

# Intro to for Parents

In 2009, the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity at Yale University released a report entitled Cereal FACTS to document the nutritional quality and marketing of cereals to children. Cereal Facts 2012 is a follow-up to that report, measuring the changes in nutritional quality and marketing of cereals to children. Since the original report, cereal companies have made a number of changes – some are improvements, others are not.

**BETTER**

Overall nutritional quality improved for 13 of 16 child-targeted brands

Milsberry.com and Postopia.com, two popular advergame sites, were discontinued



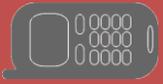

**WORSE**

The number of child visitors in 2011 increased for eight of 10 child-targeted websites existing in 2008

Kellogg introduced the first food company child-targeted advergame app for mobile phones

Total media spending to promote child-targeted cereals increased by 34% from 2008 to 2011





### Best and Worst Nutrition Ratings

**Best 5**

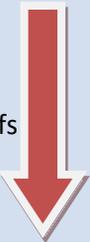
1. Kellogg Mini-Wheats
2. Kashi Golden Goodness
3. General Mills Cheerios (regular)
4. Cascadian Farm Purely O's
5. Barbara's Bakery Puffins

**Worst 5**

1. Quaker Cap'n Crunch
2. Post Pebbles
3. General Mills Reese's Puffs
4. Post Honeycomb
5. Kellogg Smorz

**Most frequently advertised to children**

1. Cinnamon Toast Crunch
2. Lucky Charms
3. Honey Nut Cheerios
4. Froot Loops
5. Reese's Puffs

### What can you do?

**Consider your options.** There are many low-sugar cereals that kids will eat. Add some fresh fruit and even a small amount of table sugar for a more nutritious breakfast option. Check out the [cereal spectrum](#) to help guide you.

**Mix it up.** If your child is used to eating high sugar children's cereals, try a lightly sweetened option made with whole grains instead. Or mix your child's regular cereal with a low-sugar cereal. Gradually add less sugared-cereal into the mix. See the [tips section](#) for more.

**Take a stand.** Write a letter to a cereal company demanding that they stop marketing their high-sugar cereals to kids.

**Learn more.** Explore the website to learn more about reading [cereal nutrition labels](#).

- Bottom Line:** cereal companies continue to **aggressively market their least nutritious** products directly to children.
- Cereals advertised to children contain **56% more sugar** compared with adult-targeted cereals.
  - In 2011, the average 6- to 11-year old saw more than **700 TV ads for cereals**, and the average 2- to 5-year old saw 595 ads.
  - The majority of cereal ads that children see on TV promote products that are one-third or more sugar -- one 30 gram serving of these cereals contains **as much sugar as three Chips Ahoy cookies** (30 gram serving).

The Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity has other resources about marketing cereals to children.

**For more information go to: [www.cerealfacts.org](http://www.cerealfacts.org)**