

## Study shows US kids seeing more fast-food ads

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Nov 8 (Reuters) - Fast-food restaurants are using television ads, websites and even their own menus to market themselves and unhealthy food products to children and toddlers, despite complaints from consumers and their own promises to tone it down, researchers said on Monday.

Here are some findings from the yearlong study by researchers at the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity at Yale University in Connecticut:

- \* The fast-food industry spent more than \$4.2 billion dollars in 2009 on TV advertising and other media.
- \* The average preschooler aged 2 to 5 saw 2.8 television ads for fast food every day; children aged 6-11 saw 3.5 daily fast-food ads and youngsters 12 and older saw 4.7 such ads.
- \* Preschoolers viewed 21 percent more fast food ads in 2009 than in 2003 and teens viewed 39 percent more.
- \* Child-targeted marketing did not encourage kids to eat healthier food offerings such as apple slices, but focused on toy giveaways and building brand loyalty.
- \* More than 60 percent of fast-food ads viewed by preschoolers and children promoted fast food items other than kids' meals, meaning they saw ads for even less-healthy adult food items.
- \* Black and Hispanic children are targeted especially hard. The average Spanish-speaking preschoolers saw 290 Spanish-language fast-food TV ads in 2009, and a quarter of Spanish ads aimed at children were for McDonald's.
- \* Nielsen and Arbitron ratings suggested that African American children and teens saw at least 50 percent more fast-food ads on TV in 2009 than their white peers.
- \* Fast food is a daily part of American life -- 84 percent of parents reported taking their child to a fast-food restaurant at least once a week and 66 percent said they went to a McDonald's in the past week.

(Source: [www.fastfoodmarketing.org](http://www.fastfoodmarketing.org))