

The Active Consumer

Beware Of Misleading Marketing Claims

(NAPSA)—Parents face some tough decisions when shopping. With more products appearing on the shelves each day, marketing claims make it a challenge to tell fact from fiction.

“Parents need to arm themselves with facts. They need to know what they’re buying,” says Rochelle Davis, a children’s environmental health advocate.

If guilt-free cookies, candy and ice cream seem too good to be true, she says, its because they may be. The real answer, when it comes to getting your kids to eat healthfully, is to teach them to make better food choices.

Take Splenda, for example. Many people are now learning that just because the artificial sweetener says it is “made from sugar so it tastes like sugar,” that doesn’t mean it really is sugar. This misleading marketing slogan doesn’t make it any easier for parents to buy healthy food for their children.

This product shows up in some 4,000 foods, ranging from ice cream to cereal to fruit juice to cookies and many parents are giving these foods to their youngsters under the mistaken impression that it’s a natural alternative to other artificial sweeteners. But it’s not in any way natural.

In fact, the sweetener doesn’t even list sugar as an ingredient and it is produced via a complex



Do you know what’s really in those packages of “made from sugar” artificial sweetener?

process that uses chemicals like chlorine and phosgene, a poisonous gas used to make plastics and pesticides. Scientists at McNeil Nutritionals, a Johnson & Johnson company and the makers of Splenda, say it’s “impossible to prove” any causal link between the taste of their sweetener and sugar.

The answer for parents who want to raise healthy children, Davis says, is to make sure kids are fed a diet that is rich in a variety of “whole foods”—fresh fruits and vegetables, and whole grains. When parents must feed their children prepared foods for convenience sake, Davis says, they should read labels carefully.

For more information online, go to www.generationgreen.org.