



TV junk food ad concern

Marianne Betts

health reporter

INDUSTRY self-regulation of junk food television advertising to children may be failing, a broadcasting watchdog report reveals.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority found it was “unclear” if industry initiatives had resulted in a fall in the level of children’s exposure to junk food advertising on TV.

The report, released yesterday, also found there were continuing community concerns around food and beverage advertising to children on commercial free-to-air TV.

The findings prompted health groups to make fresh calls for the Government to step in and develop an effective regulatory system.

Obesity Policy Coalition senior adviser Jane Martin said there was clear evidence junk food advertising was a key in promoting unhealthy food to children.

“With one in four children overweight or obese, the Government must call time and rein in junk food advertising to children,” Ms Martin said.

Self-regulation by the Australian Food and Grocery Council (AFGC) and the Quick Service Restaurant Industry came into effect 18 months ago after the authority’s review of Children’s Television Standards.

These industry initiatives focused on not advertising food and drinks to children unless they promoted healthy dietary choices.

But the AFGC rejected claims industry self-regulation was not working.