



Ankin Law Office LLC

Protecting the Rights of Injured Workers

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Food advertising aimed at kids is on center stage



Earlier this year we [predicted](#) that in 2011 there will be increasing backlash against fast food, particularly when marketing it toward children. By way of example, we cited the recently enacted [San Francisco ban of McDonald's Happy Meals](#). Shortly thereafter, we [posted about](#) a [class action lawsuit](#) that had been filed in California wherein it was claimed that McDonald's encouraged childhood obesity by enticing children to eat unhealthy meals via its Happy Meals.

Since then, the Wall Street Journal [reports](#) that the fast food industry is fighting back by lobbying for the enactment of regulations that would prevent local governments from passing laws anti-"Happy Meal" laws. As explained in the WSJ post, Arizona has already enacted legislation of this type and Florida may soon follow:

A law similar to Arizona's is now pending in the Florida legislature, Reuters reports, adding that the fast food industry justifies such legislation on the grounds that it would prevent restaurants from being subject to myriad, conflicting local marketing standards.

However, as reported in this New York Times post, the Federal Trade Commission is moving in the opposite direction and recently passed "sweeping guidelines" intended to encourage the fast food industry to change the way that it advertises its products to children. The guidelines are not mandatory but are intended to take a stab at reducing childhood obesity by strongly encouraging the fast food industry to act more responsibly when it advertises to children:

The guidelines were created at the request of Congress and written by the commission, the [Food and Drug Administration](#), the Agriculture Department and the [Centers for Disease Control](#). Regulators said they would take comments and consider changes before submitting a final report to Congress.

The guidelines call for foods that are advertised to children to meet two basic requirements. They would have to include certain healthful ingredients, like whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, or low-fat milk. And they could not contain unhealthful amounts of sugar, [saturated fat](#), [trans fat](#) and salt.

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If the guidelines are enacted, it will certainly be a step in the right direction. Obesity is a huge problem and the habits that form the building block of this societal issue start in childhood. Anything that can be done to encourage children to engage in more health eating habits is a good thing. For the future of our children, let's hope these regulations are ultimately enacted.

Howard Ankin of Ankin Law Office LLC (www.ankinlaw.com) handles [workers' compensation](#) and [personal injury cases](#). Mr. Ankin can be reached at (312) 346-8780 and howard@ankinlaw.com.

Related articles

[Should Ronald McDonald Be Fired?](#) (bioethics.net)

[McDonald's told: Axe Ronald & Happy Meal](#) (thesun.co.uk)

["Ronald McDonald Under Attack For Tricking Kids Into Buying Happy Meals" and related posts](#)
(boston.barstoolsports.com)

[Health professionals to McDonald's: For the children's sake, let's retire Ronald McDonald](#) (hotair.com)

By [Admin - BN](#)
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