

NST : Food choices: Gimmicks can promote healthy food, too

Written by Administrator

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YOUR recent reports on children and food ("Brands play vital role in children's food choices" and "Enforce rules on advertising" - NST, Mar 20) suggest that advertisements play a major part in determining children's food choices and lifestyles.

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I think they also affect the supposedly more mature and wiser adults as well.

If the adults, i.e. the parents, are often tempted into having their meals at fast-food outlets because they are influenced by the advertisements on "newly-improved" recipes, then children would surely follow suit.

Since visiting fast-food outlets is often a much anticipated family outing, is it any wonder that children "went for carbonated drinks and fast food, especially those that come with toys"?

I think Consumers International's (CI) campaign to "stop the marketing of unhealthy food to children" should review its objectives.

If "junk and unhealthy food" are banned, children would be tempted to have these "forbidden pleasures" and as a result, consume these foods in secret.

In fact, if the marketers and, subsequently, the children associate "yummy food with cartoon characters or free toys", why doesn't CI employ the same gimmicks to promote healthy food?

Try incorporating colourful and fun elements to get the children to choose apples instead of burgers and exciting graphics and images to focus on the benefits of healthy snacks.

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