**DO ADS AFFECT TEEN DRINK CHOICES?**

**YOUTH ESSAY CONTEST (AGES 13-18)**

Here's a chance to win a $100 or $50 gift card!

The *Weight of the Nation* wants you to take the lead in fighting the obesity epidemic! A big part of that is getting teens to drink fewer sugary drinks. Sugary drinks are sold everywhere. Even though sugary drinks have been linked to weight gain, their makers spend tons to encourage kids to drink their products – this is called marketing.

Write an essay about sugary drink marketing to teens.

- Where and how often do you see advertising for sugary drinks?
- How are sugary drinks marketed in your community?
- How does marketing of sugary drinks affect your drink choices?
- What challenges do you face when trying to make healthy drink choices?
- What would encourage you, your friends, and classmates to drink tap water and other healthy drinks rather than sugary drinks?

**To help get your ideas flowing:**

Watch this segment of the *Weight of the Nation* film “Children in Crisis.”

(http://theweightofthenation.hbo.com/watch/main-films/Crisis minutes 13:45 to 16:45)

Then check out this *Weight of the Nation* fact sheet, “Marketing Food to Children.”

(http://theweightofthenation.hbo.com/themes/marketing-food-to-children)

The winning essays will answer the questions in the box above in no more than 500 words. Visit the contest website (http://www.kickthecan.info/youth-essay-contest) and follow the links to submit your essay by November 15th, 2012. Essays will be judged on creativity, content, and overall impact. First and second place essays in two age groups - 13-15 and 16-18 - will be awarded prizes. Many will enter, 4 will win! These winners will be announced November 30th, 2012 on www.kickthecan.info and in a press release.

**Two age groups each with two prizes:**

First place prizes - $100 gift card
Second place prizes - $50 gift card

The *Weight of the Nation* is an award nominated documentary film series about the rising obesity rates in the US, the causes and some potential solutions. To watch the films for free and to get more info, visit http://theweightofthenation.hbo.com.

This Kick the Can Youth Essay Contest begins September 20, 2012 at 12:01 a.m. PST and ends November 15, 2012 at 11:59 p.m. PST. Void where prohibited by law. Must be 13 through 18 years of age on the start date of the Contest (and must have their parent or legal guardian's consent if they are a minor), have a computer and internet connection and be a legal resident of the US prior to the start date of the Contest to enter. For judging and prize purposes, children who are 13-15 will be entered in the Youth category. Children who are 16-18 will be entered into the "Young Adult" category. Only one (1) submission per contestant. To enter, create a Submission, and then complete the online entry form at http://www.kickthecan.info/ktc-youth-contest-form. Submissions must comply with the Submission Guidelines in the Official Rules. Only complete, valid submissions will be accepted. Sponsored by California Center for Public Health Advocacy, 1947 Galileo Court, Suite 101, Davis, CA, 95618. See http://www.kickthecan.info/youth-essay-contest-rules for complete Rules and details.

Kick the Can, www.kickthecan.info, is maintained by the California Center for Public Health Advocacy.