

Sugary drinks are the leading single source of empty calories in young people's diets^{1,2} and directly contribute to diet-related diseases, including obesity and diabetes.³ Each 8-ounce serving of a sugary drink added to a child's diet increases his or her risk of obesity by 60%.⁴ Advertising exposure for these unhealthy drinks is associated with increased consumption,⁵ and exposure during childhood can create a lasting bias towards advertised brands into adulthood.⁶

In 2011, the Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity issued the first Sugary Drink FACTS.⁷ That report found that beverage companies extensively market sugary drinks and energy drinks to children and teens almost everywhere they spend their time, including on TV, the internet, social and mobile media, local retailers, and community events.

In recent years, key actors have taken steps to reduce young people's consumption of sugar-sweetened soda and other types of sugary drinks. Local communities have launched public health campaigns to increase awareness of the negative health effects of sugary drinks and reduce their availability in public settings. Policy makers have proposed legislation and regulation to limit consumption and raise awareness of the dangers of minors consuming highly caffeinated energy drinks. Through the Children's Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative (CFBAI), some major beverage manufacturers have pledged to promote healthier beverages and refrain from advertising high-sugar beverages to children ages 11 and younger in media where they represent 35% or more of the audience.⁸

At the same time, beverage companies continue to extensively market their unhealthy products – including sugar-sweetened soda, fruit drinks, sports drinks, iced tea, and flavored water, as well as energy drinks and shots – in a wide variety of marketing venues where children and teens are exposed to these messages daily. Objective and transparent data are necessary to measure companies' actual marketing practices and evaluate their commitment to reducing young people's consumption of drinks with high levels of sugar and/or caffeine that can harm their health.

Three years after our first report – using the same methods – Sugary Drink FACTS 2014 examines the current status of the nutritional content and marketing of sugary drinks to children and teens, documenting changes over the past three years.

Methods

We used a variety of data sources and methods to provide a comprehensive analysis of the sugary drink market in the United States. Through publicly available data, we document and evaluate the nutritional content of sugary drinks and the marketing practices of 23 different beverage companies.

When the data are available, we measure changes over the past three years.

The report includes the following analyses:

- Sales of sugary drinks and other drink products, using syndicated data from IRI;
- Nutritional content of sugary drinks, as well as diet energy drinks and children's drinks and energy shots;
- Nutrition-related claims and child-directed messages on product packaging;
- Advertising spending in all measured media, using Nielsen syndicated data;
- Exposure to all TV advertising and brand appearances in prime-time TV programming (beyond only those shown during programming regulated by the CFBAI) by preschoolers (2-5 years), children (6-11 years), and teens (12-17 years), and comparisons to adults' exposure, using syndicated data from Nielsen;
- Child and teen visitors to beverage company websites and sugary drink advertising viewed on websites popular with children and teens, using syndicated data from comScore;
- Quantitative and qualitative evaluation of marketing in social media and mobile apps; and
- Disproportionate exposure to advertising on TV and the internet for black and Hispanic youth, using syndicated data from Nielsen and comScore.

We supplement these analyses with information collected from company websites, monitoring of business and consumer press, and numerous visits to retail establishments and calls to beverage company consumer helplines. Of note, our evaluation covers a broader range of marketing practices than those currently included in industry self-regulation of advertising to children through the CFBAI and ABA member voluntary guidelines on advertising to children.

We did not have access to food industry proprietary documents, including privately commissioned market research, media and marketing plans, or other strategic documents. Therefore, we do not attempt to interpret beverage companies' goals or objectives for their marketing practices. Rather, we provide transparent documentation of the range of marketing practices to which children and teens are exposed daily.

Results

In 2013, U.S. households spent \$14.3 billion to purchase sugary drinks, compared with \$10.7 billion spent on 100% juice, plain bottled water, diet soda, and other diet drinks. Regular soda represented 45% of sales and 18% of brands examined in our analysis, followed by fruit drinks, which accounted for 18% of sales and 47% of products. Although gallon sales of soda (including regular and diet) declined

by 7% and fruit drinks went down by 3% from 2010 to 2013, gallons sold of other drink categories (flavored water, sports drinks, and ready-to-drink coffee and tea) increased by 7% to 21%. At the same time, volume of energy drinks sold increased 41%. From 2010 to 2013, there were few changes in the number of products offered by category or company.

Nutritional content of sugary drinks and energy drinks

We examined the nutritional content of 914 different products offered by 106 brands from 47 different companies. As in 2011, researchers' experiences collecting nutrition information varied widely by company. In 2014, the largest beverage companies (Coca-Cola Co., Dr Pepper Snapple Group, and PepsiCo) maintained websites that generally provided complete and easily accessible nutrition information, including lists of ingredients. In contrast, it was difficult to obtain nutrition information, especially lists of ingredients, from many of the other companies in our analysis. Of note, two energy drink companies (Monster Energy and Rockstar) provided comprehensive nutrition information on their websites in 2011, but this information was no longer available when we collected our data in 2014. Positively, nearly all energy drinks and regular soda products did report their exact caffeine content in 2014, whereas many only reported that caffeine was present in 2011.

In comparing sugary drink categories, regular soda, fruit drinks, and energy drinks continued to have the highest median sugar content at 24 to 29 grams (totaling 100 to 110 kcal) per 8-ounce serving, while flavored water, sports drinks, and iced tea/coffee had the least sugar at 10 to 14 grams. Minute Maid Cranberry Juice Cocktail had the highest sugar content of all products in our analysis with 57 grams per serving. Our analysis found 135 reduced-sugar products (i.e., 40 kcal or less per 8-oz serving), which represented 15% of all products. The flavored water category had the most reduced-sugar products at 62%, compared with 5% of regular soda products. Products that did not qualify as reduced-sugar drinks often contained zero-calorie sweeteners in addition to high levels of sugar, including approximately one-quarter of energy drinks and 15% of fruit drinks and iced teas or coffees.

Children's drinks

Our analyses also identified 162 products marketed specifically for children, representing 18% of products examined. Fruit drinks made up the majority of children's drinks, but the category also included two flavored water brands (Capri Sun Roarin' Waters and Apple & Eve Waterfruits). Median sugar for sugar-sweetened children's brands ranged from 2 grams (Mondo Fruit Squeezers and Little Hug Fruit Barrels) per 8-ounce serving to 30 grams (Welch's Chillers). One recently introduced children's product, Capri Sun Big Pouch, contained 33 grams of sugar and 130 calories in one 11.2-ounce single-serving package.

Although median calories in children's fruit drinks were lower than the median for other fruit drinks (60 kcal vs. 110 calories), 36% of children's products also contained zero-calorie sweeteners (vs. 22% of other drinks). Even some higher-sugar children's products, such as Sunny D and Hawaiian Punch, contained artificial sweeteners. However, information about sweeteners was only available by examining the ingredient lists under nutrition facts panels on product packages. Apple & Eve Waterfruits and Vita Coco Kids were the only reduced-sugar children's drink in our analysis that did not contain zero-calorie sweeteners. Further, just 38% of children's fruit drinks reported containing juice, compared with two-thirds of other fruit drinks, and the median juice content was just 5%.

on-package marketing messages

Nutrition-related messages appeared on nine out of ten sugary drink packages, averaging 4.2 messages per package. The majority of these messages promoted specific ingredients in the drinks, including vitamin C, minerals, electrolytes, antioxidants, and novelty ingredients. Approximately two-thirds of packages featured statements about natural or real ingredients. Positively, 61% of packages contained labels indicating calories-per-serving or container outside of the nutrition facts panel, a notable increase compared with 2011. Flavored water, iced tea, and children's drinks featured the most nutrition-related messages on product packages (4.9, 4.7, and 4.5 per package, respectively), whereas regular soda packages contained the fewest (84% of packages averaged 3.5 messages each). Brands with the most on-package nutrition messages included Apple & Eve Waterfruits (children's flavored water) with eight messages per package, and V8 Fusion Refreshers (fruit drink), Minute Maid Coolers and Fruit Falls (children's drinks), and Sierra Mist regular soda, each averaging seven messages per package.

Child features were present on 29% of sugary drink packages across all categories, and 30% of packages included at least one promotion. Although children's drinks were most likely to include child features, child-friendly cartoon images also appeared on other fruit drink, iced tea, and regular soda packages. Roughly one-third of other fruit drink (i.e., not children's drinks) and iced tea packages and one out of five regular soda, sports drink, and flavored water packages featured promotions. However, children's drinks were most likely to include promotions, which appeared on 57% of children's fruit drink packages. Child-oriented promotions also appeared on other types of sugary drinks, including a school soccer ball giveaway by Coca-Cola, a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles movie promotion on Crush soda, and Let's Play promotions on most Dr Pepper Snapple Group products.

Advertising spending

Beverage companies spent \$866 million to advertise sugary drinks and energy drinks in all measured media in 2013. Companies also spent \$465 million to advertise other

beverages, including diet drinks, 100% juice, and plain water. Overall, 31% of advertising spending for all drink categories in 2013 promoted regular soda and soda brands and 18% promoted energy drinks, while 35% promoted other non-sugar-sweetened drinks. Advertising for 100% juice and plain water represented just 10% and 4% of total advertising spending respectively. Excluding brand-level advertising, sugary drinks outsold water and 100% juice by 4.2 to 1.

From 2010 to 2013, advertising spending for sugary drinks, energy drinks, and sugary drink brands declined by 7%, while spending for diet drinks, 100% juice, and plain water went down 3%. However, changes in advertising spending varied considerably by category. Spending to advertise both regular soda and energy drinks increased 9%, and diet soda spending increased 17%. Advertising for light juices (i.e., juice with water and zero-calorie sweeteners) more than tripled. In contrast, advertising spending for all other drink categories decreased, ranging from small reductions for plain water (-3%) and sports drinks (-5%), to substantial reductions for 100% juice (-29%), fruit drinks (-40%), and other diet drinks (-45%).

The three largest beverage companies (Coca-Cola, Dr Pepper Snapple Group, and PepsiCo) were responsible for 70% of advertising spending on unhealthy drinks in 2013, and two energy drink companies (Innovation Ventures [5-hour Energy] and Red Bull) contributed another 17%. Change in advertising spending from 2010 to 2013 varied greatly by company. Coca-Cola and Dr Pepper Snapple Group both reduced advertising for sugary drinks in 2013 relative to 2010, by 35% and 13%, respectively. In contrast, PepsiCo increased spending to advertise its sugary drink brands by 32% and overtook Coca-Cola as the company with the most sugary drink advertising in 2013. Four individual brands dominated advertising spending in 2013: Pepsi (\$139 million, +181%), Gatorade (\$108 million, -4%), Coca-Cola (\$100 million, -24%), and 5-hour Energy (\$99 million, -8%). Snapple advertising (including both iced tea and brand-level advertising) was also notable for a 213% increase in spending over 2010. Kraft Foods' Kool Aid was the only children's drink among the ten brands with the most advertising spending (\$29 million, +19%); however, approximately one-half was devoted to magazine advertising, a medium typically targeted to parents and not children.

TV advertising exposure and brand appearances on prime-time TV

In 2013, there was a notable decline in youth exposure to TV advertising for sugary drinks and energy drinks; teens viewed 30% fewer of these ads relative to 2010, children viewed 39% fewer, and preschoolers viewed 33% fewer. Yet preschoolers, children, and teens continued to see 144, 169, and 287 TV ads, respectively, for these products. Exposure to advertising for children's drinks decreased the most, by approximately 60% for all age groups. Youth exposure also fell for regular soda, energy drinks, other fruit drinks, and

flavored water advertising, as well as for 100% juice, plain water, and other diet drinks (not diet soda). However, relative to 2010, preschoolers and children saw 31% and 23% more sports drinks ads, respectively, and teens saw 15% more iced tea ads. Young people also saw more TV advertising for diet soda and light juice in 2013 than in 2010.

Of all drink categories, preschoolers and children saw the most TV ads for 100% juice (approximately one out of five ads viewed). However, children's drinks, regular soda and soda brands, and energy drinks each made up at least 15% of drink ads viewed by children. Together, sugary drinks and energy drinks contributed approximately two-thirds of all beverage ads viewed by children. For teens, energy drinks followed by regular sodas were the most viewed categories (at 23% and 20% of drink ads viewed, respectively), while 100% juice and plain water combined contributed just 16% of total beverage ad exposure. Further, children and teens saw 30% to 70% fewer TV ads for diet drinks, 100% juice, and plain water than adults saw.

At the brand level, 5-hour Energy was the most advertised product to all age groups on TV, and Gatorade and Pepsi ranked in the top-five. Capri Sun Roarin' Waters and Sunny D also ranked in the top-five brands advertised to preschoolers and children, while Red Bull and Mtn Dew rounded out the top-five sugary drink brands viewed by teens. Notably, PepsiCo and Red Bull were the only companies to increase sugary drink advertising to children and teens in 2013 versus 2010. On TV, preschoolers and children saw 39% and 25% more TV ads for PepsiCo sugary drinks, respectively, and Red Bull advertising to all youth increased by 59% or more. Not surprisingly, advertising for two children's brands (Capri Sun and Sunny D) appeared to target their advertising to children directly as evidenced by the higher number of these ads viewed by children relative to adults. Several brands also appeared to target TV advertising to teens, including Sun Drop, Sprite, and Mtn Dew Kickstart sodas, Red Bull and 5-hour Energy, Vitamin Water, and Gatorade. Teens saw more ads for these products than adults saw, even though they watch 30% less television. Of note, just one 100% juice product (Capri Sun Super V) was targeted to children.

One-third of the beverage brands included in this report appeared within prime-time TV programming in 2013, totaling 2,102 appearances and 900 minutes of screen time. Children and teens viewed 21 and 33 of these appearances, respectively. Although the number of appearances viewed by children did not change from 2010 to 2013, appearances viewed by teens increased 12%. As in 2010, regular soda and soda brands appeared most frequently in prime-time TV. Snapple and Coca-Cola featured as the major brands in 2013, together accounting for 73% of appearances viewed by children and 60% of those viewed by teens for brands in our analysis. The primary venues for sugary drink appearances viewed by children and teens were product placements on talent shows (American Idol and America's Got Talent in 2013, as well as The X Factor in 2011 and 2012), followed by The

Big Bang Theory. These programs accounted for over three-quarters of all appearances viewed by children and teens.

Beverage company websites

From 2010 to 2013, there was a notable decline in the number of young visitors to approximately 60% of the websites evaluated both years, and four of the top-20 websites in 2010 were discontinued or did not have enough youth visitors to report in 2013. In general, child visitors to websites declined at a greater rate than teen visitors. However, youth visitors to eight sites increased by 20% or more from 2010 to 2013, and five of the top-20 websites in 2013 were new or did not have enough visitors to measure in 2010. Websites with the greatest increase in youth visitors from 2010 to 2013 included 5-hour Energy.com (+113,000 child and teen visitors per month), RedBullUSA.com (+25,000 youth visitors), RedBull.com (+23,000 youth visitors), and Pepsi.com (+18,000 youth visitors). Although youth visitors to MyCokeRewards.com declined by 58% from 2010 to 2013, the site continued to attract the most child visitors (almost 13,000 per month in 2013). MyCokeRewards.com and Coca-ColaScholars.com also had the highest youth engagement, averaging seven minutes or more per visit.

Twenty of the 50 websites in this analysis attracted a disproportionately high number of teens compared with visits to the internet overall, including six energy drink sites and six Coca-Cola Co. sites, and much of their content appeared to be aimed at a youth audience. TumETummies.com was the only website to offer content designed specifically for children. However, the most popular energy drink, soda, and other sugary drink websites featured extreme sports, popular entertainment, promotions, and other content (e.g., scholarships) with youth appeal. In addition, most websites featured social media content (e.g., Facebook and Twitter posts, YouTube videos) and links to brands' social media pages, including Facebook, Twitter, Google+, and YouTube.

Display advertising on third-party websites

From 2010 to 2013, the number of sugary drink and energy drink display ads placed on third-party youth websites declined by 72% (94.7 million per month in 2010 vs. 26.8 million in 2013). Ads for regular soda and soda brands, sports drinks, and flavored waters declined more than 50%. My Coke Rewards eliminated virtually all ads on youth websites (compared with 40 million ads per month in 2010). The proportion of ads placed on youth websites also declined from 11% in 2010 to 5% in 2013. Despite this overall decline, children's brands such as Capri Sun, Hawaiian Punch, and Tum E Yummies increased ad placements on youth websites by 15%, with 18% of ads for Capri Sun and 50% of Tum E Yummies ads appearing on children's websites. Further, CFBAI companies placed more than 46 million ads for sugary drinks that were not approved for advertising to children on children's websites in 2013, including Coca-Cola, Powerade,

Pepsi NEXT, and NOS energy drink. Other brands placing a high proportion of their ads on websites visited relatively more often by youth under 18 included Hawaiian Punch (45%), Jarritos (34%), Crush (27%), and Powerade (12%).

Advertising on social media sites YouTube and Facebook appears to have replaced much of the advertising on youth websites, representing 31% of all display ads for the sugary drink and energy drink brands in our analysis. Although young people visit these websites at similar rates as adults, they are among the most popular sites for youth. 5-hour Energy, Coca-Cola, and Capri Sun placed the most ads on these sites (55 million, 31 million, and 10 million, respectively). Gatorade and Sunkist also had a particularly strong presence on Facebook, with over 50% of their ads viewed on this one site, and 5-hour Energy placed 73% of its display ads on YouTube.

Social media and mobile marketing

In 2014, energy drinks and regular soda brands dominated social media marketing, representing 84% of the 300 million Facebook likes for brands in our analysis, 89% of 11 million Twitter followers, and 95% of 1.8 billion YouTube views. As in 2011, Red Bull and Coca-Cola were the leaders in social media marketing in 2014. Pepsi also ranked among the top-three brands on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube in 2014 due to increases of 600% on Facebook and 30-fold on Twitter from 2011, and 196 million video views on YouTube in 2014. Two additional energy drink brands – Monster Energy and Rockstar – ranked among the most active brands on all social media platforms, and 5-hour Energy ranked fourth in YouTube video views at 129 million. Coca-Cola, Red Bull, and Pepsi also were the top-three sugary drink brands on Instagram, and Coca-Cola and Red Bull ranked in the top-five sugary drink brands on Vine.

Overall, the popularity of energy drinks and regular soda brands on social media increased exponentially from 2011 to 2014. Total Facebook followers tripled for regular soda and doubled for energy drinks, and Twitter followers increased by over 90% for both categories. Individual brands in our analysis increased their presence on social media in different ways. Brands added 53 new Instagram accounts and 21 active Vine accounts since 2011. Coca-Cola, Red Bull, Mtn Dew, and Rockstar expanded by creating new social media accounts for sponsored music, sports, and arts activities and establishing new accounts for these promotions on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and even Vine and Instagram.

Another social media trend across many brands was the use of celebrities. Pepsi, Sprite, Gatorade, Lipton, Arizona, and Brisk utilized well-known music and sports celebrities, while Fanta and Red Bull used young digital-media celebrities. Brands also engaged users to virally increase their social media reach, with retweets, regrams, and revines, as well as teen-targeted contests inviting users to post videos and photos on various platforms. Brands tended to use consistent messaging across platforms, with similar content on their

Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and Vine posts. In addition, links within posts commonly directed users to other social media platforms or the brand's website, introducing users to new platforms as they became popular.

We also identified 39 smartphone applications available for US-based iPhone users offered by nine of the companies in our analysis. These apps promoted 14 different sugary drink brands. Red Bull had 15 applications – the most from any company – followed by PepsiCo and Coca-Cola Co., which offered nine and seven apps each. The majority of apps were for gaming ($n=16$) or entertainment ($n=7$) purposes. One-third ($n=13$) had child-targeted elements, such as cartoon-style graphics, child characters, or simple game play appropriate for children. Most of the apps ($n=36$) were free to download, although eight featured in-app purchases. Red Bull Racers and Red Bull Kart Fighter 3 both had child-targeted elements and in-app purchases of up to \$39.99 and \$29.99, respectively.

Marketing to Hispanic and black youth

Seven companies spent \$83 million to advertise sugary drinks and energy shots on Spanish-language TV in 2013, an increase of 44% versus 2010 and on average 14% of their total TV advertising budgets. By comparison, companies spent just \$9 million to advertise diet drinks, 100% juice, and water combined. Both PepsiCo and Dr Pepper Snapple Group substantially increased their Spanish-language advertising spending for sugary drinks by \$17 million and \$13 million, respectively. A new product, SK Energy, also spent \$17 million in 2013. Of note, SK Energy and 7UP only advertised on Spanish-language TV. Both Dr Pepper Snapple Group and Sunny D devoted a relatively high one-third of their total TV advertising budgets to Spanish TV. In contrast, Coca-Cola Co. reduced its Spanish-language TV advertising by 38% (although the company continued to rank second in Spanish-language advertising spending), while Red Bull and Kraft Foods virtually eliminated their Spanish-language TV advertising.

Hispanic preschoolers and children saw 23% and 32% more Spanish-language TV ads for sugary drinks and energy shots in 2013 than in 2010. As in 2010, Hispanic preschoolers saw more of these ads than either Hispanic children or teens saw. However, Hispanic teens' exposure did not increase from 2010 to 2013. As a result, in 2013 Hispanic children saw more Spanish-language ads for sugary drinks and energy shots than Hispanic teens saw.

On English-language TV, black children and teens saw more than twice as many ads for sugary drinks and energy drinks compared with white children and teens in 2013. Further, this gap increased compared with 2010 as advertising to white youth declined at a greater rate than advertising to black youth. Although black children and teens also watch more television than their white peers, this difference does not explain the entire difference in number of ads viewed. Black teens saw four times as many ads for Sprite and three times as many Coca-Cola

regular soda ads, compared with white teens, indicating that these brands targeted their advertising to a black audience. Other brands with relatively high ratios of ads viewed by black compared with white youth included Vitamin Water (2.5), 5-hour Energy (2.2), and Red Bull (2.1). In contrast, black teens saw just 70% more ads for plain water, 60% more diet soda ads, and 50% more ads for 100% juice, comparable to differences in amount of TV viewing between black and white teens.

As found in our analysis of all youth visitors to beverage company websites, 5HourEnergy.com and MyCokeRewards.com attracted the most Hispanic and black youth visitors. However, some websites also attracted disproportionately high numbers of Hispanic or black youth visitors. For example, 7UP.com and Sprite.com had the highest Hispanic targeted indices; Hispanic youth were approximately six times more likely to visit these sites compared with all youth. In addition, Welch's.com had a high targeted index for black youth, who were 2.5 times as likely to visit the site compared with all internet visitors, and black youth were 62% more likely to visit Gatorade.com. Overall, Hispanic youth were 93% more likely to visit the beverage company websites in our analysis compared with all youth, and black youth were 34% more likely to visit.

Beverage companies spend more to promote events and sponsorships specifically aimed at youth than companies in any other food category.⁹ PepsiCo, Coca-Cola Co., and Dr Pepper Snapple Group also have publicized their strategies to appeal to multicultural youth.¹⁰⁻¹² For example, Coca-Cola estimates that 86% of its growth through 2020 will come from multicultural youth.¹³ PepsiCo and Dr Pepper Snapple Group have noted their focus on sponsorships and events to attract multicultural youth and the "crossover" appeal of this strategy in reinforcing the "coolness" of their products.¹⁴ Celebrity spokespersons with crossover appeal include Beyonce (Pepsi),^{15 16} Nicki Minaj (Pepsi),¹⁷ and Pitbull (Dr Pepper).¹⁸ Sponsorships of soccer clubs and events, ranging from Coca-Cola's sponsorship of the Brazilian World Cup to the Dr Pepper Dallas Cup (a youth soccer tournament),^{19 20 21 22 23} also appeal to multicultural audiences. Although we could not comprehensively track these typically locally based marketing efforts, examination of the business press highlights many examples of events and sponsorships that appear to be aimed specifically at Hispanic and black youth, primarily for the companies' regular soda brands.

Discussion

Beverage companies have made some progress in improving sugary drink marketing to youth. Notably, children and teens saw approximately one-third fewer total TV ads for sugary drinks in 2013 than in 2010, and ads for fruit drinks declined by 50%. Sugary drink ads placed on youth websites (e.g., Roblox.com, FanPop.com) went down by three-quarters, and companies placed just 5% of their ads on these sites in 2013 compared with 11% of ads in 2010. Some companies have also made nutrition information about their products

more accessible, and the largest beverage companies now provide calories-per-serving on the front of most product packages. Further all energy shots and 92% of energy drinks now disclose their caffeine content.

However, despite the introduction of some reduced-sugar sodas, there were no changes in the overall nutritional content of products offered by sugary drink brands from 2011 to 2014. In addition, the majority of children's drinks remained high in sugar and their packaging featured nutrition-related messages that could mislead parents into believing that these products are healthier choices for children. Further, children's fruit drinks are less likely to contain juice and more likely to contain artificial sweeteners than other fruit drinks, even though the majority of parents do not want to serve their children products with artificial sweeteners.²⁴

In addition, we found considerable evidence of increased marketing directly to children or teens for some sugary drink brands and energy drinks overall. Many brands also increased their non-traditional forms of marketing that appeal to young consumers, including brand appearances in prime-time TV programming, marketing in social media, and mobile marketing. These types of marketing raise additional concerns as they are more difficult for young people to recognize as marketing and for parents to monitor. Evidence of increased marketing of some sugary drink brands directed to black and Hispanic youth is especially troubling due to the increased risk of obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and other diet-related diseases for communities of color.

Recommendations

Beverage companies should do more to ensure that youth consume fewer of the sugary drinks and energy drinks that can harm their health:

- Stop marketing sugary drinks and energy drinks to children and teens;
- Do not target sugary drink marketing to communities that suffer disproportionately from diet-related diseases, including Hispanic and black youth;
- Strengthen the CFBAI self-regulatory pledges to cover children up to age 14, ensure that companies' self-regulatory policies cover all media; expand definitions of child-directed marketing, and increase the number of companies participating in the program;
- Discontinue marketing practices that disproportionately appeal to teens, including product placements and youth-oriented social media, celebrities, and sponsored events;
- Further improve transparent product labeling and consumer access to ingredient information; and

- Replace marketing of high-sugar and highly caffeinated beverages to youth with marketing of reduced-sugar drinks, plain water, and 100% juice.

Government regulation and legislation can help counteract marketing by lessening the appeal of sugary drinks to youth and leveling the playing field among companies:

- Require straightforward and easy-to-understand labeling, including disclosing calories, added sugars, and artificial sweetener content on the front of all packaging;
- Require products that feature nutrition-related claims on packages to meet minimum nutrition standards;
- Provide funding to regularly update the Federal Trade Commission's reporting of food and beverage industry expenditures on marketing directed to children and adolescents;
- Monitor and enforce children's privacy protections under the Children's Online Privacy and Protection Act (COPPA), including in social and mobile media; and
- Prohibit the sale and marketing of highly caffeinated energy drinks and shots to minors under age 18.

Advocates, researchers and parents can also make a difference:

- Advocates can support policy measures to help reduce consumption and marketing of sugary drinks, educate policymakers and shareholders about the negative impact of sugary drink marketing, and lead campaigns to pressure beverage companies to improve their marketing practices.
- Researchers can help build critical evidence to support policy maker and advocacy actions.
- Parents can check ingredient lists on packages of children's drinks for added sugars, juice content, and artificial sweeteners; and contact beverage companies to let them know they are unhappy with marketing of unhealthy products directly to their children.

In 2011, we asked beverage companies to reduce the enormous amount of marketing for unhealthy sugary drinks and energy drinks that children were exposed to daily. The facts presented in this report confirm that some companies have improved some marketing practices. However they also show that significantly more improvements are necessary and that any one company may not be able to sustain progress if the entire industry does not follow. Policy makers, advocates, and parents should demand that beverage companies do the right thing for the health of our children.