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WI\$E PARENTING



Kids are an attractive market.

Children and adolescents spend around \$180 billion per year and influence their parents to spend another \$200 billion.

What's particularly troublesome is that children younger than eight do not understand the notion of "intent to sell" and frequently accept advertising claims at face value.

The key is to educate your kids on how to become an informed consumer.

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Z WEALTH SOLUTIONS

How to raise ad-savvy kids

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, children and adolescents view 40,000 ads per year on TV alone.¹ Add the Internet, magazines and billboards, and the average young person is bombarded with over a million ad messages every year. Here are five talking points to share with your kids on truth in advertising:

1: Ads are paid for by people who make a product

Naturally the ads will try to make the products look as appealing as possible. But just because an ad tells you that a product is the best thing ever made, or is something you have to have, doesn't mean it's true.

2: Do your own research

Although ads can give people useful information, they are just a starting point. We should do our own research and be aware of the many ways in which ads try to manipulate us before believing everything they claim.

3: Celebrities are paid to endorse products

People endorsing products in ads – whether they are celebrities or seem like ordinary people – are paid actors and don't necessarily use the products.

4: Companies want to use your personal information

Promotions, raffles and giveaways are clever ways to get personal information from people (like names, addresses and telephone numbers) so that more advertising can be directed at them. Internet sites store personal information about users whenever they "like" something on a social media site or click on a link.

5: Learn to think like an advertiser

The process of creating an ad helps kids think like an advertiser and be more able to spot advertising tricks in the future. Ask your child to think of all the ways advertisers may attract buyers. Some examples include bright colors, flashing banners, music and sound effects, pictures of happy people or celebrities using the product, repetition.

Though as a parent it's difficult to limit your children's exposure to advertising, in small ways, it is possible to become an ad-savvy family.

¹ American Academy of Pediatrics, Children, Adolescents, and Advertising, Pediatrics Vol. 118, No. 6 December 1, 2006, pp. 2563-2569.