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Protecting children from bad food habits control of advertising of food and drink products to children in Brazil: Lessons for the Americas

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In recent decades, international trade barriers have been lifted, a policy of deregulation has been instituted across the globe, and multinational food and drink corporations have grown rapidly. These and other factors have shifted the food supplies of many countries away from traditional foods, and towards intensely processed and often energy-dense fatty, sugary or salty products, which typically are branded and heavily advertised and promoted. It is now generally accepted that the marketing of energy-dense foods, snacks and drinks to children is an important cause of the rapid rise of childhood and early life overweight and obesity, and raises the risk of related diseases in early and later life. This is confirmed in the 2009 WCRF/AICR report *Policy and Action for Cancer Prevention*, and its executive summaries *Políticas e Ações para Prevenção do Câncer no Brasil*, and *Políticas y Medidas Para la Prevención Del Cáncer y de Otras Enfermedades Crónicas en América Latina*, produced in partnership with the Brazilian National Cancer Institute (INCA), and with the Pan American Health Organization. These all recommend that governments take the lead in restricting advertising and marketing of 'fast' food, other processed foods, and sugary drinks, as does the World Health Organization. The question is, by what methods? Civil society organizations favour legislation, whereas industry favours voluntary codes. This presentation will summarize the results of policies, interventions and discussions in Mexico and Brazil, involving government, industry, and civil society, and will provide insights into the best way forward inside and beyond Latin America.