizes and FunKtown exclusives.”

promotions

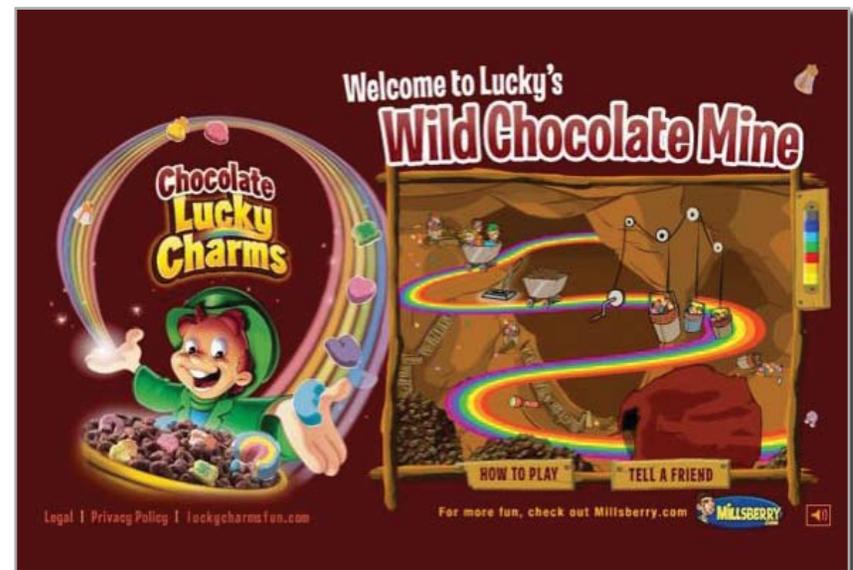
free points

email your friends

## USE OF THE INTERNET TO MARKET FOOD TO CHILDREN

The vast majority (85%) of the leading food brands that target children on TV are also either directly targeting children on the Internet or providing online content likely to be of interest to them. Of the brands that are using the Internet this way, more than three-quarters (77%) have websites specifically created for children (68%) or teens (9%), while 12% have child-oriented sections on websites for a more general audience, and 11% have content likely to be equally appealing to all age groups. Half (50%) of all products included in this study promoted a web address on the product's packaging.

“Create a Froot Loops picture that REALLY GLOWS!”



**Kellogg's Fun K Town**

TOWN MAP INFO CENTER ARCADE THEATER FUN FACTORY SPORTS PLEX KID STATION PASSPORT OFFICE SIGN UP HERE

WELCOME TO FUN K TOWN  
YOU CAN SIGN-UP FOR A PASSPORT HERE  
SIGN UP

RICE KRISPIES CEREAL  
TALKING SOFTWARE!  
CONQUER THE SEA  
APPLE JACKS CEREAL  
POP TARTS TOASTER PASTRIES  
PASSPORT OFFICE  
POPS CEREAL  
FROST LOOPS CEREAL

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“Sprint up the mountain and avoid the cookie dough snowballs.”

## ADVERGAMES

“Advergames” are online games in which a company’s product or brand characters are featured — an advertisement and a game all in one. Online games can provide a more highly involving and entertaining brand experience than is possible with conventional media. From a marketer’s perspective, one of the potential advantages of an advergame is the ability to draw attention to the brand in a playful way, and for an extended period of time.

Advertisers make abundant use of advergames in marketing to children online. About three out of four (73%) of the websites in the study include advergames, ranging from one to more than 60 games per site. In total, 546 unique games containing one or more food brands were counted on the study websites (431 on the brands in the study, and the remainder on related brands).

For example, the site kids.icecream.com invites kids to imagine that “Nestle Push-up Frozen Treats are popping up all over the place, and it’s your job to bop ‘em back down.” For every “pop” that you “bop,” you earn points, and as you become more skilled at the game, you can progress from the “easy” to a “medium” or “hard” level of play. The brand package is the visual centerpiece of the game (it pops up repeatedly), making the brand easier to recall later. This is one of several games on the site. On candystand.com, children can play “Boardwalk Bowling,” with individual Lifesavers serving as the game pieces, and with a pack of Lifesavers and the words “Discover the Refreshing Flavors” pictured on the alley.

Among the games for brands included in the study:

- 97% incorporated at least one type of brand “marker,” such as an image of the food item (e.g., Cap’n Crunch cereal in a bowl), a product package, a brand character (e.g., Tony the Tiger), or a brand logo;
- 80% included two or more types of brand markers;
- 64% included a brand marker as a prominent or featured part of the game, for example, as a game piece, a prize, or a secret treasure (e.g., the object of the game is to catch as many Froot Loops as possible in a bowl);
- Many of the games included features to encourage repeat playing, such as asking if the child wants to play again at the end of the game (71%), offering multiple levels of play to keep the child interested and challenged as they get more skillful at the game (45%), or suggesting other games the visitor might enjoy (22%).

“Games galore with your favorite Spokescandies!”

**m&m's**  
[HOME](#) | [ABOUT M&M'S](#) | [NEWS & PROMOTIONS](#) | [FUN & GAMES](#) | [RECIPES & IDEAS](#) | [M&M'S MINIS' ZONE](#) | [M&M'S STORE](#)  
 Fun & Games Home | Games | TV Commercials | Downloads | E-Cards

## Games

### Trivia Game

Flip the Mix  
 Red vs. Green  
 Color Stacker  
 Wild Tiles  
 Do You Remember Color?  
 ▶ **Trivia Game**  
 Amazing Crispy  
 Yellow Takes Tokyo  
 Monster Movie  
 Staker  
 Save Yellow's Shell  
 Dead Man Hopping

**m&m's**  
**Trivia Game**

[Instructions](#) [Play](#)

Where to Buy M&M'S® Candies | Change Your Email | Contact Us | Site Map | International  
 PRIVACY POLICY | Note to Parents | Legal | Site Owner | Masterfoods USA Newsroom  
 ©2005 Mars, Incorporated. All Rights Reserved.

**NABISCO WORLD**  
[HOME](#) | [GAMES](#) | [PROMOTIONS](#) | [OUR BRANDS](#) | [RECIPES](#) | [SENSIBLE SNACKING](#) | [PRIVACY](#) | [MY PAGE](#) | [LOGOUT](#)

**Profile**  
 Welcome sholin!  
 If you are not sholin,  
 please click here.  
 My Scoreboard ▶  
 Edit Profile ▶  
 Logout ▶

**My Favorite Games**  
 Click here to add games to  
 your favorites list!

**Promotions**  
 Let your voice be heard!  
 Share your thoughts  
 about NabiscoWorld.com  
 Let your voice be heard!  
 Share your thoughts  
 and make NabiscoWorld even  
 better!  
 Take our survey

**Soccer Shootout**  
 Brought to you by:

**Chips Ahoy!**  
**Soccer Shootout**  
 Please select a player  
 Women's Men's

DEVELOPED BY SKYWORKS TECHNOLOGIES, INC.  
 Click Control O to Bookmark this page

**How to Play** **High Scores: 550** [View High Score!](#)

1. Move the mouse left or right to line up the player.
2. Click and hold the mouse button down to place the ball.
3. Push the mouse forward and release the mouse button to kick.

Please see the full instructions by clicking "Help" in the game.

[Home](#) | [Games](#) | [Promotions](#) | [Our Brands](#) | [Recipes](#) | [Sensible Snacking](#) | [Help](#)  
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# CHUCK E. CHEESE'S

**LEVEL**  
**HARD**  
**REGULAR**  
**EASY**

**RESET**

# Tic Tac Toe

**Posiopia** **GAMES** **CC** **MLP** **LOG OUT**

**SIP, SEE RIDDLE SHOW**

**THE WHEEL OF RIDDLES**  
 What will your riddle be?  
 Click SPIN to find out.

**SPIN**

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“Find new yummy smelling Rub ‘N Sniff Froot Loops cereal boxes in stores for a limited time”

free points  
email your friends

## BRAND EXPOSURE AND ADVERTISING CLAIMS

In addition to advergaming, children are exposed throughout the websites to food companies’ products, characters, and logos – and to specific advertising claims about many individual products.

About eight out of ten (79%) study brands include some type of specific advertising statement – “brand benefit” claim – on their sites (e.g., one or more statements touting the brand’s taste, convenience, popularity, variety, or fun). There were 1,500 of these types of claims in this study. For example, “see the candy magically change color in your mouth” on [wonka.com](#), or “you can find new yummy smelling Rub ‘n Sniff Froot Loops cereal boxes in stores for a limited time,” on [frootloops.com](#).

In addition to games, there were an average of two types of brand identifiers per web page within the sites in the study (e.g., an image of a brand’s candy bar or Popsicle, or of the brand’s character, such as Captain Crunch).

The vast majority of sites also offer children a gateway to other sites promoting food products: 84% of sites in the study provided links to one or more additional food-related site.



“The first ever  
3-in-1 fruit  
flavored snack!”

**Cheetos**

# EXPLORATION STATION

HOME | PARENTS | PRIVACY POLICY

← CHEESY ADVENTURES | TV SPOTS | GAMES | DOWNLOADS →

MAY THE CHEESE BE WITH YOU | CHEESE QUEST

**May the Cheese Be with you**

Our hero Chester Cheetah™ zooms into space and comes face to face with his fuzzy foe - again! Will he give in to the Dark Side? Find out for yourself in this twisted tale!

**PLAY NOW**

STAR WARS RESISTANCE

**MAY THE CHEESE BE WITH YOU** PLAY

**CHESTER CHEETAH** **Free-Style** PLAY

**GAMES** PLAY

CHEETAH'S EXPLORERS | TV SPOTS | CHEESY ADVENTURES | DOWNLOADS | GAMES  
 CHEETAH'S PAGE | PROMOTIONS | PRODUCT INFO | CHEETAH STORE | HOME

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“Share the island groove, mon...  
Invite a friend to the island.”

free points  
email your friends

## VIRAL MARKETING

Advertisers have long recognized that peers can be an important source of influence in purchase decisions. The more favorable the information an individual receives from friends or acquaintances, the more likely he or she will adopt a product as well. Recognizing the power of personal information sources, marketers have developed new approaches to try to proactively influence consumers to talk to one another about their products. Viral marketing uses the Internet to encourage consumers to market to one another through personal contact stimulated by the firm’s marketing efforts. This is a practice that has been widely adopted by food companies as a tool for marketing their products to children.

Almost two-thirds (64%) of sites in the study make use of viral marketing, in which children are encouraged to send emails to their friends about a product, transmitting the company’s marketing information to their peers. Embedded in these emails are news, activities and entertainment that are favorable to the brand: an “e-card” using a brand character, or a link to a game on the company’s website. For example, on Keebler’s Hollow Tree website, children are invited to send a friend some “Elfin Magic” in a birthday or seasonal greeting; on the Millsberry site they’re told “There’s no better way to show a friend or relative that you’re thinking about them than by sending a greeting card (whether they live in Millsberry or elsewhere).”

On Chef Boyardee’s chefboy.com site, children can get a free Chef Boyardee Superball if they register in the “Chef Club,” play a game on the site, and email the game to a friend. In a game on the Froot Loops site, children are encouraged to “Tell your friend to help solve the puzzle,” and asked to submit their friend’s first name and email address. On Kellogg’s Apple Jacks site, kids are told to “Share the island groove, mon...Invite a friend to the island.” On Juicy Fruit’s site, kids are encouraged to “send a friend this fruitylicious site,” and told to: “Send this site to 5 friends, and get a code!”

Viral marketing is more common on sites designed specifically for children and teens (74%) than those that also include content for adults (34%).

“Invite friends to  
come over and help  
you redecorate.”

**OREO**  
MOMENTS OF O&M  
OREO STORY O'S  
COOL STUF

PERSONALITY QUIZ  
E-CARDS  
VARIETIES  
NEWS

### Oreo & Milk E-Cards

Please provide the following information to send this E-Card to a friend:

ENTER YOUR NAME:

ENTER YOUR FRIEND'S NAME:

ENTER YOUR FRIEND'S EMAIL:

ENTER A MESSAGE (OPTIONAL):

OREO HOME | MOMENTS | STORY O'S | COOL STUF | QUIZ | E-CARDS | VARIETIES | NEWS

Home | Games | Promotions | Our Brands | Recipes | Sensible Snacking | Help  
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Hi kids, when you see "Ad Break" it means you are viewing a commercial message designed to sell you something. Remember, if you are under 18 years old, you should get a parent's permission before you submit any information about yourself or try to buy anything online.

**MILLSBERRY**  
MY HOME | SHOPPING | HI SCORES | HELP

Welcome cheerio34! [Logout] Westridge won!

MILLSBERRY.COM Address Book

Start! | Map | Games | My Stuff

Shortcuts:

Select Language: English

### Millsberry Post Office

There's no better way to show a friend or relative that you're thinking about them than by sending a greeting card (whether they live in Millsberry or elsewhere). The Millsberry Post Office offers a wide variety of greeting cards, so whether you're marking a special occasion or simply looking to stay in touch, it's sure to have your needs covered!

You sent off a message to poppy234

[Check Inbox (0 new)] [Check Outbox]

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**WHEATLEY'S Juicy Fruit**  
GOO NOW L

PLAY ABRACADABRA GRABRA

SEND A FRIEND THIS FRUITYLICIOUS SITE!

FRIENDS FIRST NAME:

FRIENDS EMAIL:

YOUR FIRST NAME:

YOUR EMAIL:

MESSAGE:

Send this site to 5 friends and get a CODE!

Longer Lasting! Juicy Fruit BIGGER PIECES

HO'LL LAS ONGER

MENU | FUN ROOM | BLOG | TV SPOTS | PRODUCTS | ABOUT JF

**Communication Hut** **Apple Jacks**

Share the island groove, mon.

Type in your information.

Send an e-invite to a friend. We'll send your e-invite right away. We won't use your e-mail or your friend's e-mail for anything else.

Your first name:

Your e-mail:

Invite a friend to the island.

Your friend's first name:

Your friend's e-mail:

[ Back to Top ] [ Close this window ]

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“Do not hesitate!  
Get your FREE tickets today!”

## SWEEPSTAKES AND PROMOTIONS

One way marketers try to attract children’s attention and generate excitement is through promotions, such as sweepstakes, contests, premiums, and sample offers. Two-thirds (65%) of all brands in the study have promotions in which children may participate in some way. The promotions include sweepstakes (40% of sites), such as the chance to win a Nintendo Game Cube system on bubbletape.com, or a trip to Nickelodeon studios on pfgoldfish.com. Other promotions are “premium” offers (31% of sites) — a chance to get free merchandise related to the food product. For example, on the Hershey’s kidztown site children could get a free movie ticket for the re-release of *E.T.* by making multiple purchases of Reese’s candy. Some of these promotions make use of both viral marketing and an extended brand experience: for example, children can earn a free “Hershey’s Happiness” t-shirt with the brand logo on the front if they register and email a friend. Parental permission is required either to enter sweepstakes or to claim a prize.

“Eat, Lick  
and Win!”



**WONKA.com** Golden Ticket WONKAmobile Tour Game Central ShoutOuts Ask Willy my Club Dub AD Buzz

**Find a GOLDEN TICKET** **5 Grand Prizes you can win!** **PLAY THE GT Blaster 3D GAME** **Go!**

Find the Golden Ticket inside specially-marked packages of these WONKA Candy brands and you could win instantly! There are 5 separate GRAND PRIZES that you could win!

**AD Buzz** You could **WIN** a **VIOLET BEAUREGARDE Fantasy Sports Camp Adventure!** Find the Golden Ticket in Sparkle Jerry Cherry LAFFY TAFFY and you could WIN the "Violet Beauregarde" Grand Prize – a trip for two to attend a Fantasy Sports Camp. You'll also get \$5,000 spending money to gear up for camp! **No purchase necessary.** [Click here to read the rules](#)

**Use the slider above to scroll through all of the 5 Grand Prizes!**

**Charlie AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY** In Theaters July 15th **or 100 First Prizes!** A *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* movie pack and a year's supply of WONKA Candy. **Enter the Second Chance Drawing** Enter the password found inside non-winning specially-marked WONKA "Golden Ticket" candy packages. Enter password here  **Go!**

**WONKA Downloads** **Upcoming Events** **Prizes You Could WIN!** [Click here for rules and how to get a free game piece](#)

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“Tell us what YOU THINK! Watch our commercials, then tell us what you really think.”

free points  
email your friends

## TELEVISION ADVERTISING ONLINE

Technological developments are blurring the lines between one advertising medium and another. Faster connection speeds and increased broadband access have allowed many marketers to put video on their sites that visitors can readily access. Many food companies are now posting their TV ads online, and are offering children incentives to watch them — such as giving them special “points” or access to premium games if they watch the commercials or send them on to a friend.

Half (53%) of all sites in the study have television commercials available for viewing. This practice is more frequent on those sites that are explicitly child- or teen-oriented (60%) than on sites that also include content for a more general audience (32%). For example, on Campbell’s mysoup.com, children are asked to rate the soup commercials they see. On Kellogg’s FunKtown site, one of the things that children can do is visit the town theater to see commercials for their favorite brands, watch movie trailers or meet the Kellogg’s brand characters. As an incentive to encourage viewing, children can earn stamps by watching the commercials, and can then redeem the stamps to play “special” games on the site.

“Visit the town theater”





“We need your help.  
Take this quick poll and tell us what you think!”

free points  
Email your friends

## MEMBERSHIPS, REGISTRATION, AND MARKETING RESEARCH

Once a website is created, getting visitors to spend time on it and return to it later is one of the key challenges marketers face. Memberships that offer additional incentives or access to special activities, promotions or games are another way to encourage participation. In some instances, companies are using their websites to conduct market research, asking children to vote for their favorite flavors or brand characters.

One in four (25%) sites offer a “membership” opportunity for children age 12 or under — for example, a chance to register or join a club to get access to special activities or “secret” games. For example, Wonka’s Club Dub offers access to special games, a “personally flavored home page,” special screen savers, and e-cards. Children who sign up on websites may also be proactively informed about new brands, exclusive offers, and new television commercials available for viewing.

The 25% of sites with registration or membership opportunities includes 13% that require parental permission, and 12% that do not. On the 12% where permission is not required, the only personal information required to join is a screen name and password. On the 13% of sites where permission is required, permission is obtained by either an email sent to the parent with a response required, an email sent to the parent who then needs to go to the site and provide credit card information, or written parental permission.

Thirteen percent of sites include polls or quizzes, often used to ask users their opinions on products or brand-related items. For example, on [cuatmcdonalds.com](http://cuatmcdonalds.com), visitors are asked to vote for “the dollar menu item you crave the most” and for “your favorite McDonald’s IM icon character.”



“Wonka Club Dub:  
Join Today –  
Then Play all Day”

**KRAFT Macaroni & Cheese THE CHEESEST.COM**

HOME GAMES & PROMOTIONS COOL LINKS TELL A FRIEND

## WELCOME TO C.REX GAMES REGISTRATION!

User Name

Password

Confirm Password

Password Question  Something to remind you of your password in case you forget it.

Answer

**SUBMIT**

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©2005 KF Holdings **LOG OUT**

**WONKA.COM** Golden Ticket MONI Amabile Tour Game Central ShowOuts Ask Willy My Club Dub

# WONKA Club Dub

What's new in the Wild World of Wonka

Hours of Games and Fun! Join Today — Then Play all Day!

Already a member? Wait, then sign in here!

Screen Name

Password

**Enter**

**JOIN NOW!** Here's What!

Play the Golden Ticket 3D GAME

WONKA WORLD TOUR

GOLDEN TICKET 5 Grand Prizes

**Featured Games**

Here's just a taste of all the FREE games you get in ClubDub.

LARRY TERRY IS PHRASES

WONKA'S GLOSSARY

WONKA CITY TOUR

WONKA BLOOD PARTY

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**PopSicle**

Home Games eCards Fun Theater Downloads Treats

## Sign In

**GET INTO FUN! SIGN IN NOW!**

Sign In

PopSicle.com Nickname

Password

**Sign In**

Not signed up yet? What are you waiting for? Sign up to save and show off your high scores!

**Sign Up Here!**

[Privacy Policy](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | © 2005 Good Humor-Breyers Ice Cream. | [Sign In](#) | [Help](#) | [Parents](#) | [Contact Us](#)

**Kellogg's FROST LOOPS Cereal**

## You Can Tell Your Friends!

You can tell your friend to help solve the puzzle.

Your First name

Your Email

Your Friend's First Name

Your Friend's Email

**NEXT**

Email address will be used to send a one-time password on your behalf and will be deleted after the email is sent. It will not be collected or used by Kellogg for any marketing purposes.

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“Star Wars Chocolate M-Pire: See the rise of the M&Ms Brand  
Dark Chocolate Candies and the birth of the Chocolate M-Pire!”

free points  
Email your friends

## MEDIA TIE-INS

One popular tool food companies and others use to market their products to children is a tie-in to an already popular TV show or movie. Products like Scooby-Doo crackers or SpongeBob macaroni and cheese have become increasingly commonplace at the supermarket. The Internet offers marketers another venue for promoting such tie-ins.

Nearly half (47%) of all sites include a movie or TV tie-in (31% movie, 25% TV, 9% both). For example, Mars had a tie-in with the latest *Star Wars* movie, which resulted in a section on the M&M website titled “Chocolate Mpire.” The site offered children *Star Wars* screen savers, wallpaper, and e-cards with the M&M characters. On the Pepperidge Farm Goldfish site, children could enter a sweepstakes to win a free trip to Nickelodeon’s studios in Los Angeles, and on the Wonderball site there were tie-ins with nine different Cartoon Network shows.

“The Powerpuff Girls drink chocolate milk because they want to grow”



[M&M.COM](#)
[STARWARS.COM](#)

**STAR WARS**  
**CHOCOLATE M-PIRE**

**CHOOSE THE DARK CHOCOLATE SIDE**  
[SWITCH](#)



TELL A FRIEND ABOUT CHOCOLATE M-PIRE.  
[GO](#)

**TRAILER**

See the rise of M&M'S® Brand Dark Chocolate Candies and the birth of the Chocolate M-Pire!



**CHOOSE TRAILER SIZE:**

SMALL (Low Bandwidth)	LARGE (High Bandwidth)
Windows Media (3 MB) <a href="#">PLAY</a>	Windows Media (6 MB) <a href="#">PLAY</a>
Quicktime (3 MB) <a href="#">PLAY</a>	Quicktime (6 MB) <a href="#">PLAY</a>

**MILK CHOCOLATE JEDI SIDE**

- [SCREENSAVER](#)
- [WALLPAPER](#)
- [WOOKIEE E-CARD](#)
- [NASCAR](#)
- [COLLECTIBLE PACKS](#)
- [PRODUCTS](#)

---

- [WATCH THE TRAILER](#)
- [SHOP MY M&M'S](#)
- [MINI-FUN](#)
- [WATCH TV SPOT](#)

YOU COULD WIN THE ULTIMATE M-PIRE COLLECTION!  
[ENTER NOW!](#)

**M**

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 [NOTE TO PARENTS](#) | 
 [LEGAL](#) | 
 [CONTACT US](#) | 
 [SITE OWNER](#) | 
 M&M'S® BRAND & STAR WARS AROUND THE WORLD



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cool

“Get the code from inside the box...  
Enter the code and choose your reward.”

free points  
email your friends

## INCENTIVES FOR PRODUCT PURCHASES

While all advertising is ultimately about promoting sales, in many cases, food companies use their websites to more directly encourage children to buy their products (or get their parents to buy them), by requiring purchases for access to special rewards such as game tips or product-related merchandise.

Almost four out of ten sites (38%) have incentives for the user to purchase more food so they can collect brand points, universal product code labels (UPCs), or stamps that they can then exchange for premiums (such as gaining access to new games or purchasing brand-related clothing). For example, children are encouraged to purchase specially-marked packages of Bubble Tape gum and then enter the codes online to get free Nintendo game tips. In another example, children are encouraged to collect “postokens” from the inside flap of a cereal box, which they then enter on the website postopia.com to unlock “secret levels” or “extra lives” in the games, or to see special television bloopers from Nickelodeon’s show *Fairly Odd Parents*, available only to those who have tokens to redeem.

“Discover a whole new world of fun and adventure!”

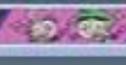
The screenshot shows the Hershey's KidzTown website interface. On the left is a blue sidebar with navigation links: 'AD ALERT!', 'ABOUT HERSHEY', 'FUN & GAMES', 'KID'S RECIPES', and 'PRIVACY POLICY Legal Information'. The main content area has an orange header 'Candy of the Month' and a central promotion for 'Free Movie Tickets BY MAIL With Proofs of Purchase'. The promotion features an image of E.T. and Reese's candy bars. Text below the image reads: 'Celebrate the 20th Anniversary of ET by being one of the first people to see the re-release of this classic film. What if we told you could re-live the magic for FREE? Well you can by simply sinking your teeth into a new REESE'S® Brand products. Here's how: Send the UPC symbols from any: • Three ( 3 ) Bags of REESE'S® Packaged Candy (12oz. or larger) • or Twelve ( 12 ) REESE'S® Candy Bars (1.5oz. or larger) You will receive one movie ticket for each bundle of UPC's you send as described above. (There is a limit of six tickets per household) You should mail your UPC's along with this fully completed form - (click here to get form). Mail to: REESE'S® Movie Cash Offer P.O. Box 420582 El Paso, TX 88542-6582. Click here to check out the Offer Details.' At the bottom, a red box contains the text: 'Whether you are re-living the magic of ET or viewing it for the first time, there is something for everyone. Do not hesitate! Get your FREE tickets today!' and 'E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial is a trademark and copyright of Universal Studios. Licensed by Universal Studios Licensing, Inc. All Rights Reserved. ©2011 Hershey Foods Corporation'.

Welcome outgrowers! Thank you!















## POST CEREAL CENTRAL

[Home]
[Strawberry Electro Honeycomb!]
[Pebbles!]
[Marshmallow Mania Honeycomb!]



**POWER UP!**

Use these online codes to unlock secret levels, extra lives, bonus powers & more!

**WHERE DO I FIND THEM?**

Look for Postopias on boxes of Post Kids Cereal

**HOW DO I USE THEM?**

- Get the code from inside the box



- Log in to Postopia.com
- Enter the code and choose your reward

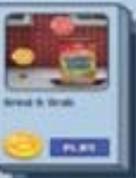






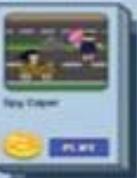


**CEREAL FUR HIGHLIGHTS**



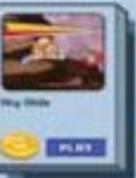
Fred & Trish

PLAY



Big Top

PLAY



Big Hole

PLAY



SillyBunny Street

PLAY


[Home](#) | [Help](#) | [Parents Info](#) | [Terms and Conditions](#) | ©2004-2005 KP Holdings. All Rights Reserved.  
 The games and other activities on this site are online messages about the products that sell.

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cool

“Welcome to Gushers Place! This is what you want – your own room to deck out exactly how you want!”

free points

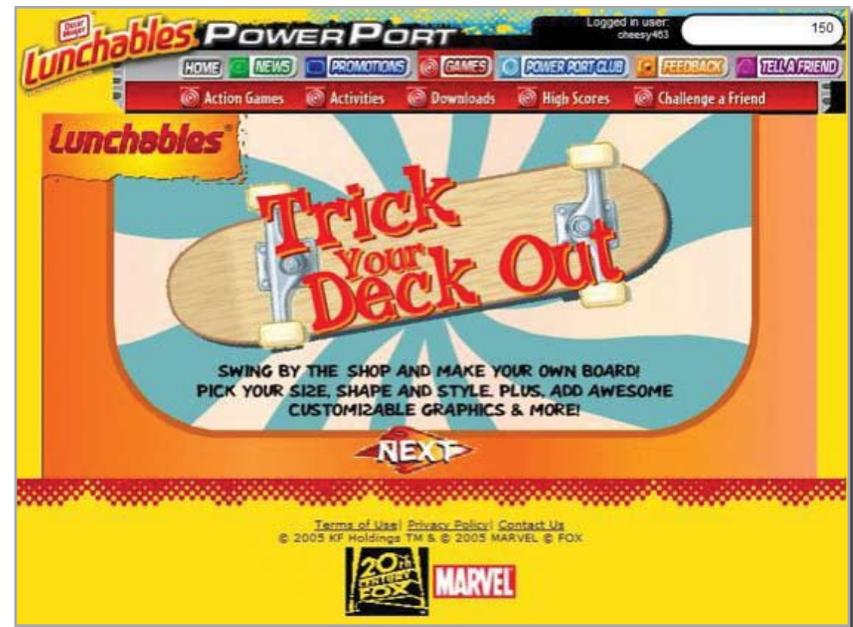
email your friends

## CUSTOMIZATION

One of the ways to enhance consumer involvement is to customize the website experience in some way. Customization may involve allowing a child to create her own space in an online community, or to develop his own character as a guide through the website. By engaging children in a personal way, the experience is likely to be richer and more memorable, and perhaps more likely to foster an ongoing brand relationship.

Seventy-three percent of sites offer children a chance to “customize” website content, whether by posting their game score, choosing a background color for the site, sending an email to a friend or creating their “own” room or character on the site. For example, on gushers.com, children can create and furnish their “own room,” which they can return to again on future visits, updating the design and adding new features.

“Save your favorite games and scores!”



**FRUIT GUSHERS**

# REDO YOUR ROOM

**Welcome to Gushers® Place!**

This is what you want - your own room to deck out exactly how you want! YOU choose & arrange the furniture, paint the walls, everything. And you can get new virtual stuff with codes found on specially marked packages of Gushers® Fruit Flavored Snacks.

**Make it a virtual party!**

Invite friends to come over and help you redecorate. And Re-do Your Room in YOUR style!

**ENTER HERE**

**Already Have a Room?**

Take the Express Elevator

**sound** 🔊

Privacy Policy | Terms of Use | © 2005 General Mills

“Click on the screensaver, save to your desktop, and double click to install.”

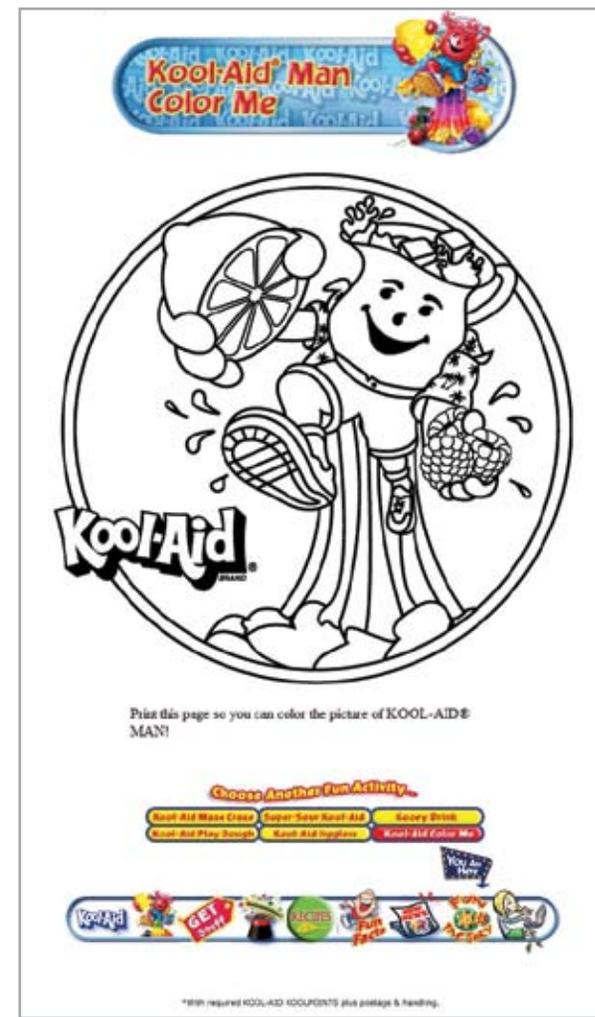
free points  
email your friends

## EXTENDING THE ONLINE EXPERIENCE OFFLINE

One way advertisers try to extend consumers' interactions with a product is to provide brand-related content that children can keep once they leave the site. These are items that can be downloaded, or printed and saved. In some cases, such “extras” may provide the opportunity for a brand message to be reinforced over an extended period of time.

Three out of four (76%) websites studied offered at least one “extra” brand-related option for children, such as screensavers or wallpaper for a child's computer, or a brand logo or character that can “live” on the child's computer desktop. Fifty-two percent offer two or more. One option on the M&M site was for children to download a paper *Star Wars* “light saber;” and on the Lunchables site there was a branded calendar for children to print out. Other items on sites in the study include masks, bookmarks, light switch covers, door hangers, coloring pages, pennants, book covers, and CD covers, among many others.

“Show your friends what's on your mind.”



The screenshot shows the Mountain Dew website interface. At the top left is the Mountain Dew logo. A navigation bar contains links: Home, About Dew, Help, Privacy Policy, and Dew Gear. Below this is a secondary menu with categories: MD TV, GAMING, SPORTS, PROMOS, BRANDS, DOWNLOADS (highlighted in red), and JOIN DEW. A third row of links includes SCREENSAVERS (highlighted in green), WALLPAPERS, and ARCADE. The main content area features a 3D isometric illustration of a city street corner. A large Mountain Dew can is the central focus, with a red straw and a green cap. To its left is a hot air balloon with red and white stripes. In front of the can is a large burger on a blue stand labeled 'BURGER'. To the right is a building with a 'PLAY' sign and a traffic light. The 'DOWNLOADS' section on the right contains the following items:

- SCREENSAVERS**  
Click on the screensaver, save to your desktop and double click to install.
- POWERED BY DEW**  
Mac | PC
- DO THE DEW**  
Mac | PC
- DEW BUBBLES**  
Mac | PC
- DEW WAVES**  
Mac | PC

At the bottom left, there is a 'LAUNCH DEW MUSIC' button. At the bottom right, there is a small image of a Dew bottle. The footer contains the text: Copyright © 2007 PepsiCo, Inc. | Terms and Conditions

“Hang out with the Food Label Guy and find out what all that confusing stuff really means.”

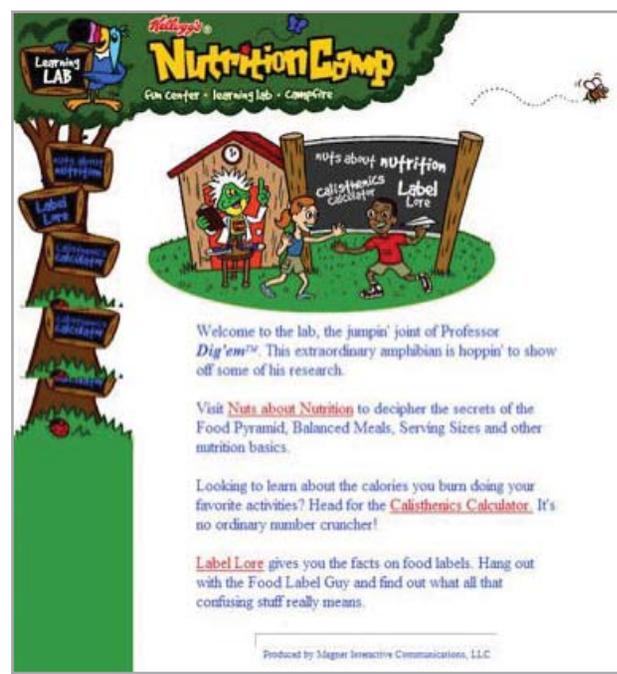
free points  
email your friends

## NUTRITION INFORMATION

One of the options that food marketers have in creating a website is to use this space, at least in part, to educate site visitors about the nutritional qualities of their brands as well as how they may fit into a healthy lifestyle. In fact, it could be argued that the Internet has unique capabilities as a communications medium which make it particularly well-suited for this purpose. The capacity for sight, sound and animation enables creative and exciting content (much like television), and at the same time, detailed information can be presented to inform and persuade (much like print media). As part of this study, sites were analyzed to see the extent to which food marketers are using this medium for the purpose of providing nutrition and health-related brand information.

Websites for 72% of the brands included some type of nutritional information about the product: either brand-related nutritional details (e.g., ingredients and nutrition facts similar to those found on a package label, on 51% of sites), or specific nutritional claims (e.g., claims such as “good source of vitamins and minerals,” found for 44% of brands).

Twenty-seven percent of all sites have general information about eating a healthy diet (e.g., the number of servings of fruit and vegetables that should be eaten each day). For example, on the Kellogg’s site [nutritioncamp.com](http://nutritioncamp.com), children could visit “nuts about nutrition” to “decipher the secrets of the Food Pyramid.”



“McDonald’s serves a range of foods that can easily fit into a balanced diet.”



TAKE THE CHALLENGE

**WHAT IS A SUBWAY® CHAMPION?**

**KNOWS ABOUT THE FOOD PYRAMID**

**STAYS AWAY FROM GREASY FAST FOOD**

**AVOIDS EMPTY CALORIES**

**YOU EAT FRESH, YOU'RE A CHAMPION TOO!**

**BACK**      **SAMPLE ENTRIES**      **NEXT**

**CLICK HERE TO ENTER**



[RULES](#)   [PRIVACY POLICY](#)

close

NO PURCHASE NECESSARY. Void where prohibited. Contest ends 9/25/05. Must be a legal US resident, ages 8 through 12, as of 8/15/05. You must have your parent or guardian's consent to enter. Entries will be judged on basis of originality, creativity, and connection with the theme. Sponsored by The Subway Franchisee Advertising Fund Trust. See [www.subwaykids.com](http://www.subwaykids.com) for Official Rules and details or send a SASE to: "Take the Subway® Champions Challenge" Official Rules, P.O. Box 25497, Rochester, NY 14625. ©2005 Doctor's Associates Inc. SUBWAY® is a registered trademark of Doctor's Associates Inc.

“Welcome to the Millsberry Museum! Our mission is to stir your soul, delight your senses, and captivate your imagination!”

free points  
email your friends

## EDUCATION AND “ADVERCATION”

Some marketers use a portion of their site to provide content with an educational emphasis. For the purposes of this study, educational content was defined as “activities that develop the knowledge, skill or character of site users on topics other than a food brand, its ingredients or manufacturer.”

Thirty-five percent of sites offer some type of “educational” content, ranging from historical facts and dinosaurs to astronomy, sports or geography. For example, millsberry.com features a virtual museum where children can click on paintings such as the Mona Lisa, and get information such as a discussion of the “puzzling landscape background that is far removed from the reality of Florence at the start of the 16th century.”

A third (33%) of sites include what the study has dubbed “advercation,” a combination of advertising and education. This could include something like the history of a brand ingredient (e.g., how chocolate is made, on the hersheys.com website), using a brand character to present educational topics, or working the product into an educational message (e.g., describing how much vultures like Twinkies and then presenting facts about vultures).

Thirty percent of the sites include links to educational sites, such as Kool-aid.com’s link to the American Diabetes Association.



“Sue the Dinosaur:  
Age—67 million  
years.”



MY HOME | SHOPPING | HI SCORES | HELP

Welcome cheerio34! [Logout](#)

MILLSBERRY.COM

Westridge won!

Address Book  [GO](#)

Start!

Map

Games

My Stuff





**Millsberry Museum**

Welcome to the Millsberry Museum! Our mission here at the museum is to stir your soul, delight your senses, and captivate your imagination! Renowned curator Keith Umal has assembled a vast collection of paintings, photographs, and sculptures, which will be displayed in special exhibits throughout the year in Millsberry. Our hope is to provide each and every visitor with a memorable experience, whatever their personal taste in art.

During your visit to the Millsberry Museum, we highly recommend taking a tour through our current exhibition (just visit each piece of art). Conducted by staff docent Belinda Collier, each tour is filled with all sorts of fascinating information about the works that are currently on display.

In addition to the new exhibit, Mr. Umal is especially proud to welcome everyone to the Museum's new Portrait Studio. For the nominal sitting fee of 300 Millsbucks, professional photographer Sam Harwell is happy to take portrait photographs in one of two different views, in front of a wide variety of backgrounds, which can be framed in a selection of beautiful and interesting frames.

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Please view our [Privacy Policy](#).

Shortcuts

+
-

Select Language:  
English ▾

“Hey Kids, This Is Advertising!”

## WEBSITE PROTECTIONS FOR CHILDREN

To date, the primary regulatory concern regarding online marketing has been on protecting children’s privacy, via the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). At the same time, the advertising industry’s self-regulatory body, the Children’s Advertising Review Unit (CARU), has instituted a set of general guidelines to advise advertisers on how to communicate with children in an age-appropriate way on the Internet. At the time of this writing (June, 2006), more detailed guidelines regarding online marketing were expected soon from CARU.

With regard to privacy, on all sites in this study where personal data is requested from children, some mechanism is in place to obtain parental permission if the child is under 13 (for example, asking for the visitor’s birthday as a way of verifying their age, or requesting a parent’s email address or credit card information).

Almost all (97%) sites in the study provide some information explicitly labeled for parents. Typically, there was a tab on the site’s home page that directed visitors to a special section in which parental information was included. The parent information usually includes what type of information is to be collected from children on the site (93%), legal disclaimers (88%), a “contact us” link (87%), statements about the use of “cookies” (81%), and statements of compliance with COPPA (74%) or adherence to CARU’s guidelines (46%).

On television, advertisers are required to insert commercial separators, or “ad breaks,” before and after advertisements in shows intended for children. On the Internet, the boundaries between advertising and other entertainment may be harder to distinguish. CARU’s guidelines suggest that “advertising content should be clearly identified as such” on product-driven websites. Eighteen percent of the advertisers in our sample do provide an “ad break” or “ad alert” for children somewhere on their site (for example, “Hey Kids, This Is Advertising!”); but more than eight in ten (82%) do not. On the sites that do provide a reminder, most both define what it means, and present it on multiple locations within the site. For example, postopia.com repeats the reminder on every page of its extensive website.

“Ad Break”



[HOME](#) | [GAMES](#) | [PROMOTIONS](#) | [OUR BRANDS](#) | [RECIPES](#) | [SENSIBLE SNACKING](#) | [PRIVACY](#) | [MY PAGE](#) | [LOGOUT](#)

MORE CHIPS AHOY!  
COOKIE GUY FUN!







**Not Monkey... Chunky!**

Wear Chunky (and some monkeys) on your T-shirt!

### PRINT IT YOURSELF T-SHIRT DESIGN

Print on special Iron-on Transfer Paper to make a cool Chunky T-shirt!

**Important Information about T-shirt printable**

To make a T-shirt, you need special paper for your printer. You can purchase this paper from many office supply stores / online retailers.

The iron-on will print out backwards so that it transfers onto your T-shirt correctly. For a notebook or wall decoration, print out the desktop wallpaper image.

Check your printer's manual and paper packaging for specific printing instructions. Kids, never use the iron without the help of a parent.

[Print](#)

Home
Games
Party
Fun Stuff
Fun Room Designer
Varieties
Cookie Guys

Home | Games | Promotions | Our Brands | Recipes | Sensible Snacking | Help

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Hi kids, when you see "Ad Break" it means you are viewing a commercial message designed to sell you something. Remember, if you are under 18 years old, you should get a parent's permission before you submit any information about yourself or try to buy anything online.

## CONCLUSION

The world in which children encounter advertising is changing rapidly. While television and other more “traditional” forms of marketing to children still dominate, this study makes it clear that food companies are making extensive use of the Internet when it comes to targeting children. There is a vast amount of food-related content online, with the potential to significantly expand and deepen children’s exposure to food marketing messages.

The technological capacities of the Internet allow new forms of communication and customer interaction. This has enabled creative new forms of marketing communications such as advergaming, viral marketing, customized brand experiences, and greater opportunities for cross-media branded entertainment, and it has blurred the line between advertising and entertainment. Children who visit these sites — which are promoted in TV ads and on product packages — are being exposed to a diverse and extensive array of brand-related information, far beyond anything they would see in a 30-second TV ad. They are also being recruited as marketers themselves, promoting branded messages to their friends.

Although young children are rapidly adopting new media, research efforts have not kept pace. Little is known about what children understand, believe or do as a consequence of their exposure to brand messages in this new marketing environment. With the significant increase in levels of obesity among children, questions are being raised about the impact of food marketing, in Congress, at the Institute of Medicine, and at the Federal Trade Commission, as well as by key players in the food and advertising industries. This study is intended to be a first step towards understanding the nature and scope of the online environment in which many children are spending time. Now the challenge is to learn more about how this young audience responds to that environment.



## FOOD BRANDS INCLUDED IN THE STUDY

Following is a list of the products that were identified through TV ad spending as being the most heavily advertised products in their categories to children on TV. For each product, researchers checked whether there was a branded website for that product, with content designed for or likely to appeal to children age 12 or under. Eighty-five percent of the products did have such a website; those with an asterisk did not.

BREADS & PASTRIES	CEREALS	DRINKS	PREPARED FOODS
Kellogg's Pop Tarts	Cheerios	Kool-Aid	Kraft Macaroni & Cheese
Eggo Waffles*	Frosted Flakes	Sunny Delight Fruit Drinks	Lunchables
Little Debbie Cakes	Pebbles	Capri Sun Fruit Drinks	Chef Boyardee Pasta
Hostess Baked Goods	Cap'n Crunch	Tang*	Totinos Frozen Pizza Rolls*
Rice Krispy Treats	Honeycomb	Juicy Juice	Spaghetti'o's
<b>CANDY &amp; GUM</b>	Froot Loops	Hi-C Fruit Juices & Drinks*	Campbell's Soup
Snickers	Cinnamon Toast Crnch	Nestle Nesquik Milk & Drink Mix	<b>RESTAURANTS</b>
M&Ms	Apple Jacks	Milk	McDonald's
Reese's Cups & Sticks	Reese's Peanut Butter Puffs	<b>ICE CREAM</b>	Burger King
Kit Kat	Trix	Popsicle	Wendy's
Skittles	Life Cereal	Nestle Cones And Pops	KFC
Life Savers & Crème Savers	Lucky Charms	<b>OTHER SNACKS</b>	Pizza Hut*
Hershey's Kisses	Cocoa Puffs	Fruit Rollups	Subway
Starburst	Kix	Betty Crocker Fruit By The Foot*	Chuck E. Cheese
3 Musketeers	<b>COOKIES &amp; CRACKERS</b>	Betty Crocker Gushers Fruit Snack	<b>SALTY SNACKS</b>
Hershey Bar	Oreo Cookies	Quaker Chewy Granola Bars	Pringles
Milky Way*	Ritz Crackers & Bits	General Mills Milk & Cereal Bars*	Doritos
Butterfinger	Pepperidge Farm Goldfish	Trix Yogurt*	Cheetos
Wonka Candy	Chips Ahoy	Yoplait Go-Gurt Yogurt*	Ruffles*
Nestle Crunch	Cheez-It	Dannon Danimals	Lays Potato Chips*
Twizzlers	Teddy Grahams	Jell-O Gelatin & Pudding Snacks	Bugle Corn Snacks*
Air Heads	Cheese Nips	<b>PEANUT BUTTER &amp; JELLY</b>	Fritos*
Ring Pops	Chips Deluxe	Jif Peanut Butter	<b>SOFT DRINKS</b>
Nestle Wonderball		Smuckers Jams & Jellies	Coca Cola
Topps Push Pops			Pepsi
Wrigley's Juicy Fruit Gum			Sprite
Ice Breakers Gum			Mountain Dew
Bubble Tape Bubble Gum			7 Up
			Dr. Pepper

## WEBSITES INCLUDED IN THE STUDY

3musketeers.com	honbatz.com	popsicle.com
7up.com	jello.com	poptarts.com
airheads.com	juicyjuice.com (just for kids' section)	postopia.com
applejacks.com	juicyfruit.com	pringles.com
bk.com (kids' section)	keebler.com/brand/onthegosnacks	quakeraday.com(family fun section)
bubblegum.com	kelloggsfunktown.com	ronald.com
bubbltape.com	kelloggs.com/products/treats/index.html	sillyrabbit.millsberry.com
butterfinger.com	kfc.com (kids' section)	skittles.com
candystand.com	kids.icecream.com	smuckers.com
capncrunch.com	kidztown.com	snickers.com
caprisun.com	kool-aid.com	sprite.com
cheetos.com	lifecereal.com	starburst.com
chefboy.com	littledebbie.com	subway-kids.com
chuckecheese.com	luckycharmsfun.com	sunnyd.com
cuatmcdonalds.com	lunchables.com	thecheesiest.com
danimalsxl.com	millsberry.com	thehollowtree.com
dannon.com	mountaindew.com	tonguetracks.com
dewbajablast.com	mycoke.com	tonythetiger.com
doritos.com	mypasta.com	topps.com
drpepper.com	mysoup.com	twinkies.com
frootloops.com	nabiscoworld.com	us.mms.com
funkyfaces.com	nestlecrunch.com	wendys.com(kids section)
gotmilk.com	nesquik.com	whymilk.com
got-milk.com	nutritioncamp.com	wonderball.com
gushers.com	pepsi.com	wonka.com
hersheys.com	pfgoldfish.com	

The full report on which this summary is based was written by Elizabeth Moore, associate professor of marketing, University of Notre Dame. The study was designed by Kaiser Family Foundation staff in collaboration with Professor Moore. All data collection and analysis was conducted by Professor Moore and her colleagues. Professor Moore thanks James Wilkie, Kyle Chamberlin, Victoria Blainey, Barbara McDonald and Nicole Horne for their time, dedication, and many contributions to this project.

At the Foundation, the project was directed by Victoria Rideout, vice president and director of the Foundation's Program for the Study of Entertainment Media and Health.

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