



Building the bridge between parents and schools

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New Moms Survey Reveals Strong Support of Through-School Marketing Programs Aimed at Parents Instead of Kids

Wrentham, MA -- June 24, 2008 -- For consumer companies who have been facing increasing scrutiny in marketing directly to kids and marketing through schools, School Family Media, Inc.'s 2008 Survey of Moms' Attitudes About Marketing and Advertising in Schools strongly suggests that they can actually go "back to school" – as long as their marketing and advertising is focused on the parent, aka Mom, and not the student. The survey shows that moms, while still skeptical of through-school marketing programs targeting students, are open to constructive, *parent-focused*, out-of-the-classroom marketing programs. More than 92% of those surveyed found corporate-sponsored materials and samples distributed to parents at parent-attended school events to be acceptable.

Conversely, respondents affirmed a very low tolerance for through-school marketing and advertising targeting students directly. Only 9% of respondents found ads on school buses acceptable and less than 34% found ads on book covers acceptable. Even free curriculum materials containing only a corporate logo were found acceptable by just 50% of respondents.

"The School Family Media research reveals that if consumer marketers shift their focus from targeting kids to connecting directly with parents via mutually beneficial programs that are relevant to and supportive of the school community, they need not fear that they are trespassing on school grounds," said John Driscoll, Vice President of Business Development, School Family Media, Inc.

For example, more than 95% responded favorably to school redemption/rewards programs such as General Mills' Box Tops for Education and Campbell's Labels for Education. And more than 80% supported educational materials and magazines provided free specifically to parents.

“If a corporate sponsor wants to distribute materials or advertise through schools, they should approach the parents first and go through them, instead of the kids directly,” stated Robin Young, a mom from Bedford, Washington.

The high rate of receptiveness for parent-focused materials and samples distributed at school events aligns perfectly with the current trend towards direct-to-consumer, experiential marketing that has proven a powerful vehicle in increasing product awareness and purchase intent with families of school-age kids – whose consumer spending is expected to reach \$143 billion by 2010, according to *Promo Magazine’s* Packaged Facts Market Research.

Respondents were asked to rank their interest level in receiving free product information or samples from a range of product categories at parent-attended school events. Categories showing the strongest support (“Some” to “Strong” Interest Level) were Health products (85%) and Sports/Fitness products (85%), followed by Toys/Crafts (83%) and Food/Cooking (82%).

In response to growing concerns about childhood obesity and the ethics of marketing directly to kids in general, industry-leading consumer packaged goods companies have been moving towards self-regulation in various forms, most notably, the Better Business Bureau’s Children’s Food and Beverage Advertising Initiative (CFBAI). According to the School Family Media, Inc. survey, almost two-thirds of respondents feel that the CFBAI pledge is a genuine step in the right direction by marketers. However, 74% of respondents advocated for further self-regulation, and felt the CFBAI should be extended to include all companies that advertise to kids, not just food and beverage companies.

At the end of the day, parents hold themselves most accountable when it comes to advertising and kids. 86% of survey respondents say that parents, not corporations or schools, are primarily responsible for limiting kids’ exposure to advertising – indicating that consumer marketers would do well to chart a collaborative course with school parents when marketing through schools.

“Through-school, out of the classroom marketing and school-business partnerships executed the right way remain highly valued by parents and our schools – and are probably one of the most direct and effective ways to connect with this audience,” said Mr. Driscoll.

The survey results were presented at the 2008 Kid Power Marketing Conference, May 20, 2008 in Orlando, Fla. Further details and complete survey results are available by contacting Mr. Driscoll directly at School Family Media, Inc. at jdriscoll@schoolfamilymedia.com or 800-644-3561 x202.

METHODOLOGY

The 2008 School Family Media Survey of Moms’ Attitudes About Marketing and Advertising Through Schools was developed in conjunction with Kid Power® to gain current insights from mothers of school-age children regarding the acceptability of corporate sponsorship of materials or programs targeting students or parents, at their schools. The survey included detailed questions about the key issues surrounding marketing and advertising through schools, such as: the acceptability of student- vs. parent-focused materials, in- vs. out-of-the-classroom

materials, as well as general corporate responsibility in marketing through schools. Data was garnered via an online survey conducted during April and May 2008 with 1,186 respondents across 48 states. Of the total respondents, 93 percent were women age 25-54 with 1 or more children under the age of 18 years old.

ABOUT SCHOOL FAMILY MEDIA, INC.

School Family Media is the only marketing and media services company focused exclusively on helping parents and schools help children succeed by promoting and enabling practical and meaningful parent involvement at school. School Family Media's parent-focused, out-of-the-classroom programs, such as School Family Nights and Back2School, as well as the parent-focused website, SchoolFamily.com, offer consumer brands an unmatched connection with influential, involved parents across the country - especially moms with kids age 6-11. These unique and powerful programs provide consumer brand marketers with innovative, turnkey, grassroots marketing solutions on a national scale. For more information, please visit www.schoolfamilymedia.com.

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