

# Vending



## Objective

- *Increase the availability and sales of healthy food and beverage options, and decrease the availability and sales of unhealthy food options for students and staff.*



## Key Message

**Comprehensive school food and beverage policies have a positive impact on students' diets.** <sup>7</sup>

- Policies that restrict the sale of unhealthy competitive foods have proven to reduce student consumption of chips, soda and candy. <sup>7</sup>
- Policies that restrict the sale of unhealthy competitive foods increase consumption of healthier options and emerging evidence suggests that such policies may also be associated with healthier student BMIs. <sup>7</sup>

**Foods sold at school affect dietary intake; children consume an estimated 19-50% of total calories at school on school days.** <sup>1</sup>

- Foods sold outside of the school meal program in venues such as a la carte lines, vending machines, school stores, and concession stands are more likely to be high in calories, sugar, fat and salt, while lower in vitamins and minerals. <sup>2</sup> Approximately 40% of students nationwide consume at least 1 of these foods on a typical school day. <sup>2</sup>
- On-campus vending machines with sugar-sweetened beverages contribute a significant source of unhealthy calories for children. <sup>2</sup>
- Soda, sports drinks, energy drinks and fruit drinks contributed nearly half of added sugars in the diet of the U.S. population in 2005-2006. <sup>3</sup>
- Students in schools where foods and drinks outside of the school meal program are available report lower intakes of fruits, vegetables and milk at lunch, as well as higher daily caloric intake from total and saturated fat. <sup>4-5</sup>

**Studies indicate that schools that maintain strong nutrition standards are able to maintain financial stability.** <sup>6</sup>

- School meals participation (reimbursable meals) has been reported to increase with the introduction of nutrition standards for vending and a la carte foods. This also demonstrates that an increased number of students are receiving healthier foods by participating in the meal program. <sup>6-7</sup>
- The federal government invests significant resources (\$12.5 billion in FY 2009, including cash payments and commodities) in the school meal programs. Making foods of poor nutritional quality in venues such as vending that compete with these nutritious meals undermine taxpayers' investment in those programs.

**Healthy foods contribute to a diet fit for learning!**

- Iron deficient children and teens, those who do not consume enough iron and vitamin C-containing foods from sources such as meat, poultry, leafy green vegetables, citrus fruits and peppers, often have poor cognition and lower academic performance. <sup>8</sup>
- Dental cavities, which are often associated with sugar-sweetened beverages consumption such as soda pop, can cause pain when untreated that affects school attendance. <sup>8</sup>



## Key Strategies

- **Work as a team to select healthier snack options.** Form a group that includes food service staff, vendors, school administrators, building and/or district wellness leaders, school nurses, etc.
- **Understand and implement the USDA's Smart Snacks in School nutrition guidelines for all foods sold in school. Effective July 1st, 2014,** these practical, science-based nutrition standards for snack foods and beverages provide guidance on which products can be sold to children at school during the school day. See the "key resources" section below for a link to the standards.
- **Use product lists to select healthier substitutes for snacks and beverages.** (See lists in "key resources"). Determine what products your vendor is able to get. If the vendor is not able to meet your district's needs, consider other vendors who can.
- **Involve students in selecting healthier food items for vending machines.** Consider taste-testing new products with students to determine the most popular items.
- **Work with your school's vendor.** Create a set of procedures to ensure the nutrition standards are utilized when procuring food. For example, some vendors find it helpful to utilize a plan-o-gram of how the vending machine will look when stocked with healthy options to communicate that to their driver. Also determine who at the school district will approve new products that the vendor would like to add to the machine over time.
- **Ensure the vending contract is upheld.** Determine who will conduct assessments of vending machine offerings and how often (e.g., local public health will conduct an assessment at the beginning of every school year and once more throughout the year).
- **Establish a district vending policy.** Insert language into district wellness or separate vending policies that explicitly states that all food sold in vending machines will meet specific nutrition standards. Also include these nutrition standards in contracts with the vendor.



## Sample Policy Language

"All foods and beverages for sale during the school day and outside of the meal program (i.e., a la carte, vending, school stores) shall meet USDA nutrition standards, ensuring the provision of whole grains, fruits and vegetables."

---

"Vending machines and a la carte lines will be prohibited in all elementary schools."

---

"Nutritious and appealing foods such as fruits, vegetables, low and non-fat dairy and whole grain products will be available wherever food is sold or offered in buildings during the school day."

---

"All vending machines shall be turned off between \_\_ and \_\_ to avoid competing with food items offered in the school cafeteria."



## Success Stories

### **Farmington Area Public Schools, ISD 192, Farmington, MN Healthy Vending – Wellness Policy drives changes!**

After an assessment of vending machines in Farmington Area Public Schools found that 0% of products sold met the Institute of Medicine nutrition standards, the district wellness committee knew they had to take action. They began by strengthening the district wellness policy and associated guidelines to specify that 100% of vending on school grounds will meet Institute of Medicine standards. Although such strong changes take some time, within the first school year after the policy was adopted, the proportion of healthy products in middle and high school machines increased to between 37%-67%. The secondary schools continue to strive for a goal of a 100% and will be working with a registered dietitian in the upcoming school year to make that goal a reality!

---

### **Burnsville Secondary Schools, ISD 191, Burnsville, Eagan, Savage, MN Healthy Vending - Vendor switch!**

After multiple years of struggling to convince their vending machine vendor to stock the secondary school vending machines with healthier options for students, their break finally came when it was time to go out for bid. The district's dedicated wellness leaders - food service staff, wellness coordinator, and school nurse – took part in discussions with other school stakeholders at meetings throughout the bidding process. During these meetings district wellness leaders had on hand specific nutrition standards (Institute of Medicine standards for competitive foods) that they wanted 100% of foods and beverages in the machines to meet. Having multiple stakeholders represent student wellness at the table resulted in the integration of IOM nutrition standards in the vending contract, as well as an agreement with their new vendor that all products would comply with such standards immediately upon roll-out.

---

### **Multiple school districts report: Revenues from vending don't necessarily decrease when schools switch to healthier options.**

- North Community High School in Minneapolis replaced most of its soda vending machines and added additional machines stocked with 100% fruit and vegetable juices and water and slightly reduced the prices of healthy beverage options. As a result, the sale of healthier items increased and the school did not lose money.
- Vista Unified School District in California bought its own vending machines and replaced high-fat and sugar snacks with healthier options such as yogurt and granola, fruit, and cheese and crackers. The district also offered less soda and more water, sports drinks, 100% juice, milk, and smoothies. In the first year, the school generated \$200,000 more in sales than it had the previous year.
- A middle school and high school in Philadelphia eliminated sports drinks from vending machines (sodas were already banned) and included only 100% juice and water. Average monthly revenue from the machines did not decrease.



## Resources for Implementation

- **John Stalker Institute healthy snack list:** (note - check product labels for most up-to-date nutritional information) <http://www.johnstalkerinstitute.org/alist/alist.pdf>
- **Dakota Medical Foundation healthy snack list:** (note - check product labels for most up-to-date nutritional information) <http://www.dakmed.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Healthy-Snack-List.pdf>
- **Smart Snacks in Schools USDA's All Foods Sold in Schools Standards:** [http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/allfoods\\_flyer.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/allfoods_flyer.pdf)
- **Factsheet: Develop a Healthy Beverage Vending Agreement:** [http://changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/HealthyVendngAgrmnt\\_FactSheet\\_FINAL\\_090311\\_rebranded.pdf](http://changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/HealthyVendngAgrmnt_FactSheet_FINAL_090311_rebranded.pdf)
- **A Blueprint for Healthier Vending: (Contains great resources such as sample policies, contract language, surveys, etc.):** <http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/cdph/CDPH/BlueprintHealthierVending2013.pdf>
- **USDA's Smart Snack Project Calculator:** <https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/calculator/>

### Sources:

1. Mancino, L., Todd, J., Guthrie, J. and Lin, B-H. (2010). *How food away from home affects children's diet quality.* United States Department of Agriculture. Retrieved online from [http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/136261/err104\\_3\\_.pdf](http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/136261/err104_3_.pdf)
2. Fox, M. K., Gordon, A., Nogales, R., & Wilson, A. (2009a). *Availability and consumption of competitive foods in US public schools.* *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 109(2 Supplement 1), S57-S66.
3. USDA. (2010). *Dietary Guidelines for Americans.* Retrieved online from <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/dietaryguidelines.htm>
4. Gonzalez W, Jones SJ, Frongillo EA. (2009). *Restricting snacks in U.S. elementary schools is associated with higher frequency of fruit and vegetable consumption.* *J Nutr*, vol. 139:142-4.
5. Kubik, MY, Lytle, LA, Hannan, PJ, Perry, CL, Story, M. (2003). *The association of the school food environment with dietary behaviors of young adolescents.* *Am J Public Health*, vol. 93:1168-73.
6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2010). *Implementing strong nutrition standards for schools: financial implications.* Retrieved online from [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/pdf/financial\\_implications.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/pdf/financial_implications.pdf)
7. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2012). *Influence of competitive food and beverage policies on children's diets and childhood obesity.* *Research Review, Bridging the Gap.* Retrieved online from <http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/articles/articles/2012/rwjf400047>
8. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control. (2011). *School health guidelines to promote healthy eating and physical activity.* *MMWR*, vol. 60(5).

*Smart Choices is a partnership of the Dakota County Public Health Department and school districts in Dakota County committed to making the healthy choice the easy choice by creating opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity before, during and after school.*

*Smart Choices is made possible by funding from the Minnesota Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP), and Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota through the Center for Prevention. Blue Cross® and Blue Shield® of Minnesota is a nonprofit independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association.*

Dakota County  
Public Health Department  
1 Mendota Road West, Suite 410  
West St. Paul, MN 55118-4771  
651.554.6100  
[www.dakotacounty.us](http://www.dakotacounty.us)



December 2015