

Creating healthy food and beverage environments: A role for the recreation sector

Kim Bergeron, PhD

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Health Promotion Capacity Building

We provide training and support services to Ontario's public health and health care intermediaries to assist them to plan, conduct and evaluate interventions which improve health and prevent chronic disease and injury at a community and population level.



Healthy Kids Resource Centres



Do you see what people eat as a matter of personal responsibility or as more of an environmental influence?



Ecological Model¹



Access to healthy foods in recreation settings²

Healthy Eating at School Sporting Events Video



**HOSTING HEALTHY
SPORTING EVENTS**



0:05 / 3:50



What are recreation spaces and places?

- Safe gathering places for people of all ages
- Public spaces for physical activity and/or to create a social environment to strengthen sense of community
- Can have a positive or negative affect on the health of residents³



What does the evidence say?

- Recreation settings can be obesogenic environments
- Stakeholders were interested in changing the environment and technical support on how to do so; however, resources and education are needed on how to make this change
- Few facilities had committees and/or initiatives underway to help promote and provide healthier choices⁴



What does the evidence say?

- Policies supporting access to healthy beverages on municipally-owned properties can make healthier beverage options more accessible
- Consider a 'guideline and recommendations' approach to creating healthy beverage environments
- For every pro-policy response there appears to be an anti-policy argument⁴



What types of recreational opportunities are available in your community?



Role of recreation stakeholders

Recreation stakeholders include:

- Municipal elected officials
- Municipal employees (e.g., management, facilities staff, program staff, cleaning staff)
- Recreation and sports clubs (e.g., hockey, figure skating, curling)
- Food suppliers
- Concession operators
- Patrons
- Others?

All listed stakeholders are well positioned to influence the availability of healthier foods and beverages in recreation facilities and programs⁴

Role of recreation stakeholders

To create a healthy food and beverage environment through both words and actions³

Words	Actions
We will offer healthier food and beverages.	Develop and implement a healthy food and beverage policy.
As recreation stakeholders we have a role to contribute to the health of the community.	Evaluate all elements of the food and beverage environment including food sales, what is provided at meetings, at recreation programs, as fundraisers and advertising on site.
Our community deserves supportive environments that offer opportunities for both active living and making healthy food choices.	Assess the physical environment to make the healthy choice the easy choice.

Policy interventions⁵



Change the physical environment

Change the messaging environment

Change the fiscal environment

Barriers: Worksheet 1

- Lack of consensus on what constitutes “healthy” food and beverage choices
- Lack of education for both staff and the public on healthy eating and making healthy choices
- Lack of training for food service staff to understand nutrition information
- Lack of knowledge on how to negotiate with food service contractors for healthier food choices
- Lack of a healthy food policy
- Lack of equipment or space to prepare or store healthier food choices
- Food choices are dictated by food service contracts that restrict the brands of foods and beverages they were allowed to sell
- Recreation decision-makers would offer healthier food choices if they understood better what their patrons would actually buy
- Poor sales of healthier foods and associated with loss of revenue
- They are cautious about providing food and beverages that could contribute to the loss of revenue
- The need for the community to have patience to allow providers time to change
- Unsure how to promote the change to healthier food choices⁶

One of the
outcomes of today
is to generate
solutions



Next Steps



Worksheet 2: Think 1, 2, 4

1. Write down one strategy you have used or would consider using to change the food environment so the healthy choice is the easy choice.
2. Find a person you have not met or worked with in the past, introduce yourself and share your strategy.
3. In your group of two, share with another group of two the strategies identified.
4. Write the strategies on flip chart paper that best represents the type of environment to be changed: physical, messaging or fiscal.



Developing an action plan

Worksheet 3: Identifying challenges

Worksheet 4: What support do you need to do this type of work?

Worksheet 5: Taking action



General strategies to encourage policy change

- Develop organizational knowledge and support
- Understand the social, political and economic context of the municipality and community
- Build partnerships with key stakeholders⁴



Become an agent of change by developing relationships to create healthy food environments to increase the wellbeing of residents

Kim Bergeron
kim.bergeron@oahpp.ca



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