Why are Healthy Snacks & Beverages Important?

* **Talking Points for School Administrators**

- School wellness policies putting limits on certain aspects of snacks foods and beverages (calories, fat, sugar, etc.) are effective at reducing children’s caloric intake (2)
- School food policies restricting/prohibiting unhealthy snack foods leads to less access and consumption of unhealthy snacks, and are linked to more healthy snack options (2)
- Policies permitting unhealthy snacks and beverages are associated with increased BMI in students, while policies restricting unhealthy snacks and beverages are linked to lower proportions of overweight and obese students (2)
- Food service revenues generally do not decrease with the restriction of unhealthy snacks and beverages. Rather, food service revenue increases due to kids partaking more in school meal programs. (2)
- Students in states with strong competitive foods policies showed less weight gain than students in states with weaker competitive foods policies. In addition, those students in states with strong competitive food policies were less likely to remain overweight/obese than their counterparts living in states with no competitive foods policies. (5)
- Healthy fundraising policies result in healthy fundraising practices (2)
- District policy prohibiting the use of food as a reward for academic performance or good behavior was strongly associated with school respondents reporting food was not used as a reward (6)
- Students who improved their nutrient density and food group intake were found in schools that implemented at least three new nutrition practice changes and at least three new nutrition policies. The most successful schools were those that introduced healthy competitive foods at lunch venues. (7)
- Comprehensive policies are the most effective, as opposed to policies that do not totally reduce/restrict unhealthy snacks and beverages (2)
- Children who have access to SSB were more likely to drink SSB than other beverages, and to be obese. The odds of consuming SSB were 1.5 times higher for kids in schools that supplied SSB than schools that did not supply SSB. Students going to schools supplying SSB had a 1.5 times higher chance of being obese than students attending schools that did not supply SSB (8)

**Fast Facts**

- 1 in 3 children in America is obese (1)
- Kids are in school for most of the day for at least 9 months out of the year
- Over 35% of kids’ caloric intake occurs at school (2)
- Approximately 40% of students purchase and consume one or more snacks throughout the school day (1)
- 68% of students purchase and consume one or more sugar sweetened beverages (SSB) throughout the school day (1)
- On Average, over 27% of children’s daily calories come from snacks (3)
- 90% of American’s believe K-12 schools should play a role in fighting obesity (4)
References