

Under embargo until 05:30am Tuesday 8 December 2015

## Not so happy: McDonald's not lovin' Fame and Shame Awards

**Fame and Shame Awards: 10.30 am Tuesday 8 December at State Library Victoria, 328 Swanston St, Melbourne VIC 3000**

Maintaining their 10 year 'winning' streak, McDonald's Australia took out three 'Shame' awards in this year's Parents' Voice *Fame and Shame Awards*. They crowned their efforts by winning a special "Worst of the Decade" award, for the company most often nominated for marketing junk food to kids over the last 10 years.

Also a clear winner in the *Digital Ninja* and *Pester Power Awards*, parents believe that McDonald's Australia is continuing to develop marketing techniques that target children. McDonald's *Happy Reader* promotion offered kids a selection of free books and digital readers with the purchase of a McDonald's *Happy Meal*. Parents are particularly concerned that to collect all 10 books and 16 digital readers, children would have needed to consume 23 *Happy Meals* in an eight week period!

Traditional TV advertising where the 'Happy Meal' character played a starring role in a clip from the *Minions* movie saw McDonald's pick up the *Pester Power Award*.

Alice Pryor, Campaigns Manager for Parents' Voice, believes that parents are frustrated with the lack of change in the way junk food companies target children, "It's very disappointing that so little progress has been made in the last decade. In fact, many parents fear that it's worse than ever as junk food companies now use digital and social media to direct their junk food products to children. There is virtually no regulation around advertising using social media, so companies are developing games, apps, or Facebook sites using junk food products as the 'hero' character and designing them to appeal to kids and teenagers.

"Protecting children from being bombarded by junk food marketing is no longer achieved by simply turning off the TV! Parents need to be constantly vigilant about a digital world that surrounds kids, is mobile and is the perfect tool for promoting junk food products."

Parents also have to be careful about 'health claims' that are used to market unhealthy food. Coca-Cola Amatil launched *Coke Life* in 2015 amid a flurry of healthier option claims that did not fool parents who voted it winner of the *Smoke and Mirrors* category.

Mother of two, Cheryl McLeod, from Melbourne, is annoyed that unhealthy products are marketed using language that suggests they are healthier than they are, "I voted for *Coke Life*, because it is promoted as a healthier option. You have to look past the green coloured packaging and study the label to realise that there are 10 teaspoons of sugar in a 600ml bottle!"

Sport is another favourite target of the junk food industry. KFC's sponsorship of the *Big Bash League* got parents' vote for the *Foul Sport Award*. Up against stiff competition from McDonald's sponsorship of junior sport and a *Gatorade* commercial featuring Gary Ablett, KFC was judged to be the worst for sending a misleading message to children that consuming unhealthy products is consistent with a sporting career and healthy lifestyle.

In good news for the ABC, two of its programs went head to head for the inaugural *Media Spotlight Award*, for programs highlighting inappropriate marketing claims to children. Finishing in front by a whisker was Charlie Pickering's *The Weekly*, which featured a comprehensive look at the state of junk food advertising and regulation in Australia and its relationship to childhood obesity. *Gruen* was a commendable second for

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its November 4 segment which framed the issue of marketing to kids, highlighting pester power and the use of children's TV characters.

Nutrition Australia and Produce Marketing Association (ANZ) was commended in the *Parents' Choice* Award for their fun *Pick Right. Feel Bright!* campaign which features The Wiggles as ambassadors and encourages families to choose fresh fruit and vegetables over processed foods, to increase healthy eating and improve health.

Presenting the Awards, Dr Alessandro Demaio, Co-Founder of global social change movement, NCDFREE and festival21, said, "The leading causes of global deaths are Non-Communicable Diseases including type 2 diabetes, cancers and heart disease. An unhealthy diet is a leading risk factor for disease and when one in four Australian children is overweight or obese, these examples of junk food marketing to kids are frankly appalling. 'Big Food' companies are not interested in our children's health, they are interested in getting us to consume more of their products and increase profits by whatever means necessary. It's essential that we all understand the facts, and see through their smoke and mirror tactics to deter public focus on regulation."

Ms Pryor added. "It's sad that 10 years on we still need the *Fame and Shame Awards*, but two 'Fame' awards this year is a positive step. It is encouraging to see more debate about the wider concerns of junk food marketing to children and its association with a rise in the consumption of unhealthy food. More information and media coverage of the issues help to equip parents with the facts, see beyond the hype, and call for better regulatory guidelines and protection for children."

-Ends-

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**Notes to Editor**

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Parents' Voice is an online network of parents who are interested in improving the food and activity environments of Australian children. Formerly known as The Parents' Jury, Parents' Voice was formed in 2004 and represents thousands of Australian parents. Parents' Voice is supported by Cancer Council Australia, Diabetes Victoria, VicHealth, YMCA Australia and the Bluearth Foundation.

**List of award nominees and winners**

Nominees and winners ads and segments are linked to dropbox, where available.

**Digital Ninja**

[Happy Readers - McDonald's Australia](#)  
[Fandangles – Peter's Ice Cream](#)  
[Whizz Fizz – Fyna Foods](#)

**Winner – [Happy Readers – McDonald's Australia](#)**

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## **Pester Power**

[Minions Happy Meal](#) – McDonald's Australia  
[Allen's Makes Smiles](#) - Allen's Lollies, Nestlé  
[Made for Kids](#) – Kinder Chocolate, Mondelez Made for kids

**Winner – [Minions Happy Meal – McDonald's Australia](#)**

## **Smoke and Mirrors**

[Coke Life](#) – Coca-Cola Australia  
[The Right Kinda Nuts](#) - Kraft, Mondelez  
[Pack a Little Joy](#) - LCM - Kellogg's

**Winner – [Coke Life](#) – Coca-Cola Australia**

## **Foul Sport**

[Fuelling Future, Gary Ablett](#) – Gatorade – Schweppes Australia  
[Macca's Junior Sports Grants](#) – McDonald's Australia  
[Sponsorship of Big Bash League](#) – KFC Australia

**Winner - [Sponsorship of Big Bash League](#) – KFC Australia**

## **Parents' Choice**

[Pick Bright. Feel Right!](#) – Nutrition Australia, Produce Marketing Association Australia and New Zealand and The Wiggles  
[Finish with the Right Stuff](#) - New South Wales Health  
[National Walk Safely to School Day](#) - Pedestrian Council of Australia

**Winner - [Pick Bright. Feel Right!](#) – Nutrition Australia, Produce Marketing Association Australia and New Zealand and The Wiggles**

## **Media Spotlight**

[Minions and Junk Food - Gruen \(ABC - 4 November 2015\)](#)  
[Junk Food Advertisements - The Weekly \(ABC - 10 June 2015\)](#)

**Winner – [Junk Food Advertisements - The Weekly](#)**

## **Worst of the Decade**

Kellogg's  
McDonald's Australia

**Winner- McDonald's Australia**

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