GUMS PROMOTION LEADS TO ADDICTION AND CHILD OBESITY

Fortified milks (GUMS) are in fact likely to undermine good nutrition in young children, since they are almost universally high in sugar, many are flavoured and, as we demonstrate in this report, intakes of sugar, fat and calories from these milks could promote overweight and obesity, oral ill-health and later chronic disease in children.


Misleading Marketing: presenting these products as necessary when they are not

GUMs add no additional benefit to young children on normal diets (EFSA, 2013). The baby food industry uses promotional marketing tactics to make parents believe that such nutrients are a critical part of a child’s diet.

- WHA Resolution 63.23 (2010) urges Member States to end inappropriate promotion of foods for infants and young children.

Addiction

Parents should be informed about the dangers of GUMs.

- Toddlers end up wanting to drink only - Not eat!
- Toddlers do not learn how to chew
- Toddlers do not recognise different tastes
- Toddlers get addicted to the sugar in GUMs
- Results: Childhood obesity

Promotion is inappropriate “if it contributes to childhood obesity and non-communicable diseases”

Clarification and Guidance on Inappropriate Promotion of Foods for Infants and Young Children - Discussion Paper. WHO. 2015

EXPANDING THE MARKET

Growing up milks (GUMS) are also called toddler milks or formulated milks and are intended and marketed as suitable for feeding young children up to the age of 36 months, including growing up milks, are adequately covered by national legislation.


To avoid inappropriate marketing of products aimed at children older than 12 months, including through health and nutrition claims and cross promotion, more efforts are required to ensure that all milk products, intended and marketed as suitable for feeding young children up to the age of 36 months, including growing up milks, are adequately covered by national legislation.


GUMs come under the International Code definition of "breastmilk substitute". WHA resolution 58.32 [2005] recommends breastfeeding to continue for up to 2 years or beyond. Any milk product that is marketed or represented as suitable as a partial or total replacement for breastmilk is a substitute and is under the scope.

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- Often, the product name or logo is similar to the company’s other formula products but sometimes has a number “3” added on. Companies use these milks to indirectly promote infant formula and follow-up formula, undermining breastfeeding and adequate complementary feeding.

- Cross promotion - the promotion of one product benefits all the others. Lookalike labels create brand recognition, trust and loyalty.

Tapping into developing markets, GUMs are gaining momentum in many markets around the world. "Exclusive formula" is a marketing tactic used in Latin America, which is likely to be explored in the region. Between 2011 and 2016, sales of formula are expected to grow by 5% to US$45 billion in China and US$10 billion in Brazil, but recent growth in the region is actually driven by China, with global sales of formula increasing only by 2% in the same period.


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Marketing of GUMs may be considered misleading as it creates doubts on the nutritional adequacy of ordinary foods

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Code Article 5.1: Advertising or other forms of promotion about products is not allowed. No health claims on products: WHA58.32, WHA59.11, WHA59.21, WHA61.20, WHA63.23 prohibit claims.

GUMS PROMOTED THROUGH NUMEROUS CHANNELS

IN MALAYSIA

LET IT OUT

IN ETHIOPIA

A desk calendar in a hospital in Addis Ababa advertises the full range of Liptomil formulas including GUMs.

IN MYANMAR

Brochure on Danone’s Mamil uses claims to manipulate parents’ fear of health problems.

IN CONGOS

Danone’s Dugro taps into emerging markets like Myanmar, a country with strong breastfeeding traditions, and makes health claims such as “2 power nuts” to compete with breastfeeding and local diets.

IN CHINA

Nestlé Neslac 3 with 3 nutritional claims: better brain power, better digestive system, and better overall health.

IN HONG KONG

This shelf talker in Myanmar claims Similac Gain will increase IQ. Similac is the brand name of Abbott’s infant formula.

IN SINGAPORE

Singapore Nestlé Nan 3 sponsored mini tracks to engage young children in traffic games. The tracks are lined with large promotional packshots of Nan Gro 3 growing-up milks and the slogan “Nurture your Child’s Potential”.

IN IRELAND

A TV ad says, “Danone’s Aptamil growing up milk should be used as part of a healthy balanced diet.”

“Everywhere in the world, GUMs are promoted through numerous channels.”

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