



Department  
of Health

From the Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP  
Secretary of State for Health

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The Rt Hon George Howarth MP  
By email to: [george.howarth.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:george.howarth.mp@parliament.uk)

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*Dear George,*

Thank you for your email of 23 September on behalf of a number of your constituents about Cancer Research UK's campaign to ban the advertising of junk food before 9pm.

Current restrictions on advertising in the UK are amongst the toughest in the world. There is a total ban on the advertising of less healthy food during children's television programmes, on dedicated children's broadcast channels and in programmes deemed to be 'of particular appeal' to children under the age of 16. The rules also contain restrictions on advertising content for both broadcast and non-broadcast media, for example promotional offers may not be used in less healthy food TV adverts targeted at pre-school or primary school aged children.

Nevertheless, we recognise that broadcasters can also act as powerful positive forces. We expect all broadcasters to consider the impact their programming has and contribute positively to reducing obesity through programme content and editorial.

As you will be aware, we launched *Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action* on 18 August. The plan aims to reduce levels of childhood obesity, improve the health and wellbeing of children, and contribute towards reducing future pressures on the NHS and society. Our plan will help children and families to recognise and make healthier choices, and be more active, supported by schools and the NHS. We cannot do this alone, however, and everyone has a part to play to help children improve their diets, be more active and lead healthier lives.

*Childhood Obesity: A Plan for Action* can be found at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) by searching for 'childhood obesity' and following the relevant link.