

Price Promotions in Out of Home Outlets – Methodology and Summary of Results

The extent and examples of children’s meal deals that include a sugary dessert

Methodology

The OHA surveyed 25 of the most popular restaurant chains with families¹ to research the extent and examples of children’s meal deals that include a sugary dessert as part of a fixed price.

The children’s menu for each of these 25 restaurants was downloaded on the 8th of February 2019, with any queries concerning the menu resolved by calling customer services.

For children’s menus where there was a meal deal e.g. three courses for £x, we calculated what percentage of the desserts offered as part of this meal deal were included in one of Public Health England’s sugar reduction categories and therefore a contributor to children’s excess consumption of sugar.

Summary of Results (please see Appendix 1 for detailed breakdown)

Of the 25 restaurants surveyed, 16 (64%) offered a meal deal, where a dessert was included as part of the fixed price meal deal. Of these 16, all had dessert options that are included in PHE’s sugar reduction programme. On average, 87% of the desserts offered are sugary (included in one of the sugar reduction categories). Seven (44%) of the restaurants offering desserts as part of a meal deal on their children’s menu, only offer desserts that are sugary (included in a sugar reduction category). This means to benefit from the fixed price meal deal, parents have no option, other than to order a sugary dessert for their child.

Examples of offers for unlimited products or refills of products that contribute to children’s excess sugar and calorie intake.

Methodology

The OHA surveyed 25 of the most popular restaurant chains with families² to research examples of offers for unlimited products or refills of products that contribute to excess calorie and sugar intake.

The menu for each of these 25 restaurants was downloaded on the 8th of February 2019, with any queries concerning the menu resolved by calling customer services.

For each menu, we recorded where there were examples of the sale of unlimited products that contribute to excess calorie and sugar intake (are included in one of PHE’s sugar or calorie reduction categories).

Summary of Results (please see Appendix 2 for detailed breakdown)

One popular family restaurant offers unlimited ice cream refills, topped with confectionery for just £3.99 as part of its children’s menu.³ Several UK family restaurants offer unlimited refills of breakfast

¹ Restaurants selected from Soil Association’s Out to Lunch campaign league table
[<https://www.soilassociation.org/our-campaigns/out-to-lunch/out-to-lunch-2017-league-table/>]

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³ <https://www.pizzahut.co.uk/restaurants/food/desserts/ice-cream-factory/>

items included in PHE sugar or calorie reduction programmes and likely to be HFSS such as sausages, pancakes and pastries.^{4,5,6}

⁴ <https://www.frankieandbennys.com/terms/offers>

⁵ <https://www.harvester.co.uk/breakfastmenu>

⁶ <https://www.brewersfayre.co.uk/pub-restaurant-menus/Fife/Bankhead-Gate-Glenrothes/breakfast.html>