Compliance with self-regulation of television food and beverage advertising aimed at children in Spain

Increased attention is brought to the link between television and the childhood obesity epidemic. Through that channel, an increasing amount of food advertisement is being spread during children’s time slot. Given this growing trend, regulations of food and beverage advertising aimed at children is gaining popularity. Spain has implemented the PAOS Code for self-regulation of youth-targeted food advertising. The current study aimed to evaluate the degree to which Spanish television advertising complies with the PAOS Code.

Unfortunately, the study revealed a very high non-compliance with the Code. As highlighted in previous studies, it appears that self-regulation codes will not be sufficient to reduce the high volume and strong impact of ‘unhealthy’ food and beverage marketing targeting children. Given the limit of the obtained results, the study states that it seems sensible to propose the adoption of statutory regulations that reduce the negative impact of advertising on children’s diets.