



## SCREENING GUIDE

### *Consuming Kids: The Commercialization of Childhood*

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#### -Before the Film-

#### Steps to Host a Screening

1. **Find a venue.** Many public libraries, universities, places of worship, community centers, and schools will gladly make space available for community film screenings. Or you can host a screening in your home. The film is 67 minutes so you'll want to reserve your venue for two hours to allow adequate time for discussion.
2. **List your screening on Brave New Theaters.** Go to <http://consumingkids.bravenewtheaters.com/> and select host a screening. Enter your screening details and list Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood under groups hosting. This will automatically create a webpage for your screening and allow people to RSVP online.
3. **Get the DVD.** Once you've entered your screening into the Brave New Theaters system, we'll contact you. If you're one of the first 40 people to host a public screening, we'll send you a free DVD! Otherwise, we'll send you a link to purchase the film for \$24.99.
4. **Equipment.** If your screening is at a public venue, you'll want to make sure that they have a DVD player or a computer that plays DVDs and projection and sound equipment. It is also helpful to have a table for handouts and email signup sheets. If the screening is at your house, you'll just need a DVD player, a television, and places for people to sit.

5. **Publicize your screening.** Here are some suggestions for getting the word out.
- Let your friends and family know. This is the perfect way to introduce them to the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood.
  - Send an announcement to any relevant listservs. Be sure to include screening details and a link to your screening website on Brave New Theaters.
  - Send an announcement with a brief description of the film and screening details to your local newspaper. Most community newspapers will list local screenings for free.
  - List the screening on the events section of Craig's List (<http://www.craigslist.org>) or other community websites.
  - Make a flyer. You can use our template, available at <http://commercialfreechildhood.org/events/screenings/screeningflyer.doc>, and fill in the details for your screening or make your own. Hang it at local libraries, places of worship, etc.
  - We'll send an email out to local members of the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood to let them know about your screening.
6. **Invite local decision makers and the media.** Let your board of education know about the screening. Call your Congressperson and local representatives and ask if they will send a staff member. Ask your local newspaper if they will send someone to cover your event.
7. **Make copies** of CCFC sign-up sheets, action steps, and about CCFC page. You may want to include additional handouts such as CCFC fact sheets, available at <http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/factsheets/facts.htm> or our suggested reading list, available at <http://commercialfreechildhood.org/events/screenings/suggestedreading.pdf>.

## -On the Day of the Event-

### **Setting Up**

Arrive in time to make sure that the equipment is working and that enough chairs are set up for the audience.

Put out handouts (CCFC Action Steps, About CCFC), envelopes, and CCFC sign-up sheets. Make sure you have several pens for the sign-up sheets.

### **Suggestions for Introducing the Film**

- Introduce yourself. Talk a little about your connection to CCFC and why this issue and our work are important to you.
  - Let people know that you will be leading a discussion afterwards and urge them to stay for it.
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## -After the Film-

### **General Suggestions for Discussion**

It's our experience that the film generates a lot of discussion. We've found that it is helpful to acknowledge that the film can be overwhelming. It is also essential to provide people with hope, to let them know that there are people around the country who are working to limit marketers' access to children, that you will be talking about CCFC, and that you will be discussing things that they can do.

Reactions may vary depending on the viewing audience. Parents of young children may have different concerns from parents of older children. Teachers may want to focus on limiting commercialism in the classroom. Spiritual communities may have another focus. If questions come up that you can't answer that's fine; you can toss the question back to the audience. You can also refer people to the CCFC website, and also to books written and edited by many of the people in the film. A suggested reading list is available at

<http://commercialfreechildhood.org/events/screenings/suggestedreading.pdf>.

We suggest raising a few points for discussion, then taking time to talk about CCFC, and, finally, closing with giving people some time to think about and talk discuss what steps they can take to reduce the commercial pressures on children.

### **Goals for the Discussion**

- To raise awareness about commercialism in the lives of children
- To build a community of activists.
- To energize communities to take action at home, in schools, and to influence local and national policies.
- To raise awareness about, and to enlist supporters for, the work of CCFC

### **Suggestions for Discussion Questions**

Remember that our suggestions are only suggestions. Feel free to pick and choose or make up your own.

**Question 1:** Did anything you saw in the film surprise you?

**Question 2:** The advertising industry suggests that it's up to parents, and parents alone, to protect children from being targeted by marketers. How realistic is this? What *can* parents do to protect their children? What are the limits to the effectiveness of one family, acting alone, to mitigate the impact of commercial culture on children?

**Discussion of CCFC:** Talking about the limits of individual families taking on commercial culture is also a good time to talk about CCFC, why you belong, and what we've accomplished. We've enclosed a description of CCFC and its accomplishments. Point people to the CCFC sign up sheets. If you're comfortable

asking for donations this is a good time to do it—you can point out, or pass out, the self-addressed stamped envelopes.

**Final Question:** Ask people to think of just one thing that they each can do to ease the commercial pressures on children. Ask them to share their ideas.

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## -Conclusion-

Remind people to sign up for CCFC and to take home the handouts. If there is time encourage people to spend some time talking informally about the issues and what you can do about them.

Please return any completed CCFC sign-up sheets by fax to:

Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood  
NonProfit Center  
89 South St., #403  
Boston, MA 02111

Fax: 617 - 896 – 9397

Phone: 617 - 896 - 9368

Email: [ccfc@commercialfreechildhood.org](mailto:ccfc@commercialfreechildhood.org)



**Campaign for a  
Commercial-Free Childhood**  
[www.commercialfreechildhood.org](http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org)



## 10 THINGS YOU CAN DO TO RECLAIM CHILDHOOD FROM CORPORATE MARKETERS

1. **Build commercial-free time into your child's life.**

Nurture creative play. Get children out in green space; nature is a great antidote to commercialism. Institute family nights where you play board games, bake, collaborate on art projects, etc.

2. **Limit screen time.**

Make sure your children's bedrooms are screen free. Remember the American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no screen time for children under two as well as limits for older kids.

3. **Educate yourself and others.**

Hold a screening of *Consuming Kids* at your school, your home, or your place of worship (<http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/events/consumingkids.html>.) Invite your state representative, board of education, and PTA/PTO president. Download CCFC's fact sheets from <http://commercialfreechildhood.org/factsheets/facts.htm>. Read books about commercialism and share them with a book group. Our suggested reading list is available at <http://commercialfreechildhood.org/events/screenings/suggestedreading.pdf>.

4. **Speak up.**

Ask your daughter's pediatrician not to use Barbie band-aids. Ask your son's teacher not to use Spiderman stickers as rewards. Ask your friends and family to adhere to your values when selecting birthday and holiday presents for your children. Even new parents can ask people to avoid electronic toys, licensed characters and screen media when giving baby gifts.

5. **Choose commercial-free.**

If possible, select preschools, camps, and daycare centers that do not depend on screens, and media-linked toys to entertain children--or work to change the ones you're involved with.

6. **Reclaim your child's school.**

Form a committee to examine school commercialism. For ideas about what to look for, see <http://commercialfreechildhood.org/factsheets/schools.pdf>. Find out how to hold a Commercial-Free Book Fair at <http://commercialfreechildhood.org/bookfairs/home.htm>. Ask your school or school board to adopt policies that limit advertising on school grounds.

7. **Speak out!**

Write a letter to your local newspaper and comment on parenting blogs and social networking sites about the commercialization of childhood.

8. **Work for local legislation.**

Urge your state representative to sponsor legislation that prohibits advertising and marketing in schools.

9. **Work for federal legislation.**

Urge your U.S. Senators to support legislation that restores the Federal Trade Commission's authority to regulate marketing to children.

10. **Support CCFC.**

Help us build a national network of parents, educators, health care professionals, advocates, and concerned citizens working together to reclaim childhood from corporate marketers by participating in CCFC's email campaigns and sending them on to friends and family.

## About the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood

The Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood is the only national organization devoted solely to limiting the impact of corporate marketing on children. Formed in 2000 by health care professionals and educators concerned about the increasing commercialization of childhood, CCFC, which now has more than 30,000 members, is the go-to organization for policymakers, parents, members of the media, and educators with questions or concerns about marketing to children.

CCFC advocates for the adoption of government policies that limit marketers' access to children and hold corporations accountable for their egregious advertising practices. In the past few years, we've had amazing success:

- After 5,000 emails from CCFC members, Scholastic agreed to stop promoting the highly sexualized Bratz brand in schools.
- In response to a parent's complaint, CCFC launched a national campaign demanding that McDonald's end its practice of advertising on report card envelopes in Seminole County, Florida. After CCFC's concerns were featured in media outlets across the country including *Good Morning, America* and *The Colbert Report*, McDonald's stopped the advertising.
- Working with local activists and parents, CCFC has stopped BusRadio—a company that plans on “taking student targeted marketing to the next level” by advertising on school buses—in school districts around the country. At our request, the Federal Communication's Commission is now studying whether BusRadio is in the public interest.
- CCFC helped draft legislation and organize support for a Massachusetts bill, currently under consideration, that would end all marketing in schools and on-school grounds. Using our bill as a model, CCFC members helped introduce similar legislation in Vermont.
- As a result of our Federal Trade Commission complaint against Brainy Baby and Disney's Baby Einstein for false and deceptive marketing, both companies have agreed to stop making claims that their videos are educational for babies.
- When Hasbro announced plans for a new line of dolls—for girls as young as six—based on the Pussycat Dolls, a real-life burlesque troupe turned singing group, CCFC launched an email campaign. Within 48 hours, Hasbro stopped production of the dolls.
- Our public letter, signed by dozens of state and local politicians and community leaders convinced the Massachusetts Bay Transit Authority to institute a policy prohibiting the advertising of violent video games on trains and buses.

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Because the Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood does not accept corporate donations, we rely on the generosity of our members. Please visit [www.commercialfreechildhood.org/donate](http://www.commercialfreechildhood.org/donate) to make a secure tax-free donation.



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