

Food companies sign EU ad pledge

Mark Sweney  

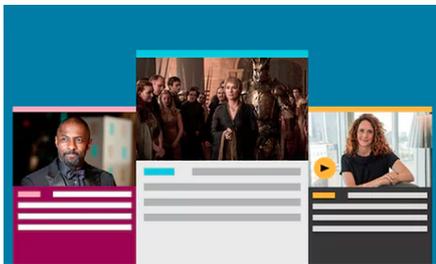
Tuesday 11 December 2007 16.55 GMT

An alliance of food companies including Coca-Cola, Nestlé, Mars and Burger King have signed a [European Union](#) pledge to stop marketing junk food to children under 12 years old.

The group of 11 companies, which represent more than 50% of the food and beverage advertising spend in the EU, have agreed to stop running junk food ads on TV, in print and on the internet to under-12s by the end of 2008.

The alliance, which also includes PepsiCo, Kraft, Unilever, Danone and Ferrero, have agreed not to market products in primary schools, except where "specifically requested by or agreed with the school administration for educational purposes".

A number of the companies, such as Coca-Cola, Kraft and Mars, have previously agreed a US responsible marketing code around advertising to children.



Sign up to the Media Briefing: news for the news-makers

 [Read more](#)

The difference with this new programme, called the EU Pledge, is that the 11 companies have agreed to have independently verified monitoring of their reduction in marketing, from January 2009.

"This is just part of the industry's response," said Stephan Loerke, the managing director of the World Federation of Advertisers.

"We have worked with the (European) commission and other stakeholders in identifying a best practice model of self-regulation, have reinforced codes of conduct and are providing children with the tools to help them understand and interpret advertising so that they are able to make informed choices".

The "common commitment" forms part of the EU pledge, that ties into an EU initiative on diet, physical activity and health set up in 2005 by Markos Kyprianou, the EU health and consumer

protection commissioner.

• To contact the MediaGuardian newsdesk email editor@mediatheguardian.com or phone 020 7239 9857. For all other inquiries please call the main Guardian switchboard on 020 7278 2332.

• If you are writing a comment for publication, please mark clearly "for publication".
