Television food advertising and the prevalence of childhood overweight and obesity: a multi-country comparison

The aim of this study is to “estimate the contribution of the TV food ads to the prevalence of obesity among 6- to 11-year-old children in Australia, Great Britain (England and Scotland only), Italy, the Netherlands, Sweden and United States.” The study made use of data from existing studies which assessed the link between prevalence of childhood obesity and TV food advertising exposure in the countries mentioned above.

Reduction in the prevalence of overweight and obesity in the absence of TV food ads in each country was assessed. The study showed that the average exposure of children to TV food ads ranged from 1.8 minute per day in the Netherlands to 11.5 minutes per day in the USA. The study showed that the contribution of TV advertisement of food and drinks to childhood obesity prevalence differences between countries and this was significant in some countries.