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## **“Too Many Ads: Marketing Junk Food to Kids” launches media campaign 7**

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A child parked in front of the television to watch Saturday morning cartoons is getting an unhealthy double whammy: inactivity and a barrage of junk-food commercials.

“The average American child sees more than 40,000 advertisements each year,” says Jennifer Young, nutrition and physical activity coordinator for Oregon Public Health Division’s Office of Family Health. “Half of those ads are for food and 97 percent of those are for sugared cereal, high-calorie snacks and fast food.”

The Nutrition Council of Oregon is fed up. On October 15 it’s launching Marketing Junk Foods to Kids: Oregon’s Parent Awareness Campaign. The statewide campaign will include ads in 200 TriMet buses, posters and bookmarks in child care and health care facilities, and a [Facebook page](#) with useful links to information on marketing to kids and providing them with healthy food.

The Nutrition Council is aiming its campaign at parents of young kids. “Children younger than 8 years are cognitively defenseless against advertising,” says Young. “They don’t understand sales techniques and accept claims at face value.”

The Nutrition Council hopes the campaign will raise awareness among Oregon parents about food marketing and provide parents with the information they need to help their kids make good food choices.  
(more)

“There’s strong evidence that television ads for food and beverages have a direct influence on what children choose to eat,” says Young. “The majority of ads targeting kids are for products high in calories and low in nutrients; foods completely out of balance with healthful diets and contributing to the current obesity epidemic.”

The Nutrition Council of Oregon urges parents to learn all they can about how food marketers target kids, so that they can help their children make good choices about the foods they eat and develop good eating habits that can last a lifetime.

They offer these three suggestions:

- Offer children healthy food choices;
- Limit TV and computer time;
- Teach kids to be media literate and understand the tactics advertisers use.

The Nutrition Council of Oregon is a group of nutrition professionals representing public health, academic settings, nutrition and food programs, and non-profit organizations interested in promoting the health of Oregonians through healthy food choices. For more information, visit the [“Too Many Ads” Facebook page](#).

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