Analysis of food advertising aimed at children and adolescents in Chilean open channel television

Over the past couple of years, childhood obesity has been on the rise in Chile and is now recognised as one of the biggest public health threats in children population. Amongst the risk factors, many studies have concluded that television advertising directly influences the consumption of energy-dense foods in children and adolescents. In Chile, advertising is most common on television channels, with food being the most advertised category followed by toys. The objective of this study was to look at the nutritional characteristics of advertised foods on five Chilean television channels aimed at children to identify the percentage of healthy and unhealthy foods, to know their exposure to lower quality nutritional foods and to incorporate new perspectives on food and nutritional education.

Results from this study highlighted that 78.7% of food advertisements targeting children was for unhealthy products. The study therefore calls for the implementation of a regulatory mechanism to control the advertising of such products.