



Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood

December 13, 2016

John Hanke, CEO
Niantic, Inc.
220 Bryant Street
San Francisco, CA 94105

Re: Pokémon GO sponsored locations

Dear Mr. Hanke,

As you may know, in July of this year Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood (“CCFC”) launched a petition drive asking Niantic, Inc. (“Niantic”) to institute protections for children playing Pokémon GO. To date, more than 7,300 people have signed the petitions hosted by CCFC and Corporate Accountability International, which state:

We call on Niantic to institute protections for young people playing Pokémon GO. Niantic should not send children under 13 to sponsored PokéStops or Pokémon Gyms, or use any information about a child’s location or gameplay to deliver targeted advertisements to them. No game played by children should lure them to visit a junk food restaurant or any other commercial establishment.

Attached please find a list of the petition signers.

You have announced that 7,800 Starbucks stores in the United States have become PokéStops and Pokémon Gyms, and will serve a new Pokémon GO-themed Frappuccino. You have also announced that 10,500 Sprint, Boost Mobile, and RadioShack stores will become PokéStops and Pokémon Gyms. We urge you to immediately institute protections which exclude children under 13 from being lured to any sponsored locations when playing Pokémon GO. Given that children under 13 have already been identified by the Pokémon GO registration process, we believe it will be easy to exclude children from being targeted by this marketing. If, however, such protections are not feasible, we ask you to discontinue the use of Starbucks and Sprint locations as PokéStops and Pokémon Gyms until such time that proper protections for children have been implemented.

Children are more vulnerable to advertising than adults, even when it’s clearly marked as advertising. Marketing to children in this way, hidden in a game, is particularly exploitative. Kids do not understand that someone has paid money to build brand loyalty and literally lure them into stores to buy their products.

Childhood obesity and diet-related illness are serious problems in America. It is wrong to use an extremely popular game to surreptitiously market Starbucks’ sugar-laden high-calorie drinks, many of which are high in caffeine, to children. A large Pokémon GO Frappuccino with whipped

cream contains: 540 calories, including 160 calories from fat; 86 grams of sugar (the equivalent of 21.5 teaspoons of sugar); and 11 grams of saturated fat (55% of the FDA's recommended daily value).

We hope you will put child welfare first and institute these protections for children. We would be glad to meet with you to discuss our concerns.

Sincerely,



Josh Golin
Executive Director
Campaign for a Commercial-Free Childhood

Enclosure provided electronically

cc: Howard Schultz, CEO, Starbucks