The Effects of Fast Food Advertising on Children

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Solution

Mandate that toys are only given out with meals that meet specific nutritional criteria.
Meals advertised with cartoons must also meet these nutritional requirements.
Force fast food companies to advertise their healthy options.

Problem

The number of overweight and obese children in this country is already too high, and quickly increasing.

Percent of Children that are Obese

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>17%</td>
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Fast food companies take advantage of impressionable children by hooking them early with toys and cartoons.

Costs

Volunteer time:
Getting government support
Lobbying
Fighting the cooperations
Virtually no monetary cost

Mechanism

Draft a policy: Toys and cartoons can not be used to advertise meals with:
500 or less Calories
35% or less Calories from fat

Assessment

Compare current sales of kids meals
Look for new healthy options
Change in sales of current healthy options
Increase in advertisement of healthy options

The long term assessment, and end goal, would be to look for a measurable decrease in childhood obesity.

Benefits

Decline in childhood obesity and overweight rates
Lifelong healthy eating habits for children
Less reliance on health care

References