

# **The Impact of Industry Self-Regulation on the Nutritional Quality of Foods Advertised on Television to Children**

**Dr. Dale Kunkel**

**Dept of Communication  
University of Arizona**



# Food Marketing to Children and Youth Threat or Opportunity?



**2006 IOM Report**



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**Mary Story**, U. of Minnesota

**Ellen Wartella**, UC Riverside

**Jerome Williams**, U. of Texas

***Study Directors: Jennifer Gootman  
and Vivica Kraak***



# Key Conclusions



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- Food marketing influences children's diet, at least in the short term.
- Children's exposure to food marketing messages is positively related with childhood obesity.



## Key Conclusions

- “Food marketing to children is out of balance with a healthful diet, contributing to an environment that puts child health at risk.”





# Policy Recommendations



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- Licensed characters should be used solely to promote healthier foods.
- If TV food ads targeting children are not “balanced” by industry efforts, Congress should regulate.



# Industry Response



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- Each company defines “healthy” foods in a different fashion.





# Monitoring the TV Ad Environment



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- Baseline data gathered in 2005.
- Baseline compared to industry behavior in 2007 and 2009.
- Ongoing research evaluates industry pledge compliance, offers independent assessment of nutritional quality



# Study Design



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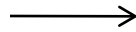
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- Categorize products by nutritional quality using DHHS consumer guide

# **Nutritional Quality of Kids Food Ads**

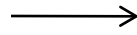
# Nutritional Quality of Kids Food Ads

**Go**- Eat anytime; rich in nutrients and low in calories.

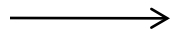


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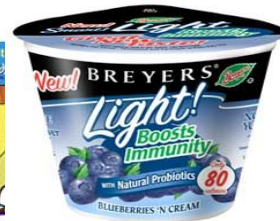
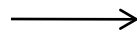


**Slow**- Eat sometimes, at most several a week; moderate in fats, salt, sugar.

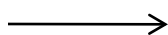


# Nutritional Quality of Kids Food Ads

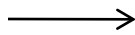
**Go** - Eat anytime; rich in nutrients and low in calories.



**Slow** - Eat sometimes, at most several a week; moderate in fats, salt, sugar.



**Whoa** - Eat once in awhile or on special occasions; high in fats, salt, sugar.





# Study Findings

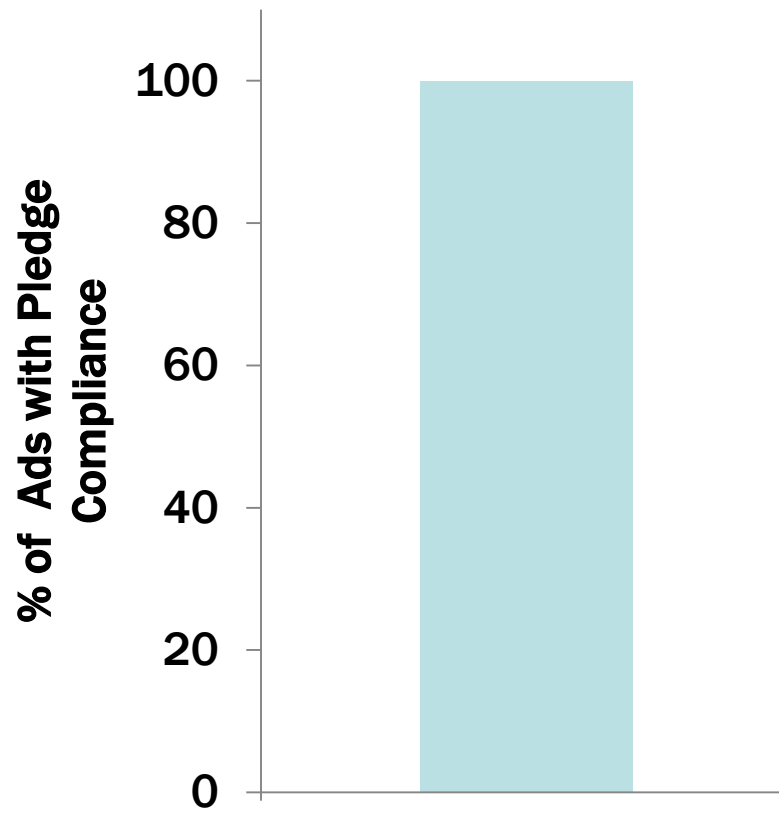


## Study Findings

- What is the level of compliance with industry self-regulation?



# **FINDING: There is perfect compliance with pledge details.**



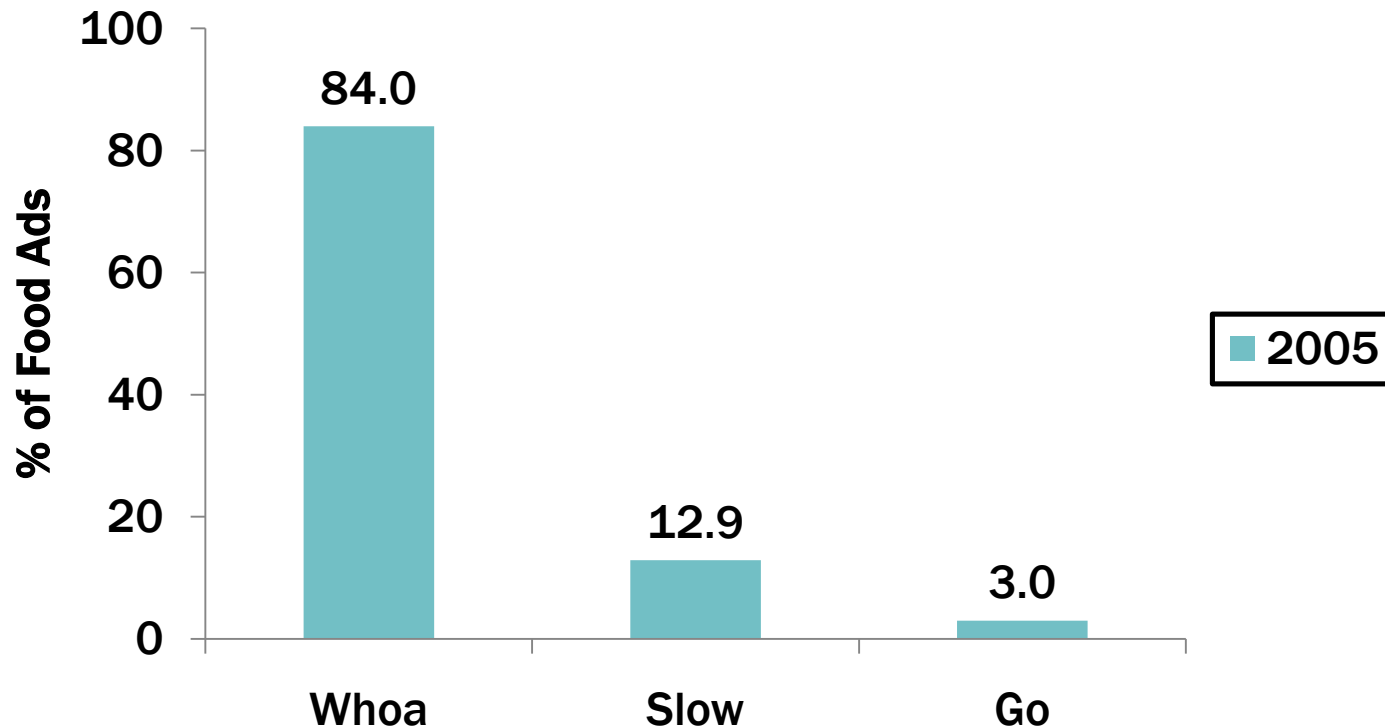
**Compliance with CFBAI Individual Company Pledges**



## Study Findings

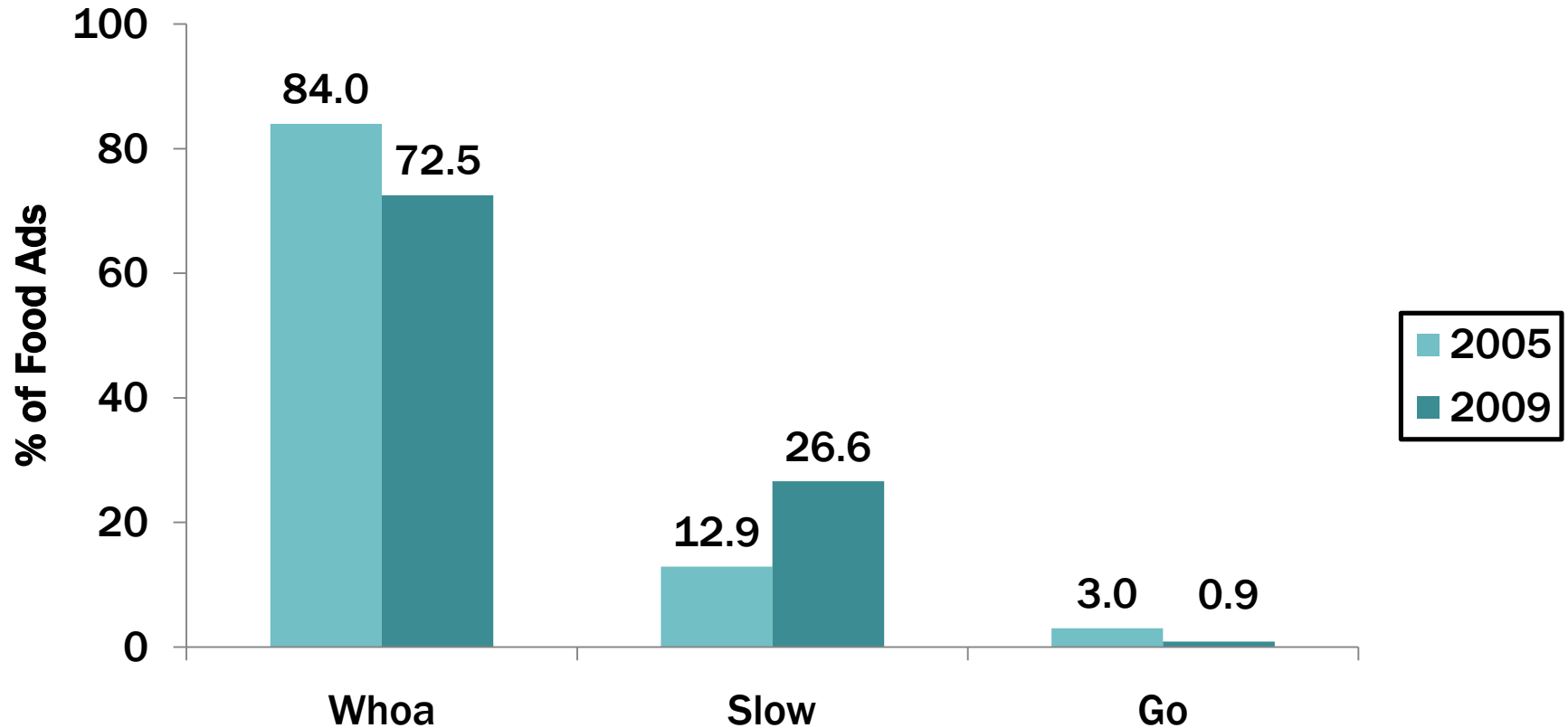
- How much has self-regulation improved the nutritional quality of foods advertised on TV to children?

# CONTEXT: Nutritionally poor food ads predominate in 2005.



Over Time Comparisons of Nutritional Quality in Food Ads for Industry, Overall

# FINDING: Nutritionally poor food ads still predominate.



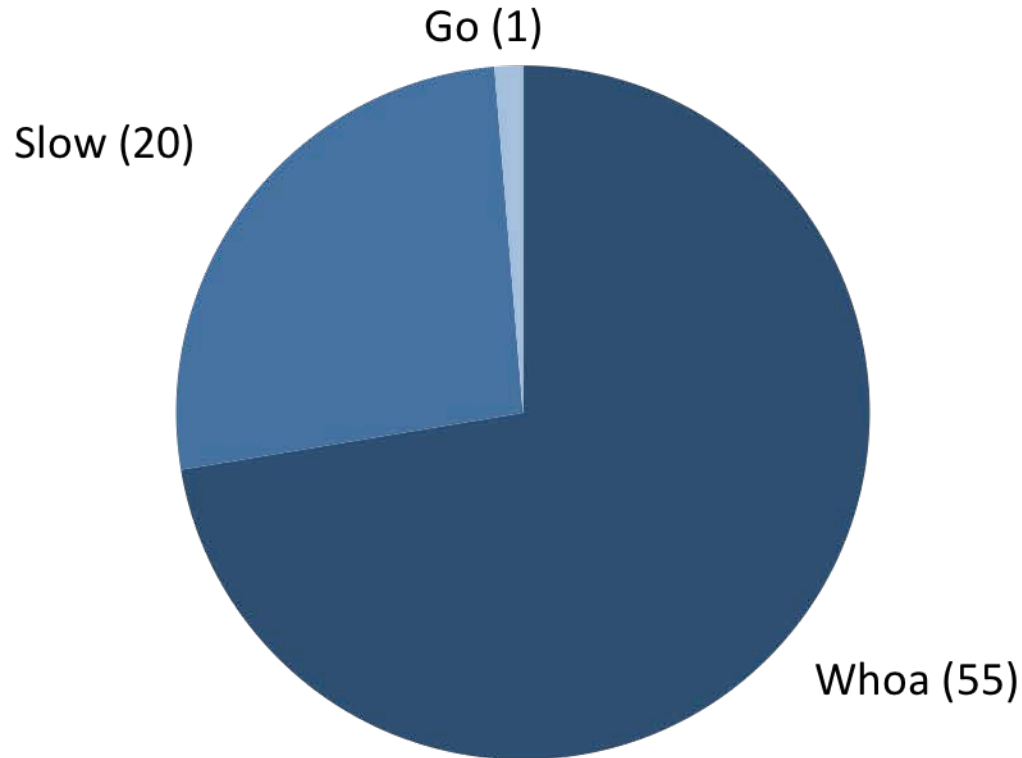
Over Time Comparisons of Nutritional Quality in Food Ads for Industry, Overall



## Study Findings

- What food advertising would a child see when watching 10 hours of children's television programming?

# FINDING: Healthy food advertising is invisible.



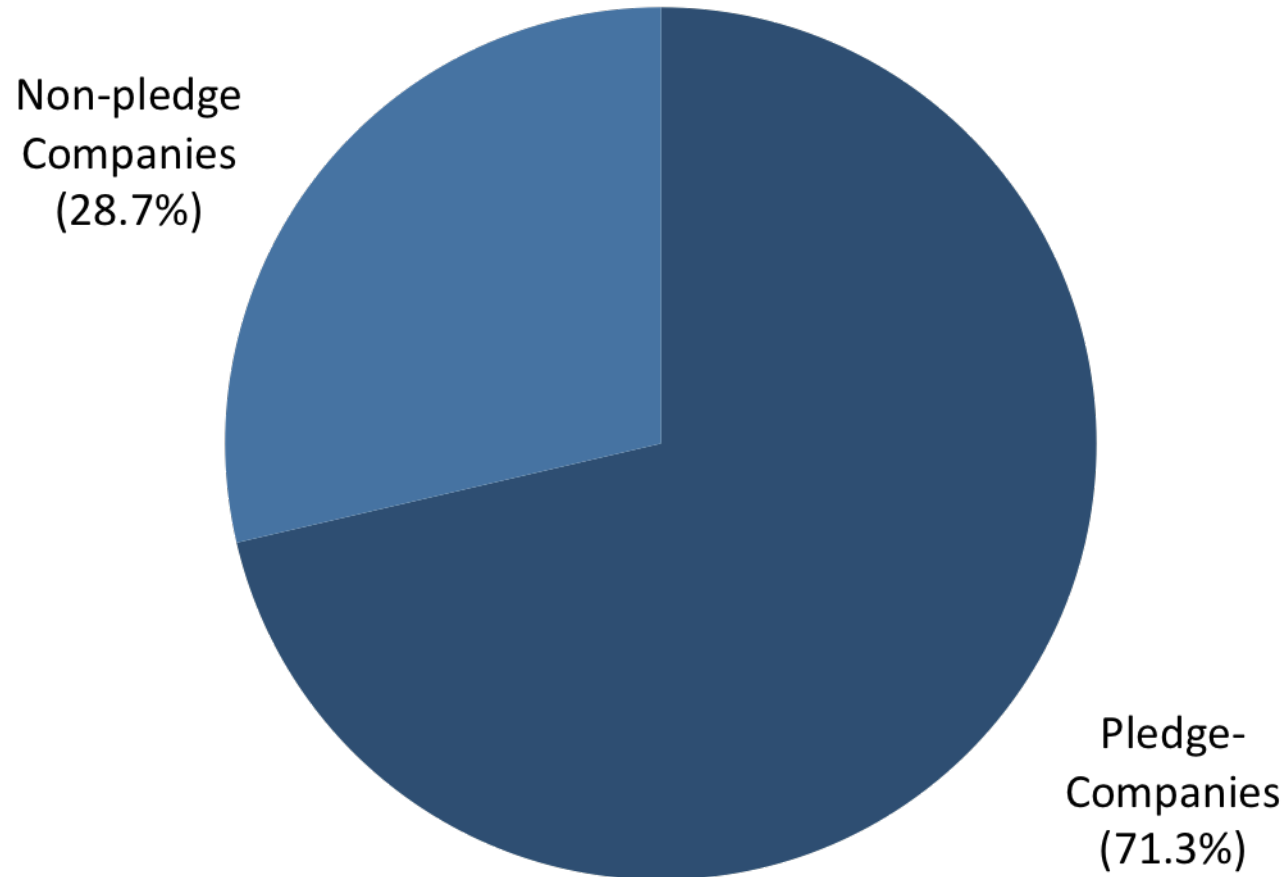
**Nutritional Quality of Food Ads in 10 Hours of Children's Programming**



## Study Findings

- How wide is the reach of industry self-regulation?

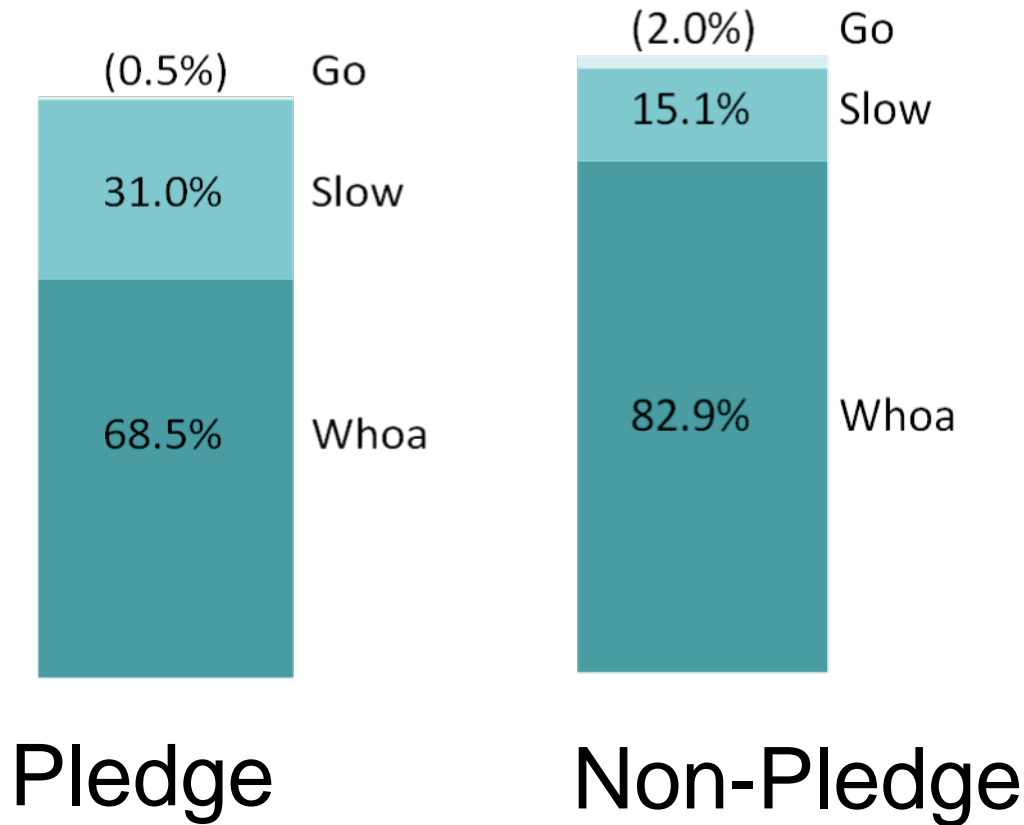
# **FINDING: More than 1/4 of food ads are from non-pledge companies.**



**Percentage of Food Ads From Pledge and Non-Pledge Companies**



# FINDING: Pledge companies show slightly fewer Whoa ads.



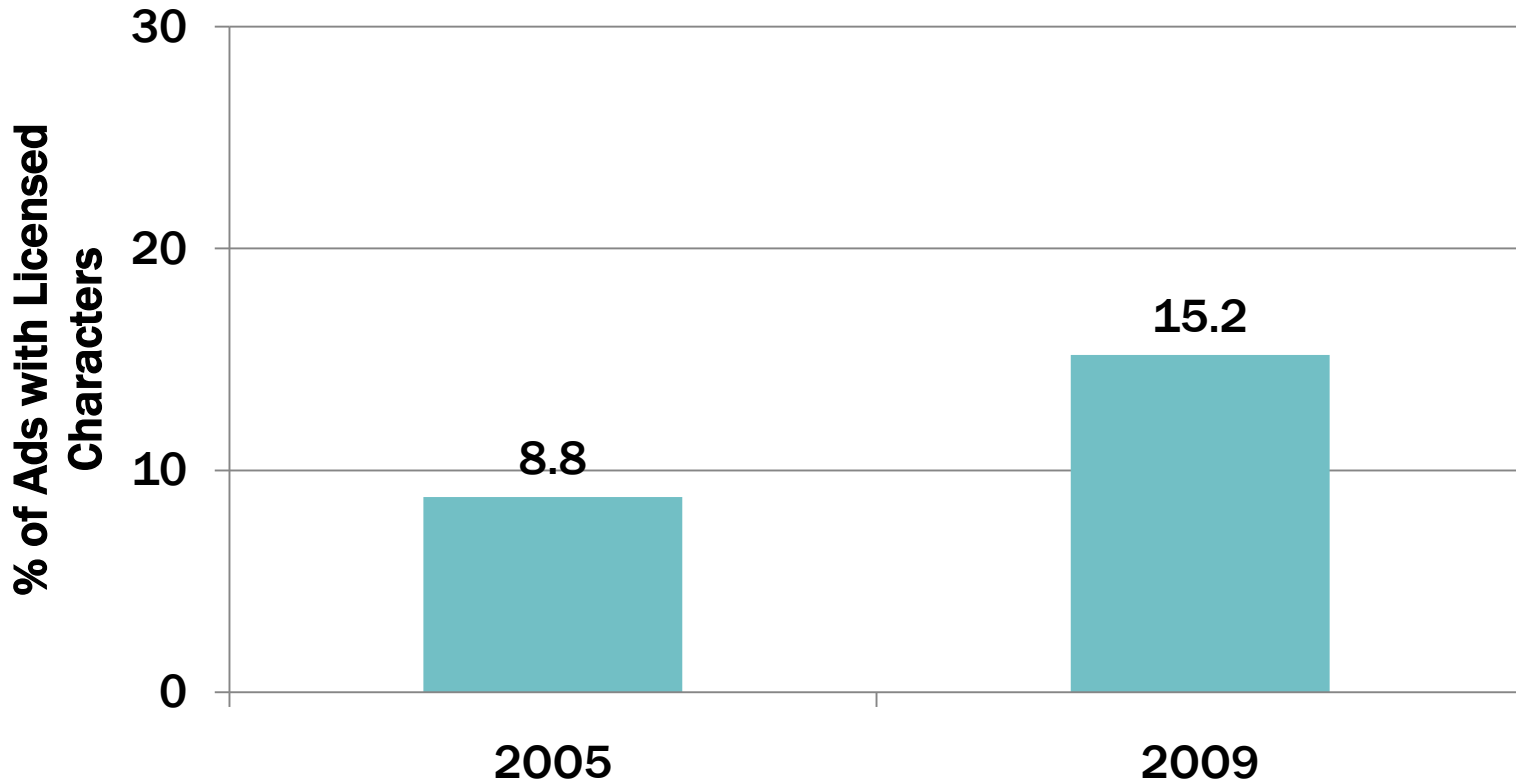
**Comparisons of Nutritional Quality in Food Ads For Pledge and Non-Pledge Companies**



## Study Findings

- How are licensed characters used in food marketing to children?

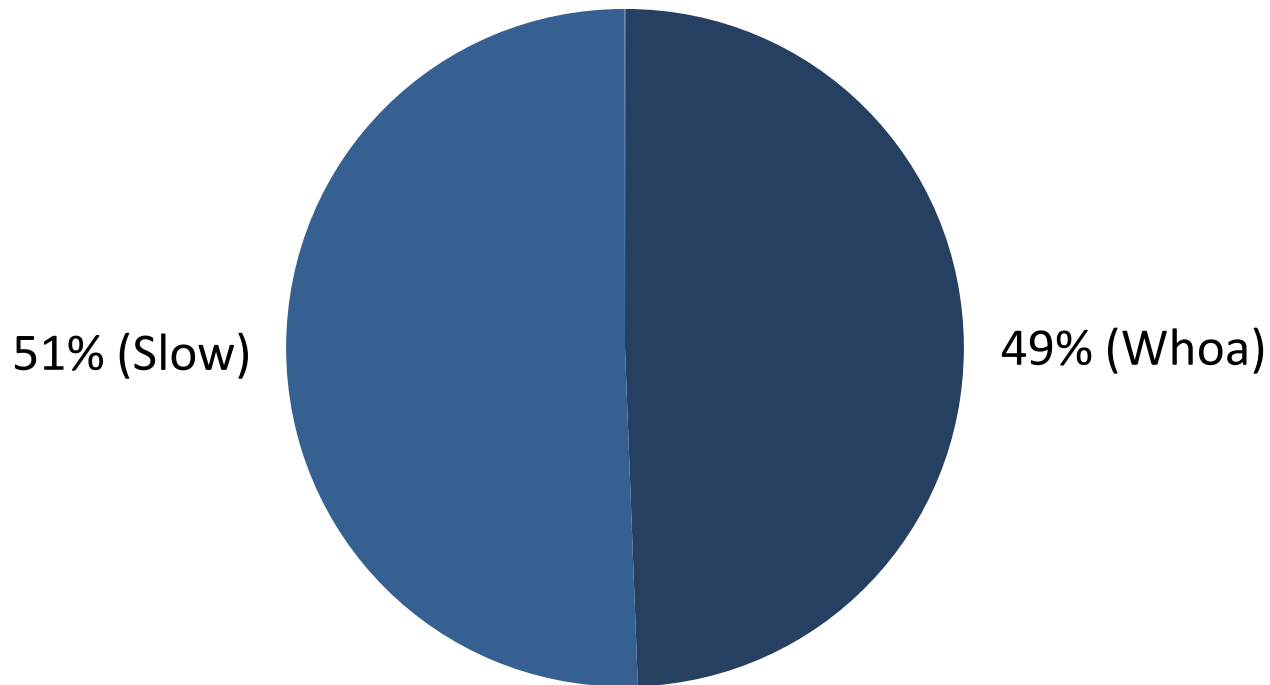
# FINDING: Use of licensed characters has increased.



**Pledge Company Use of Licensed Characters by Year**

**CONTEXT: IOM says use licensed characters only for healthy foods.**

**FINDING: Half of all licensed characters promote foods in the poorest nutritional category.**



**Pledge Company Use of Licensed Characters by Nutritional Quality Category**



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- Only slight progress since 2005 -- not yet approaching balance between healthy and unhealthy food products.
- Self-regulation has met its promises but not accomplished its goal.
- Inter-agency Working Group (IWG) federal guidelines are imminent.

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