Dear CEO Skinner,

As health professionals engaged directly in the largest preventable health crisis facing this country, we ask that you stop marketing junk food to children.

The rates of sick children are staggering. Ballooning health care costs and an overburdened health care system make treatment more difficult than ever. And we know that reducing junk food marketing can significantly improve the health of kids.

Our community is devoted to caring for sick children and preventing illness through public education. But our efforts cannot compete with the hundreds of millions of dollars you spend each year directly marketing to kids.

Indeed, as health professionals, we know that parents exercising responsibility for their children’s diets and exercise is vital. We also know that no authoritative data indicates a breakdown in parental responsibility.

Obesity and disease levels among kids are rising even though parents continue to parent and kids continue to exercise at rates similar to those of two decades ago. So what has changed?

What has changed is the food children eat and the amount of marketing they are bombarded with.

We know the contributors to today’s epidemic are manifold and a broad societal response is required. But marketing can no longer be ignored as a significant part of this massive problem.

We ask that you heed our concern and retire your marketing promotions for food high in salt, fat, sugar, and calories to children, whatever form they take – from Ronald McDonald to toy giveaways.

Our children and health care system will benefit from your leadership on this issue.

Sincerely* (View the full text and signatures at www.LetterToMcDonalds.org)

T. Colin Campbell, PhD, Author, The China Study. Prof Emeritus, Nutritional Biochemistry, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Walter Willett, MD, DrPH, Chair, Dept. of Nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health, Boston, MA

*(Affiliation is for ID purposes only)

Institutions:

- American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
- American Medical Student Association
- Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine, University of Arizona
- Baltimore Medical System
- Chicago Hispanic Health Coalition
- Department of Family Medicine at Tufts University School of Medicine
- Doctors for America
- Family Practice and Counseling Network, Philadelphia, PA
- Illinois Maternal & Child Health Coalition
- Inpatient Diabetes Program, Boston University
- Massachusetts Public Health Association
- Mercy Hospital & Medical Center, Chicago, IL
- National Council of Asian and Pacific Islander Physicians
- New Mexico Public Health Association
- Nutrition and Weight Management Center, Boston Medical Center
- Oregon Academy of Family Physicians
- Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine
- The Prevention Institute
- Science and Environmental Health Network
- The Vermont Nurse Practitioners Association
- The Vermont Nurse Practitioners Association

National Health Leaders:

- Patch Adams, MD, Activist Physician, Gesundheit Institute, Arlington, VA
- T. Berry Brazelton, MD, Pediatrician, Author, and Prof., Harvard Medical School and Children’s Hospital Boston, MA
- T. Colin Campbell, PhD, Author, The China Study. Prof Emeritus, Nutritional Biochemistry, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
- David L. Katz, MD, MHP, FACPM, FACP, Director, Yale Prevention Research Center; Editor-in-Chief, Childhood Obesity, New Haven, CT
- Robert S. Lawrence, MD, Director, Center for a Livable Future; Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, Baltimore, MD
- Robert Lustig, MD, Director of the weight Assessment for Teen and Child Health (WATCH) Program at University of California, San Francisco, CA
- Alan Meyers, MD, MHP, Associate Prof. of Pediatrics, Boston University School of Medicine; Co-Chair, Massachusetts Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics’ Obesity Committee, Boston, MA
- William Neil, MD, James H. Walker Chair of Pediatric Cardiology; Director, Coronary Artery Risk Detection in Appalachian Communities (CARDiac) Project, West Virginia University, Morgantown, WV
- Marion Nestle, PhD, MPH, Author, Paulette Goddard Prof. in the Dept. of Nutrition, Food Studies, and Public Health, and Prof. of Sociology, New York University, New York, NY
- William C. Roberts, MD, Executive Director, Baylor Cardiovascular Institute; Editor-in-Chief, The American Journal of Cardiology, Dallas, TX
- Janine Sanchez, MD, Associate Prof. of Pediatrics; Director, Pediatric Diabetes Program, Division of Pediatric Endocrinology, University of Miami Miller School of Medicine, Miami, FL
- Walter Tsou, MD, MHP, Adjunct Prof., Family Medicine, University of Pennsylvania; Fmr. President, American Public Health Association, Philadelphia, PA
- Andrew Weil, MD, Author, Founder and Director, Arizona Center for Integrative Medicine, Prof. of Medicine and Public Health, and Jones-Lovell Endowed Chair for Integrative Rheumatology, University of Arizona, Tucson, AZ

To join the growing movement of health professionals, visit: www.LetterToMcDonalds.org

*PARTIAL LIST OF SIGNATURES

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