

APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY

Child-appeal

The protocol was based on a validated child-appealing packaging (CAP) coding tool by Mulligan et al.¹ Product data collection and child-appeal analysis was undertaken by members of the Bite Back team. Researchers at Action on Salt reviewed the child-appeal analysis and determined the nutrient profiling score² and front-of-pack traffic light³ colour for each product

1 Collection of product and nutrition data

The top 10 global food and soft drink manufacturers based on sales of packaged food and drinks in the UK were identified based on Euromonitor global sales data for 2022. A list of brands for each manufacturer was produced, and this list was verified by checking the company website. Brands for Cereal Partners Worldwide were reassigned to global brand owner Nestlé in this study. The following exclusions were applied: non-food products (e.g. home care and pet food), alcohol and low-alcohol products, tobacco, dried tea and coffee, infant formula, baby food and beverages.

Product lists for each brand were collated from 3 retailer websites (Tesco.com, Sainsburys.co.uk, and Asda.com), between 12th February and 5th March 2024. An account was created for each retailer to ensure UK availability, and each brand name was entered into the retailer search function.

A product was only counted once, regardless of portion size or multipack availability. Product variants (e.g. different flavours) were included as separate products. The smallest product size was recorded and seasonal (Easter) products were excluded.

An image of the product was recorded from the UK retailer's website.

2

The 'Core techniques' set out in Table A2 in the paper by Mulligan et al.⁴ were used to define whether a product is child-appealing. The tool was developed by collating existing evidence on child-appeal techniques and validated with a panel of children. Initial analysis was carried out by the Bite Back team, to code which techniques applied to each product, if any. The analysis was then peer-reviewed by Action on Salt. Bite Back and

¹ Mulligan, C. et al. Quantifying Child-Appeal: The Development and Mixed-Methods Validation of a Methodology for Evaluating Child-Appealing Marketing on Product Packaging. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 2021, 18, 4769. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18094769>

² Department of Health (2011). Nutrient Profiling Technical Guidance.

³ Department of Health and Social Care (2016) Front of Pack nutrition labelling guidance, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/front-of-pack-nutrition-labelling-guidance>

⁴ Mulligan, C. et al. Quantifying Child-Appeal: The Development and Mixed-Methods Validation of a Methodology for Evaluating Child-Appealing Marketing on Product Packaging. *Int. J. Environ. Res. Public Health* 2021, 18, 4769. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph18094769>

Action on Salt agreed that for technique 16, it was not sufficient for a product to be considered child-appealing simply because it was labelled as 'new' on-pack.

3 Determining whether a product is unhealthy

For products that were confirmed as child-appealing, complete nutrition information per 100g was collected from retailer websites. Products where portion sizes exceed 100g were also noted. Action on Salt calculated the NPM score and the traffic light colours for fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt. The nutrient profile score for each product was calculated using the DHSC nutrient profiling model (NPM); if foods scored 4 or more points, they would be classified as high in fat, salt and/or sugar (HFSS). The fat, saturated fat, sugars and salt content of food were compared to the UK front-of-pack colour-coded guidance.

Products that score 4 or more points on the NPM, and/or received at least one red traffic light for either fat, saturated fat, sugars or salt, were considered to be unhealthy.

4 Final calculation

The proportion of products that appeal to children and are also unhealthy was calculated by the Bite Back team. The results were shared with each top company, who were invited to provide a written response of 100 words. Following the provision of additional nutrition information on fibre content from Nestlé and Unilever, the following four products were reclassified as non-HFSS: Nestlé's Fruit Stack ice lolly; Unilever's Twister Tropical ice cream, Twister Pineapple ice cream, and Calippo Lemon Lime ice lolly.

Limitations

Product collection was limited to three retailers, so some products have not been included.

Product images were collected from retailer websites, which may differ to packaging available in-store.

Nutrition information was taken from retailer websites.

The analysis excludes seasonal products (such as Easter Eggs) which are likely to be unhealthy, so the proportion of child-appealing products that are also unhealthy is likely to be higher than reported here.

APPENDIX 2:

MANUFACTURER RESPONSES

The Top 10 businesses were given the opportunity to provide a written response to our research. Publishing the comments does not reflect any endorsement or support of their position from Bite Back.

Danone, Groupe

“Health is at the heart of everything we do at Danone, and we are proud to be a healthy major food company in the UK. Last year we set industry leading commitments on health. One of them committed us to never produce and market a product for children which is HFSS, as defined by UK Government legislation. We are proud to have set these commitments and to offer healthy product choices for people and their families. It is fantastic to see the validation from the recent Bite Back reports, which earlier in the year confirmed that our portfolio is 98% non-HFSS, and now, that we do not produce unhealthy products for children.”

Nestlé SA

“This analysis of ‘child-appeal’ appears subjective, including elements that are equally (if not more) appealing to adults whilst also failing to consider if products are consumed by children. We have taken progressive voluntary measures on responsible marketing to children for many years, and we are compliant with all relevant regulations on packaging and marketing. We encourage responsible consumption, provide clear labelling and support a constructive conversation on the specific areas of concerns and the best potential ways to address them.”

PepsiCo Inc

“PepsiCo UK has led the way for almost 20 years in developing healthier products and taking a responsible approach to marketing and advertising. In 2007, we voluntarily made the decision to not advertise products that are classified as HFSS to under-16s across all media outlets. All of our marketing activity is designed with an adult audience in mind and undergoes careful review to ensure compliance. We were also amongst the first companies to voluntarily sign up to Front of Pack Nutrition Labelling in 2013 and understand the importance of clear and informative labelling in helping people manage a balanced diet.”

Unilever Group

“Unilever was one of the first companies to apply principles for responsible food marketing to children in 2003, including not targeting paid marketing to children under 16. We recognise our role in supporting healthier choices and continue to invest in the

development of ice creams that are lower in sugar and calories and in smaller portions to ensure we offer a range of options. Specifically for children, our 'Responsibly Made For Kids' range are products that adhere to healthier nutritional standards, with every ice cream in this range under 110 kcal per serving and non-HFSS."

No responses were provided by the following businesses:

- Ferrero & related parties
 - Kellogg Co
 - Kraft Heinz Co
 - Mars Inc
 - Mondelez International Inc
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