

THE INFLUENCE OF ADVERTISING ON CHILDREN

Advertising targeted on children is one of the most potential markets as children have become an important market sector for many companies these days. As a result, there are many advertisements produced for children, which require a number of techniques in order to draw children's attention.

There are four general methods, namely, cartoon characters, popular toys, bright funny pictures and free offers. First, cartoon characters are a popular technique used by advertisers which are designed carefully so that they can appeal to children. Advertisers often use well-known characters from the comic books or cartoons to advertise their products. However, it is important to understand that advertising is aimed at children, but the parents are shopping.

There are several issues associated with television advertising and its impact on a child. Research reveals the following concerned areas in this regard:

- Physical health of child
- Mental stress for not owning the product of his choice
- Diet habits
- Family stress (as a result of influence on family spending)
- Violent behavior
- Consumption of alcoholic drink
- Smoking

Children watch a lot of publicity about the food. For parents, it is the impulse to buy, and the opportunity for children to consume more food, which can lead to childhood obesity epidemic. This is a serious public health problem that increases morbidity, mortality, and has substantial long-term economic and social costs. The obesity rate in preschool children is increasing at an alarming speed. The lack of physical exercise and body movements adds to this. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the prevalence of obesity has more than doubled among children ages 2 to 5 (5.0% to 12.4%) and ages 6 to 11 (6.5% to 17.0%). It is not that advertisements have only bad impact on us. These are a very good medium of communicating information to the common populace. It is the parents' responsibility to control the food eating habits of their children.

A number of studies have concluded that advertising to children has produced disturbing results. One study revealed that by the age of two, children may have beliefs about specific brands. Two-to-six-year-olds can recognize familiar brand names, packaging, logos and characters and associate them with products, especially if the brands use salient features such as bright colors, pictures and cartoon characters.

There are various pieces of advice given to parents about the ways in which

they can counter advertising strategies. These include educating children to understand that the main goal of advertising is to make them buy things, often things they do not need and did not know they wanted until they have seen advertisements, and encouraging children to challenge advertisers' claims about their products.

To sum up, his paper discusses the television advertisements and their impact on a child health and family spending. The study has revealed a positive relationship that exists between time spent with television and its impact on the buying behavior of a child and its influence on family spending. Most children under the age of 6 cannot distinguish between programming and advertising and children under age 8 do not understand the persuasive intent of advertising.