

December 3, 2012

Mr. Philippe Dauman President and Chief Executive Officer Viacom Inc. 1515 Broadway New York, New York 10036

Ms. Cyma Zarghami President, Nickelodeon Viacom Inc. 1515 Broadway New York, New York 10036

Dear Mr. Dauman and Ms. Zarghami:

We, the undersigned, write to ask Nickelodeon to strengthen its commitment to children by better addressing food marketing to children. We appreciate that your company has taken some steps to limit licensing of Nickelodeon characters for use in the marketing of some food products. This action demonstrates that you recognize that food marketing impacts children's food choices and requests. Accordingly, we urge you to implement strong nutrition standards for <u>all</u> of the company's food marketing to children, including all television advertising on Nickelodeon channels (including Nickelodeon, NickToons, TeenNick, and Nick Jr.), company Internet sites, mobile platforms, and other places Nickelodeon reaches children. We also urge you to strengthen your policy on the use of licensed characters by applying specific nutrition standards to their use.

As you know, childhood obesity rates are at record-high levels. Research shows that food marketing is an important factor contributing to children's poor diets and obesity. The National Academies' Institute of Medicine (IOM) conducted a thorough review of the science and concluded that food advertising affects children's food choices, food purchase requests, diets, and health. In addition, the majority of foods marketed to children remain of poor nutritional quality. The IOM concluded that marketing puts children's health at risk.

We appreciate Nickelodeon's efforts to promote healthy lifestyles to children. However, such efforts are insufficient given the magnitude of the problem. Your PSAs, philanthropic activities, and partnerships with children's groups do not counterbalance the effect of Nickelodeon's core business and children's exposure to unhealthy food marketing. The mix of Nickelodeon's marketing remains out of balance, doing more to promote unhealthy than healthy eating. This contradicts the network's claim that since 2002 it has "made childhood obesity a filter by which [it] reviews all our business initiatives."

Nickelodeon lags behind the efforts of other children's entertainment companies. For example, The Walt Disney Company recently announced plans to apply nutrition standards to advertisements through child-directed television, radio, and online sites, and update its nutrition standards for foods that can be advertised to children. ION media also has standards for food marketing to children.

As the number one entertainment company for children, Nickelodeon has enormous influence over children's food choices and thus their lifelong habits and health. At a minimum, Nickelodeon should meet the food industry's own baseline and join the Council for Better Business Bureaus' Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative. Even better, Nickelodeon could show leadership by working towards implementing the Interagency Working Group food marketing guidelines. We hope you will use your influence to support parents and children.

Sincerely,

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics	Berkeley Media Studies Group, a project of the Public Health Institute
Advocates for Better Children's Diets	
American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry	California Center for Public Health Advocacy
American Academy of Pediatrics	California WIC Association
American Academy of Sports Dietitians and Nutritionists	Center for Communications, Health and the Environment (CECHE)
Nutritionists	Center for Digital Democracy
American Cancer Society	Center for Science in the Public Interest
American Diabetes Association	
American Heart Association	ChangeLab Solutions
American Institute for Cancer Research	Childhood Obesity Prevention Coalition (WA)
American Medical Student Association	Consortium to Lower Obesity in Chicago
American Public Health Association	Children (CLOCC) at Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children's Hospital of Chicago
American School Health Association	Defeat Diabetes Foundation
Association of State and Territorial Public Health Nutrition Directors	Directors of Health Promotion and Education
Be Active New York State	Earth Day Network

Environmental Working Group

Food Trust

Fooditude

FoodPlay Productions: Turning Kids on to Healthy Habits!

HealthyPlanet

Jamie Oliver Food Foundation

Latino Coalition for a Healthy California

LiveWell Colorado

Mercyhurst Institute for Public Health

MomsRising.org

National Action Against Obesity

National Association of Chronic Disease Directors

National Congress of Black Women, Inc.

National Farm to School Network

National Physicians Alliance

National WIC Association

Ameena Batada, DrPH Department of Health and Wellness University of North Carolina at Asheville

Henry Blackburn, MD School of Public Health University of Minnesota

Janet Bond Brill, PhD, RD, LDN Nutritionist and Author DrJanet.com

Faith Boninger Commercialism in Education Research Unit University of Colorado – Boulder New York State Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Alliance

North American Society for Pediatric Gastroenterology, Hepatology and Nutrition

Oregon Public Health Institute

Partnership for Prevention

Praxis Project

Prevention Institute

Project MANA

Public Health Advocacy Institute

Public Health Institute

Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity

Shape Up America!™

Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior

United States Water Fitness Association

Voices for America's Children

Young People's Healthy Heart Program

David VB Britt Retired President-CEO Sesame Workshop

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Christopher Gardner, PhD Stanford Prevention Research Center

Frank Gatti, MD Amherst, MA

Angela Harper Mahome, MD Roseland Community Hospital

Melinda Hemmelgarn, MS, RD Food Sleuth, LLC

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