

Advertising to children – food for thought!

If you thought that you rarely see any food advertising for nutritious foods that target children - you would be right!

Increasingly, companies marketing foods high in sugar and fat and low in nutrients target children through TV and other advertising. These foods are frequently linked to appealing images such as cartoon characters or positive role models. A well-documented marketing technique is the use of children's 'pester power', used to encourage parents to purchase particular items. In a time when we have alarming numbers of overweight and obese children, not only are children engaging in sedentary activity while watching television, they are bombarded by unhealthy food advertising enticing them to eat potato chips, biscuits, lollies, soft drink and fast foods –often in giant portion sizes!

Young children are not able to fully understand the purpose of advertising nor the health consequences of their food choices. There is the potential for advertising to make occasional foods and large portion sizes appear normal, everyday options.

Mixed messages

Advertisers link less healthy foods with positive role models that young people aspire to. It is unlikely that their sports hero does regularly consume the advertised product, but children may be encouraged to believe it is ok to eat this product on a regular basis. Sponsorship of sports and community events helps food companies to keep their brand visible and perceived as family-friendly and healthy. Is it time to think critically about the foods we link with events?

Children need to be supported by a healthy food environment so that they can make healthy choices. Messages from teachers and parents need to be reinforced by the food choices they are provided with and not undermined by extensive advertising of occasional foods. Over consumption of foods high in fat and sugar contribute to obesity and also risk displacing more nutritious foods needed for growth and development e.g. soft drink instead of milk, potato chips instead of fruit.

Food for thought

On a daily basis how often are your children exposed to conflicting messages about food? e.g. TV, community events, fundraising items, school canteen. What food and drinks are available at places of leisure? E.g. swimming and sports centres, movie theatres, shopping malls.

Have we developed a culture where children expect a food reward for good behaviour/performance? E.g. fast food vouchers used as rewards for sporting performance.

If you are concerned about the types of food promoted to children make your views known to the relevant organisation or contact the Nutrition and Physical Activity Team at Community & Public Health for further information and support.

Healthy Nibbles Nutrition & physical activity information for primary schools

For more information visit: www.cph.co.nz

Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

Community & Public Health
Canterbury District Health Board

Date: 1 December 2005

Code/Reference: NUT0007y

Authorised by: Nutrition Team

Light and Delicious Summer Desserts

Cool and Tropical Ambrosia

1 x 425 can pineapple pieces, drained (or use fresh pineapple, about 2 cups, chopped)
2 oranges, segmented
2 medium bananas, sliced
1 medium bunch of black grapes
1 punnet of berries (raspberries, strawberries or blueberries)
½ cup chopped walnuts or pecans
1 cup coarsely chopped marshmallows
500g flavoured yoghurt eg passionfruit, mango, apricot

Mix all ingredients together in a bowl; then transfer to a serving dish. This is good served in individual glass dishes. Serves 6

Per Serve: 1294Kj, 7g Fat, 3g Fibre

Mango Jelly

1 litre mango juice
200g caster sugar
30g gelatine
375g reduced fat evaporated milk
1 mango, pureed
1 mango finely diced

Heat juice and sugar until dissolved. Sprinkle in the gelatine, stir well, remove from heat, cool and whisk in evaporated milk and pureed mango. Fold through the diced mango and pour into lightly oiled ring mould. Refrigerated until set. Unmould and serve with fresh mango slices and fresh berries.

Serves 8

Suggestion – for a more tropical flavour, substitute a tin of light coconut milk for the evaporated milk

Per Serve: 1128Kj, 4g Fat, 2g Fibre

Tiramisu

1 cup toasted fine wholemeal breadcrumbs
1/3-cup brown sugar
5 Tbspns drinking chocolate
1 tspn instant coffee powder
2 Tbspns brandy or rum
500g Cyclops coffee yoghurt
250g Cyclops unsweetened green top yogurt

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Place breadcrumbs, sugar, drinking chocolate, instant coffee powder and alcohol in a bowl, mix to combine. In a separate bowl, mix coffee yoghurt with plain yoghurt. In a glass serving bowl or individual glass serving bowls, place 1/3 of the crumb mixture in a layer across the bottom. Add 1/3 of the coffee yoghurt mixture, then repeat this layering 2 more times. Top with some extra drinking chocolate or some finely grated chocolate. Serve with fresh, tinned or frozen berries. Serves 6

Per Serve: 864Kj, 3.5g Fat, 2g Fibre

Crunchy Almond Topping (great with fruit and yoghurt)

1 Tbspn polyunsaturated margarine
3/4 cup almond slivers
1/4 cup honey
1 Tbspn grated orange rind
1 1/2 cups corn flakes

Melt margarine in medium sized non-tick frypan; add almonds. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until almonds are lightly browned. Reduce heat to low. Add honey and orange peel and cook for a further 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat. Add cornflakes and stir until well coated. Spread on waxed or greaseproof paper and allow to cool completely. Break into small pieces and use on desserts as required eg with stewed / canned fruit and yoghurt / light icecream Serves 6

Per Serve: 834Kj, 12g Fat, 2g Fibre

Fresh Fruit and Marshmallow Kebabs with Raspberry Coulis

Fresh pineapple, cubed (alternatively use canned)
Kiwi fruit, thickly sliced
Watermelon, cubed
Banana, thickly sliced
Strawberries, whole or cut in half
Pink and white marshmallows

Thread fruit and marshmallows onto wooden kebab skewers; serve with berry coulis.

Berry Coulis

Frozen or canned raspberries, pureed
If using frozen berries, add a little sugar to sweeten (1-2 Tbsp per cup of berries). With canned berries, puree with some of the syrup

Per Serve (2 kebabs): 868Kj, 1g Fat, 3.5g Fibre

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