

## **Factual background**

### **Survey of how young people act while surfing the Internet**

The Swedish Consumer's Association has carried out a survey of how pupils in 9<sup>th</sup> grade act while surfing the Internet. Researchers in Media and Communication Studies and Cognition at the humanities laboratory, Lund University, have been in charge of the study. This is the third time the Nordic Council of Ministers has financed our project concerning children and media. The two earlier projects analysed the advertising of food towards children in their homes, that is direct advertising, magazines and comic books, the Internet, and TV-advertisements. The purpose was to find out how much contained advertisement of unhealthy food.

We wanted to examine:

- what websites the teenagers visit
- how much advertisements they are exposed to
- the proportion of advertisement for healthy and unhealthy food
- their attitude towards advertisements and
- if they can identify the difference between an advertisements and other ways to have an impact on people.

### **Why Internet?**

We have chosen Internet because more than 110 00 euro has been invested into advertisements on Internet during the first six months this year, according to The Institute of Commercials and Media Statistics. That is about 17 percent of the total amount of money spending on advertisement. We also know that young people prefer surfing the Internet than watching TV. Besides, it is becoming more common that young people in Sweden have access to a computer in their homes. The fourth and maybe the most important reason is that we have found out in our earlier projects that Internet is a common way trying to reach young people with advertisements for junk food.

### **Why teenagers?**

Young people between 14 and 16 years old are interesting to study because they have been experiencing advertisements ever since they childhood. They also spend a lot of time surfing the Internet and ought to be very experienced. They also have their own money to spend, a big impact on the consumption of the family and are interesting for companies to have a potential long commercial relationship with.

### **Three phases**

Approximately 40 teenagers participated from two different schools. The study was divided into three phases. During the first the teenagers answered questions about school, health, family situation, their daily life and consumption. It also contained questions about their daily life, attitudes towards advertisement and their point of views regarding branding. They were also asked to state the web sites they preferred. While spending 15 minutes on the Internet the teenagers eye movements were registered. The third

phase was an interview that was recorded, analyzed and contributed to a more deep understanding.

### **Nordic co-operation**

During the project two reference groups were organized and consulted. These groups have contributed with their experience and qualifications. The purpose of the Nordic co-operation is to create a Nordic platform of knowledge that can be used in order to create a debate and pay attention to how the impact of advertisements on the Internet is in all the Nordic countries.

The report will be printed by the Nordic Council of Ministers during the autumn of 2009.