



March 30, 2015

On behalf of the Board of Directors of,

Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada (CDPAC)  
330 Athlone Avenue,  
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**Re: *Endorsement of the Ottawa Principles***

Attention:

Dr. Tom Warshawski, Chair  
Childhood Obesity Foundation

and,

Ms. Mary Lewis, Vice President - Research, Advocacy and Knowledge Exchange  
Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada

I am pleased to confirm that the Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada endorses the Ottawa Principles. The document that CDPAC is endorsing is appended to this letter.

In endorsing the Ottawa Principles, CDPAC would like to note that it will be important to continue to monitor the evidence as it emerges as relates to the most appropriate age threshold for the regulation of marketing and advertising directed at children and youth.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Craig Larsen".

Craig Larsen,  
Executive Director

Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada      Alliance pour la prévention des maladies chroniques au Canada

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CDPAC ([cdpac.ca](http://cdpac.ca)) is an alliance of twelve national organizations sharing a common vision for an integrated system of research, surveillance, policies and programs for maintaining health and preventing chronic disease in Canada.

***Members of the Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada:***

Active Health Kids Canada  
Arthritis Society  
Canadian Alliance for Mental Illness and Mental Health  
Canadian Cancer Society  
Canadian Diabetes Association  
Canadian Medical Association  
Canadian Mental Health Association  
Canadian Nurses Association  
Dietitians of Canada  
Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada  
The Kidney Foundation of Canada  
YMCA Canada

# The Ottawa Principles

## Context

The World Health Organization and health organizations worldwide are leading efforts to ensure children everywhere are protected against food and beverage marketing. Children are exposed to multiple forms of marketing as food and beverage companies spend billions of dollars segmenting this group. Voluntary measures such as the Canadian Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative have proven to be ineffective to change the marketing environment and there is growing recognition that policies need to be put in place to protect children from food and beverage marketing.

In Canada, many non-governmental organizations have developed policy recommendations to address the negative health impacts of marketing food and beverages to children. A summary of the policy recommendations, which demonstrates the great deal of convergence amongst them, can be found [here](#).

In 2014, nationally-recognized health opinion leaders, experts, health professionals and researchers from across Canada came together to develop a consensus position on a set of definitions, scope and principles meant to guide "Marketing to Kids" (M2K) policy-making in Canada as follows:

## Definitions and Scope

1. Marketing refers to any form of commercial communication or message that is designed to, or has the effect of, increasing the recognition, appeal and/or consumption of particular products and services. It comprises anything that acts to advertise or otherwise promote a product or service.<sup>1</sup>
2. Restrictions would apply to all food and beverages.
3. Restrictions do not relate to non-commercial marketing for valid public health education or public awareness campaigns.
4. The age at which restrictions in marketing to children would apply should be 16-years-old and younger.

## Policy Recommendation

Restrict the commercial marketing of all food and beverages to children and youth age 16 years and younger. The restrictions would include all forms of marketing and not apply to non-commercial marketing for public education. In addition, the regulations enacted should fulfill the 9 Ottawa principles.

## The Ottawa Principles:

In Canada, policies and regulations to effectively protect children from commercial food and beverage marketing should:

**1. AFFORD SUBSTANTIAL PROTECTION TO CHILDREN.** Children are particularly vulnerable to commercial marketing. Policies and regulations need to be sufficiently powerful to provide them with a high level of protection. Child protection is the responsibility of every sector of society – parents and guardians, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and government.

**2. BE STATUTORY IN NATURE.** Only legally enforceable regulations have sufficient authority and power to ensure high-level protection of children from marketing and its persuasive influence over food preference and consumption. Industry self-regulation is not designed to achieve this goal and has proven insufficient.

**3. TAKE A WIDE DEFINITION OF COMMERCIAL MARKETING.** Policies and regulations need to encompass a broad range of commercial targeting of children (e.g. television advertising, print, competitions, loyalty schemes, product placements, celebrity endorsements, financial inducements and incentives, relationship marketing, games, packaging, Internet) and be sufficiently flexible to include new marketing methods as they evolve .

**4. RESTRICT THE COMMERCIAL MARKETING TO CHILDREN IN CHILD-FOCUSED SETTINGS.** Policies and regulations need to ensure that the commercial marketing to children (*the specific types to be determined*) is restricted in child-focused settings such as schools, childcare, early childhood education facilities, and sports and recreation centres.

**5. TAKE ACTION TO MANAGE CROSS BORDER MEDIA.** Cross-border media or communication channels, such as Internet, satellite and cable television, and free-to-air television broadcast from neighbouring countries, should be managed wherever possible. This is not a pre-requisite for restrictions to be implemented.

**6. BE EVALUATED, MONITORED, RESOURCED AND ENFORCED.** Policies and regulations need to be independently evaluated to ensure the expected effects are achieved, independently monitored to ensure compliance, and fully resourced and enforced.

**7. BE IDENTIFIED AND ENACTED QUICKLY THROUGH A MULTI-GOVERNMENT APPROACH.** All levels of government are urged to take action, with a view to have full compliance, as soon as possible.

**8. ENSURE GOVERNMENT IS A KEY STAKEHOLDER IN DEVELOPING POLICY.** Governments should provide leadership in setting the policy framework, while protecting the public interest and avoiding conflict of interest.\*

**9. ENSURE GOVERNMENT SETS CLEAR POLICY DEFINITIONS.** The setting of clear definitions would facilitate uniform implementation and consistency, irrespective of the implementing body.\*

*\*added after the November 27 meeting upon consultation of the set of recommendations endorsed by the World Health Assembly found in Annex 1 on page 59 of the following document:*

[http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/80148/1/9789241503242\\_eng.pdf?ua=1](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/80148/1/9789241503242_eng.pdf?ua=1)

1. World Health Organization. *A Framework for Implementing the Set of Recommendations on the marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children*. Geneva: WHO; 2012 available at [http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/80148/1/9789241503242\\_eng.pdf?ua=1](http://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/10665/80148/1/9789241503242_eng.pdf?ua=1). Accessed January 2015

*For questions or comments regarding this document please contact  
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