

Chapter 2 Lesson 3: Being a Health-Literate Consumer

Introduction:

Did you know that, as a teen, you are one of the hottest targets for advertisers? It's true. Retailers compete fiercely for teens' dollars, blasting you with ads that suggest their products will make you cool, attractive, or part of the "in" crowd. At this Web site, you can learn more about how retailers advertise to kids and how advertising affects children and teens.

Links to Explore:

Facts about Marketing to Children

<http://www.newdream.org/kids/facts.php>

Directions:

- Click on the link and read the fact sheet.
 - Then answer the following questions:
1. How much do retailers spend each year marketing specifically to American children?
 2. About how many television commercials does the average American child see each year?
 3. Why did a task force of the American Psychological Association (APA) recommend restrictions on advertising that targets children under the age of eight?
 4. What percentage of 12-to-13-year-olds surveyed by the Center for a New American Dream said that they feel pressure to buy certain brands because their friends have them?
 5. Identify one way in which advertising messages can harm children's and teens' well-being.

Answers:

1. Over \$15 billion
2. 40,000 (more than 100 per day)
3. Children this age can't evaluate advertising messages critically.
4. 54 percent
5. Any one of the following:
 - Ads for junk food can contribute to childhood obesity.
 - Consumer culture contributes to depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, and conflicts with parents
 - Sexual imagery in ads can contribute to age-inappropriate sexual behavior.
 - Consumer culture promotes harmful spending habits.

Additional Links to Explore:

Use the links below to gather additional information on the activity topic. When appropriate, have students extend their research to include important concepts contained in these Web sites.

Television and the Family

<http://www.aap.org/family/tv1.htm>

Advertising: Teens

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/childrenandmedia/ads-teens.html>

Marketing to Teens - Advertising Strategies

http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/educational/handouts/advertising_marketing/mtt_advertising_strategies.cfm