

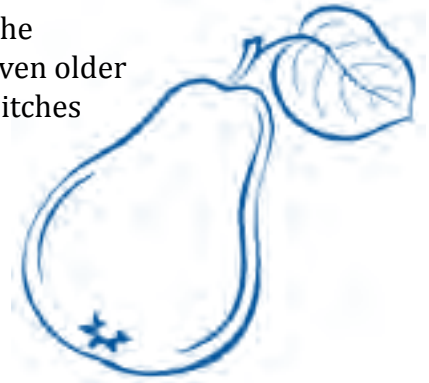


### Marketing and Advertising to Children

Television and Internet advertising is the primary way that companies target children to market their products. Among children two to six years old, even a brief exposure to advertisements can influence their subsequent food, drink and toy preferences.

Studies show that children under the age of five years can't tell the difference between commercials and television programming. Even older children do not have the cognitive abilities to distinguish sales pitches from facts and stories.

Early learning practitioners have a responsibility to support healthy childhood growth and development by creating supportive healthy environments that are free of marketing and advertising and that foster healthy choices.



Here are some tips:

1. Allow only commercial-free TV programs or pre-record TV programs and movies. Be sure to fast-forward through commercials in both TV programs and movies. Watch children's programming on commercial-free channels. This helps to create an "advertising-free" zone!
2. If children are using computers, avoid company-sponsored websites, advertisements on Internet sites and all digital advertising through email, text messaging, online quizzes, puzzles and advergames (videogame promoting a brand-name product by featuring it as part of the game).
3. Educate families so they also limit their children's screen time and become advocates for stricter rules on food and beverage advertising to children.

See the Healthy Beginnings 2-5 Healthy Eating and Sugar-Sweetened Beverage manual for more ideas on how to avoid exposing children to marketing and advertising.

