

News story: Restricting promotions of food linked to childhood obesity: public asked views

The government is proposing new rules to restrict retailers using promotions thought to cause excessive consumption of HFSS food and drink by children.

The consultation asks people to give their views on:

1. restricting multibuy promotions of HFSS products, such as 'buy one, get one free'
2. restricting promotions of HFSS products at checkouts, end of aisles and store entrances

The consultation is part of [chapter 2 of the government's childhood obesity plan](#). It will seek views from the public and industry on the potential measures, alongside whether exemptions should be made for small businesses so they are not penalised by the rules.

Currently, 1 in 3 children is overweight or obese by the time they leave primary school. Despite the complexity around obesity, experts are clear that the root cause is consistently consuming more calories than needed.

Recent research from the Obesity Health Alliance found that 43% of all food and drink products located in prominent areas were for sugary foods and drinks, with just 1% for fruit and vegetables.

The new rules would only apply to deals that promote HFSS food and drinks that are most often consumed by children. They would not stop discounts on household essentials.

Businesses would also still be free to offer discounts for individual sales of HFSS items, as this does not require consumers to buy more in order to benefit from savings.

Public Health Minister Steve Brine said:

Preventing ill health is critical to our Long Term Plan for the NHS, and I want to do everything in my power to keep people healthy for longer. This must start with the health and nutrition of our children.

Tackling childhood obesity means working together across society, with industry, public services and families all having a role to play. All too often we hear people say less healthy foods are cheaper and easier but that is simply not the case.

This is about ensuring businesses are doing their part to shift the

balance and help children and families eat healthier options like fruit and vegetables.