

# ***See, like share, remember:*** **Evidence on digital food marketing & children and young people – in Ireland and internationally**

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Coca-Cola	1
McDonald's	2
Tayto	3
Cadbury Dairy Milk	4
Ben & Jerry's	5
Domino's Pizza	= 6
Pringles	= 6
Subway (Ireland & UK)	8
Lucozade	9
Eddie Rockets Ireland	10
Supermac's	11
Apache Pizza	= 12
7Up	= 12
Haribo	= 12
M&M's	= 12
Nando's	= 16
Abrakebabra	= 16
KitKat	18



**2016 reports**

# Assumptions

**Teens:** “I just ignore the ads”

**Parents:** “They don’t pay any attention to them”

**Regulators/industry:** Teens have *advertising literacy* – can choose not to act, or to make ‘healthy choices’



How do teens respond to ads in social media?



Article

# See, Like, Share, Remember: Adolescents' Responses to Unhealthy-, Healthy- and Non-Food Advertising in Social Media

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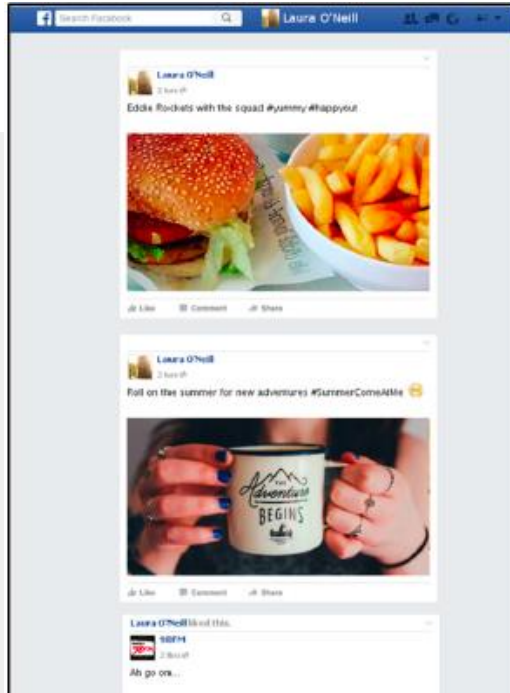
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**Abstract:** Media-saturated digital environments seek to influence social media users' behaviour, including through marketing. The World Health Organization has identified food marketing, including advertising for unhealthy items, as detrimental to health, and in many countries, regulation restricts such marketing and advertising to younger children. Yet regulation rarely addresses adolescents and few studies have examined their responses to social media advertising. In two studies, we examined adolescents' attention, memory and social responses to advertising posts, including interactions between product types and source of posts. We hypothesized adolescents would respond more positively to unhealthy food advertising compared to healthy food or non-food advertising, and more positively to ads shared by peers or celebrities than to ads shared by a brand. Outcomes measured were (1a) *social responses* (likelihood to 'share', attitude to peer); (1b) *brand memory* (recall, recognition) and (2) *attention* (eye-tracking fixation duration and count). Participants were 151 adolescent social media users (Study 1:  $n = 72$ ; 13–14 years;  $M = 13.56$  years,  $SD = 0.5$ ; Study 2:  $n = 79$ , 13–17 years,  $M = 15.37$  years,  $SD = 1.351$ ). They viewed 36 fictitious Facebook profile feeds created to show age-typical content. In a  $3 \times 3$  factorial design, each contained an advertising post that varied by content (healthy/unhealthy/non-food) and source (peer/celebrity/company). Generalised linear mixed models showed that advertisements for unhealthy food evoked significantly more positive responses, compared to non-food and healthy food, on 5 of 6 measures: adolescents were more likely to wish to 'share' unhealthy posts; rated peers more positively when they had unhealthy posts in their feeds; recalled and recognised a greater number of unhealthy food brands; and viewed unhealthy advertising posts for longer. Interactions with sources (peers, celebrities and companies) were more complex but also favoured unhealthy food advertising. Implications are that regulation of unhealthy food advertising should address adolescents and digital media.





Created profiles using teen names and content  
Integrated ads

3x3 design:  
Unhealthy-, healthy- and non-food ads  
From celebrities, brands and peers

Teens, 13-17y, n=151

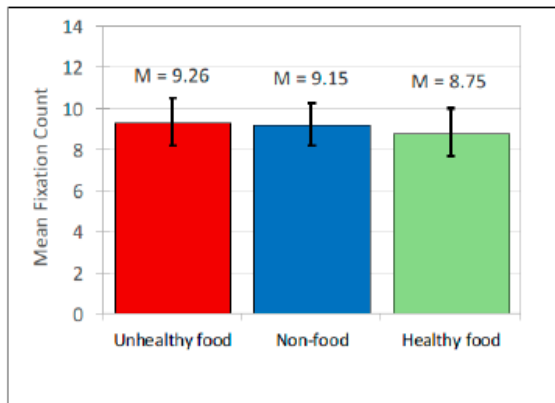
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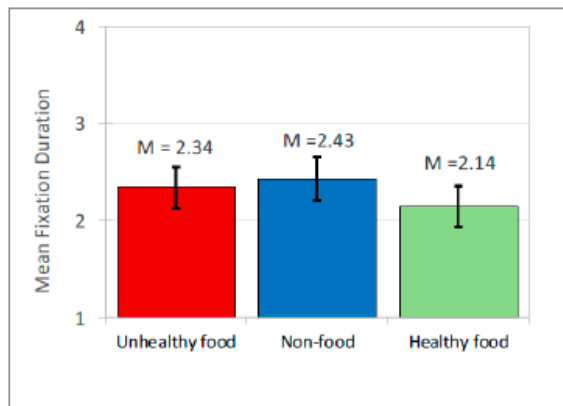
Viewed fictitious peers' FB content



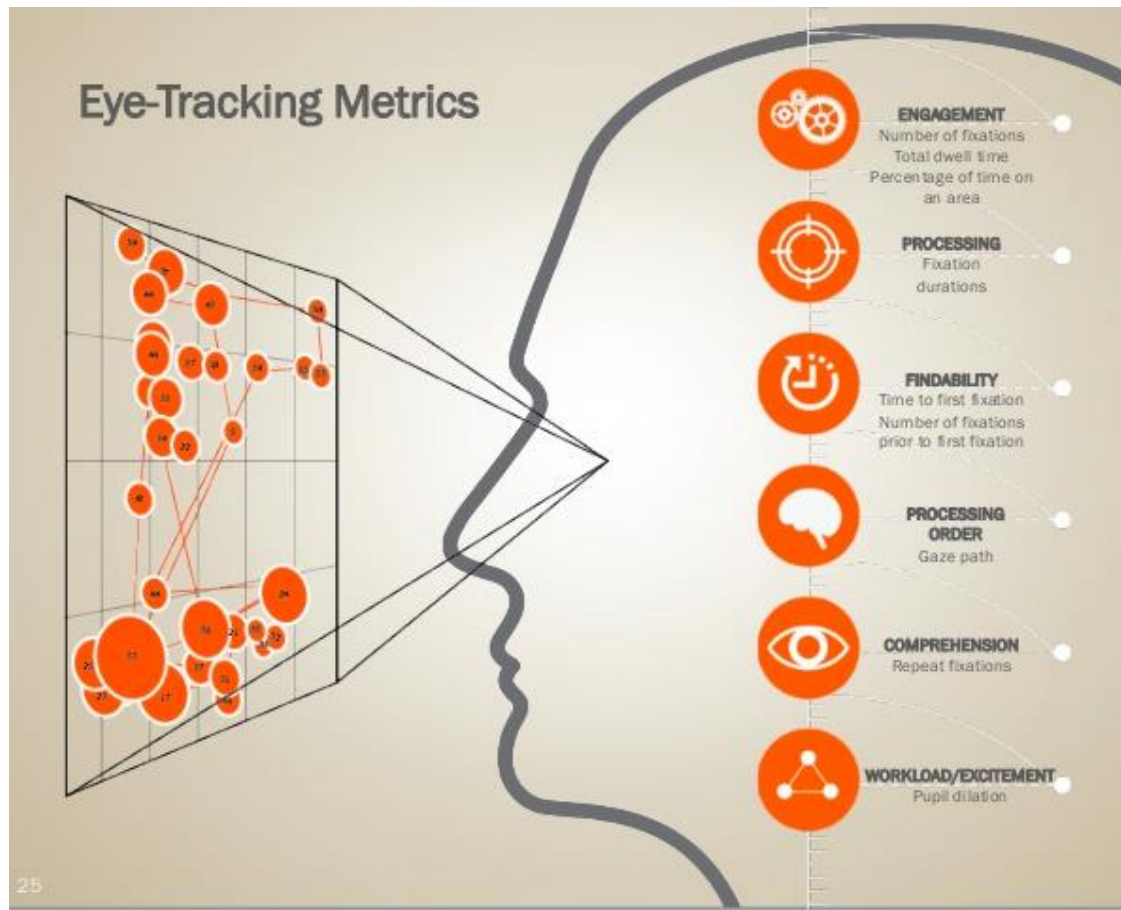




**Figure 10.** Fixation count: Mean scores.



**Figure 11.** Fixation duration: Mean scores.





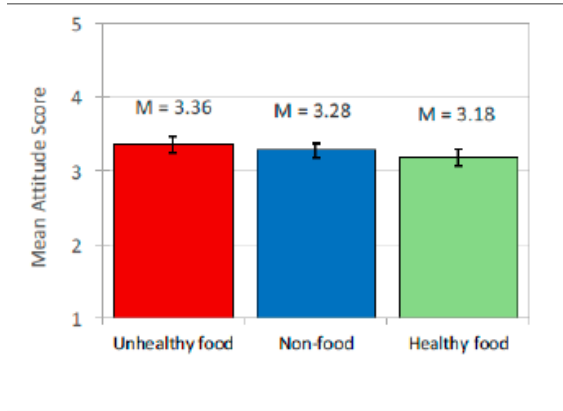


Figure 2. Attitude to peer: Mean scores.

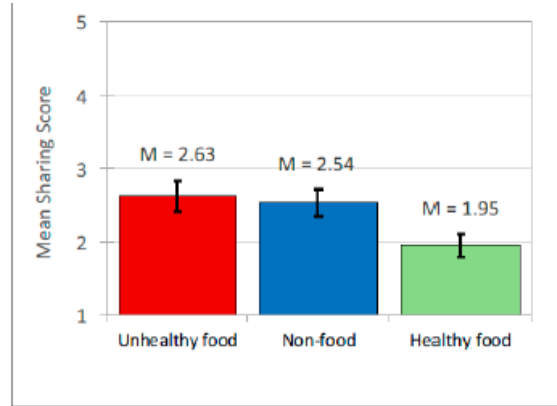


Figure 4. Likelihood to share: Mean scores.



## Peer, social, network effects

- Impression of this person? = **Evaluation of others from their social media content**
- How likely to share? = **Network effects + self-presentation, social identity**

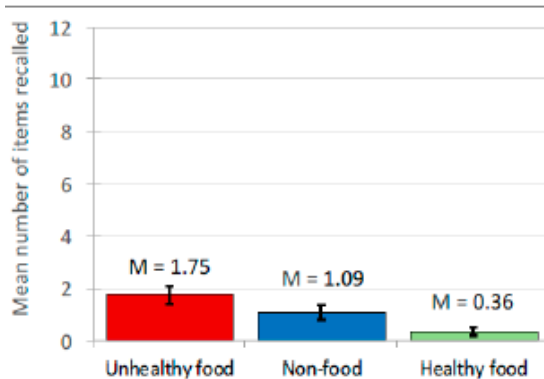


Figure 6. Free brand recall: Mean scores.

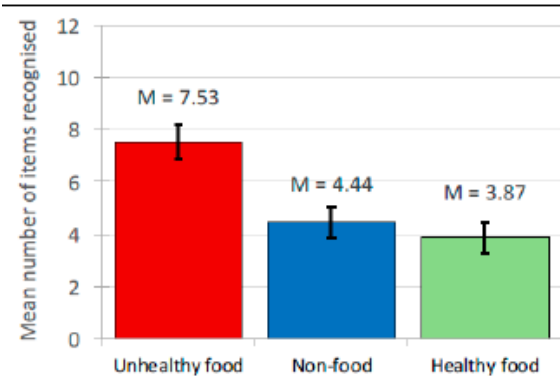


Figure 8. Prompted brand recognition: Mean scores.

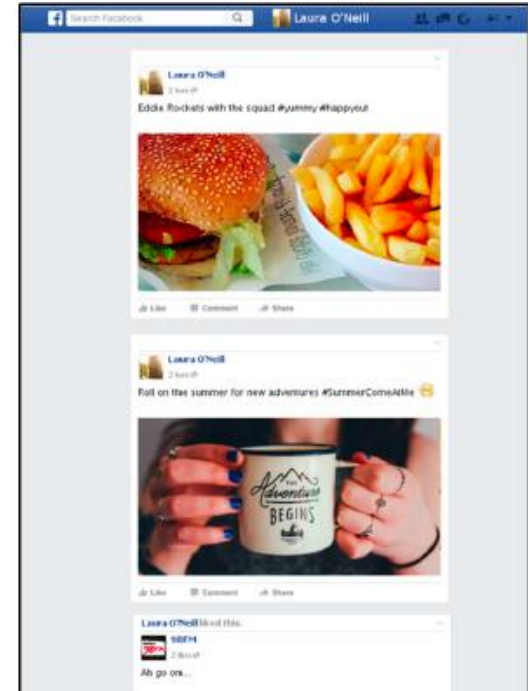
# Memory

- Free recall
- Prompted recognition, from list of 56
  - 30 brands from study + 20 distractors

# Unhealthy > non-food > healthy

- Duration of viewing
- Evaluation of peers
- Likelihood to share with peers
- Free recall
- Prompted recognition

‘Ignoring’ and ‘choosing’ ?



# Global research



## Consumption studies: Children and teens eat more after viewing ads for unhealthy foods, compared to non-foods or healthy foods

- Holiday camps - TV & game ads (Norman et al 2018a, 2018b)
- YouTube influencer promotion (Coates et al 2019a, 2019b)
- Ads on websites and social media (Buchanan et al 2017 & others)
- Advergames studies (Folkvord et al – coming up next!)

**Exposure and power studies** Extensive advertising, many platforms

## Conclusions:

- brands employ strategies to *target* adolescents and particularly encourage their engagement and increase virality
- food brands and content reaching or aimed at children are dominated by *unhealthy* items
- children (including adolescents) *interact with* food marketing in digital and social media
- it results in *eating more* food (and more unhealthy items)

# THANK YOU

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