

# The Responsible Children's Marketing Initiative of the Australian Food and Beverage Industry



## Introduction

The Australian Food and Beverage Industry has developed this initiative to demonstrate its commitment to responsible marketing of foods and beverages to children.

The goal is to ensure that a high level of social responsibility in marketing communication and marketing food and beverage products in Australia is maintained.

This initiative will provide confidence in the responsible marketing practices via clear expectations of the form, spirit and context, and a transparent process for monitoring and review of practices. The aim is to provide a framework for food and beverage companies to help promote healthy dietary choices and lifestyles to Australian children.

This Initiative has been developed in collaboration with the AANA as part of the system of advertising and marketing self-regulation in Australia. Signatories to this initiative must also abide by:

- The AANA Code for Advertising & Marketing Communications to Children
- The AANA Food & Beverages Advertising & Marketing Communications Code
- The AANA Code of Ethics

This document outlines the minimum commitments required by signatories. Companies may choose to adopt additional commitments.

## Core Principles

Companies participating in this initiative will publicly commit to marketing communications to children under 12, only when it will further the goal of promoting healthy dietary choices and healthy lifestyles.

Each participant will develop an individual company action plan that outlines how they will meet the following core principles:

- **Advertising Messaging**  
Participants will not advertise food and beverage products to children under 12 in media unless:
  1. those products represent healthy dietary choices, consistent with established scientific or Australian government standards.

**And**

2. the advertising and/or marketing communication activities reference, or are in the context of, a healthy lifestyle, designed to appeal to the intended audience through messaging that encourages:
  - good dietary habits, consistent with established scientific or government criteria
  - physical activity.
- **Use of Popular Personalities and Licensed Characters**

Participants will not use Popular Personalities or Licensed characters' in advertising primarily directed to children under 12 unless such advertising complies with the messaging options set out above and the specific requirements of the Children's Television Standards in relation promotions and endorsement by Program Characters (CTS section 22).
- **Product Placement**

Participants will commit to not paying for or actively seeking to place their food or beverage products in the program/editorial content of any medium primarily directed to children under 12 for the purpose of promoting the sale of those products unless those products are consistent with healthy dietary choices under #1 above.
- **Use of Products in Interactive Games**

Participants will commit that, in any interactive game primarily directed to children under 12 where the company's food or beverage products are incorporated into the game, the interactive game must incorporate or be consistent with healthy dietary choices under #1 above and healthy lifestyle messaging under #2 above.
- **Advertising in Schools**

Participants will refrain from product-related communications in primary schools, except where specifically requested by, or agreed with, the school administration for educational or informational purposes, or related to healthy lifestyle activities under the supervision of the school administration or appropriate adults.
- **Use of Premium Offers**

Participants will commit to not advertising premium offers unless the reference to the premium is merely incidental to product being advertised in accordance with the AANA codes and in the Children's Television Standards (CTS Section 20).

## **Individual Company Action Plans**

Companies will sign up to this initiative as a minimum commitment and will develop and publish individual *Company Action Plans* that outline their specific commitments including individual nutritional standards if applicable in order to meet the core principles of this initiative.

Because companies and their product lines vary, the way companies comply with this framework will differ. However, all commitments will be consistent with the core principles outlined in this initiative.

This initiative outlines the minimum commitments required by signatories. Companies may choose to go further if they wish to.

## **Compliance and Complaints**

Key criteria will be established to assess how companies' marketing communications to children meet the core principles outlined in this initiative.

The AFGC will work with the AANA to formulate a transparent compliance program including the administration of a public complaints system in relation to the Responsible Children's Marketing Initiative.

Sanctions will be developed to ensure that participants meet their obligations under the terms of this initiative.

The compliance program will publicly issue reports detailing its activities.

The compliance program, in consultation with the participants, will periodically review its procedures and the overall impact of this initiative. The first such review shall be started after the new program has been operational for at least 1 year.

## **Monitoring**

The Australian Food and Grocery Council will commission a study to monitor food and beverage advertising to children over a period 12 months from the commencement of this initiative. This will be repeated periodically.

The purpose of this study will be to measure the industry's response, determine the nature of improvements in performance and to report on the findings.

## **Implementation**

1. Agreement to this initiative to be finalised by the end of 2008.
2. The position statement will become effective from 1 January 2009.
3. Company Action Plans will be required to be submitted by 1 January 2009.
4. The AFGC and the AANA undertake to review this initiative in 2010.

## Appendix I - Definitions

In this Initiative:

**Marketing Communications** means

- a) matter which is published or broadcast using any medium in all of Australia or in a substantial section of Australia for payment or other valuable consideration and which draws the attention of the public or a segment of it, to a product, service, person, organisation, or line of conduct in a manner calculated to promote or oppose directly or indirectly that product, service, person, organisation or line of conduct;
- b) any activity which is undertaken by or on behalf of an advertiser or marketer for payment or other valuable consideration and which draws the attention of the public or a segment of it to a product, service, person, organisation or line of conduct in a manner calculated to promote or oppose directly or indirectly the product, service, person, organisation or line of conduct,

but does not include Excluded Advertising or Marketing Communications.

**Excluded Advertising or Marketing Communications** means labels or packaging for products.

**Advertising or Marketing Communications to Children** is defined by the AANA Code for Advertising and Marketing Communications to Children and means advertising or marketing communications which, having regard to the theme, visuals, and language used, are directed primarily to children and are for product

**Media** means television, radio, print, cinema and third-party internet sites where the audience is predominantly children and/or having regard to the theme, visuals, and language used are directed primarily to children.

**Children** means children under 12.

**Popular Personalities and Licensed Characters** means:

- a personality or character from a C program or P program
- a popular program or movie character
- a non-proprietary cartoon, animated or computer generated character

**Premium** means anything offered free or at a reduced price and which is conditional upon the purchase of a children's food or beverage product.