The Effects of Fast Food Advertising on Children

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
  - 1980: 4%
  - 1990: 11%
  - 2000: 17%

Fast food companies take advantage of impressionable children by hooking them early with toys and cartoons.

Mechanism

Draft a policy: Toys and cartoons cannot 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.

Costs

Volunteer time:
- Getting government support
- Lobbying
- Fighting the cooperations

Virtually no monetary cost

Benefits

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

References