

**Mulcair's PLAN**

# Keeping our kids healthy

## **Media backgrounder**

*Protecting Canadian children from junk food advertising*

NOVEMBER 26, 2014



## Keeping our kids healthy

*“Parents have enough to do every day and shouldn’t have to worry that their kids are being bombarded with ads for junk food. I don’t think Canadians want that for their kids and grandkids.”*

*–Thomas Mulcair, Leader of the Official Opposition*

## The challenge

- // In Canada, the average child watches about two hours of television each day—and sees more than 20,000 commercials per year.
- // Food advertising constitutes 50% of all advertising time on children’s television shows, and is the largest category of ads that children see.
- // This is the first generation of Canadians that may face lower life expectancies than their parents, largely due to poor diet and lack of physical activity.
- // 31% of Canadian kids are overweight or obese, and 70% of children aged four to eight are not meeting daily serving recommendations for healthy foods like fruits and vegetables.<sup>1</sup>
- // Ipsos Reid polling found that 81% of Canadian parents want government to place limits on advertising unhealthy foods and beverages to children.

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<sup>1</sup> Heart and Stroke Foundation

## Keeping our kids healthy

*“Marketing junk food and sugary drinks to kids with slick ads isn’t just sneaky—it’s making children sick. We strongly urge federal legislation to restrict the marketing of all foods and beverages to children. We have a duty to keep children safe and to help parents give them the best start for a long, healthy life.”*

*–David Sculthorpe, CEO, Heart and Stroke Foundation*

## Our commitment

**New Democrats will help busy moms and dads who want to make healthy choices for their kids—by taking junk food advertising aimed at children off the air.**

**Tom Mulcair and the NDP will change federal legislation to ban commercial food and beverage advertising targeting children under 13.**

For 32 years, Quebec has had some of the strictest consumer protection legislation in the world, banning advertising directed at children under the age of 13.

A recent study of Quebec’s ban on advertising to children found that it effectively reduced fast food consumption in households by as much as 13% each week—and Quebec has one of the lowest childhood obesity rates in Canada.<sup>2</sup>

Now it’s time for federal leadership.

Tom Mulcair’s New Democrats are putting forward practical solutions to ensure the health and well-being of all Canadian children. Protecting them from junk food advertising is a healthy start.

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<sup>2</sup> Tirtha Dhar *Fast-Food Consumption and the Ban on advertising Targeting Children: The Quebec Experience*, 2011 <http://journals.ama.org/doi/abs/10.1509/jmkr.48.5.799>