



Creating Healthy Schools

Smart Snacks in Schools

Our school district has adopted best practices on vending, school stores, and á la carte items sold in schools. Every school is required to create and use School Wellness Policies and make sure foods and beverages sold in vending, school stores, and á la carte food lines meet nutrition standards. Family support of healthier food and beverage choices at school and home provides healthier options for your child and sets the stage for life time healthy behaviors.

Why is healthy vending important?

The foods sold in vending machines, school stores and á la carte are often unhealthy. Many times children are eating this food instead of healthy snacks or nutritious meals offered by school meals programs or at home. Research consistently shows that children, who make healthy food choices, eat healthier and reduce the risk of becoming obese, getting dental cavities or having other weight-related health problems. Schools and families should make healthy food and beverage choices the easy choice. This helps children eat healthier, create healthy habits and do better in school.



How can I get more involved?

There are many ways you and your family can support healthy snack options at school. Below are a few examples:

In School Setting

- Check on what foods and beverages are sold in your child's school.
- Request that your school or district adopt healthy vending guidelines.
- Ask your principal to move the vending machines to a student-restricted area, or turn them off during the lunch hour, so that students are more likely to eat a healthy lunch.
- Share the list of tasty and healthy vending options with your principal (link in resource section). Ask them to stock those items regularly.
- Know where your child's school gets its vending and á la carte products and who is in charge of picking these items.
- Support healthy choices in the school.

In Your Neighborhood and at Home

- Talk with your child about making healthy choices from vending machines and á la carte lines.
- Get other families together to learn more about vending and á la carte best practices.
 - Talk to your neighbors to get more support to make sure vending and á la carte options in your children's school are healthy.
 - Set a good example at home with healthy choices.

Other Resources:

- Healthy Alternatives for School Celebrations, Rewards, Fundraisers and Snacks is a handbook put together by Blue Cross Blue Shield and KC Healthy Kids. Pages 42 - 43 outline healthy vending snack suggestions. This can be found at: <https://1.cdn.edl.io/jeTtkv5kCOX2IU4fryJAsnR2wVbpueryAdoMn5MFUwiytHhW.pdf>
- USDA has developed Smart Snacks in Schools guidelines that our schools must meet. The guide to smart snacks in schools can be found here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/guide-smart-snacks-schools>
- The Alliance for a Healthier Generation has made a Healthy Schools Program, Snacks and Beverages resource guide for families and school staff. Information can be found at: https://schools.healthiergeneration.org/focus_areas/snacks_and_beverages/smart_snacks/
- The Rhode Island Action for Healthy Kids program has made a guided called Nutrition Guidelines for School Vending & À La Carte Foods. This resource provides information on healthy food guidelines as well as a glossary of terms: <http://www.ride.ri.gov/Portals/2/Uploads/Documents/RINutrition-GuidelinesVending-AlaCarte.pdf>
- Nemours Health & Prevention Services produced a Healthy Concessions Guide that is based on the "Go, Slow, and Whoa" model. This resource also provides examples of healthy alternatives to unhealthy options. Information can be found at: <http://www.nemours.org/content/dam/nemours/www2/filebox/service/healthy-living/growuphealthy/healthyconcession.pdf>

Local Success Stories

Kentucky Trail Elementary, in Belton, Missouri, has removed all soft drink and candy machines from school premises.

In **Hickman Mills School District** in Kansas City, Missouri, some beverage machines offer only 100% juice and in others, milk is available as a healthy selection. Soft drinks have been removed from middle school beverage machines, and while they are offered at the high school level, the machines are turned off during the school day.



I'm interested in learning more!

Who do I contact?

Principal: _____

PTO President: _____

School Wellness Coordinator: _____

District Wellness Coordinator: _____

 **Health Care Foundation**
OF GREATER KANSAS CITY

 **KU SCHOOL OF MEDICINE**
The University of Kansas

 **weighingin**
Children's Mercy
Collaborating to prevent childhood obesity