

THIS IS THE ONLY  
FOUNTAIN DRINK HE NEEDS.



TAKING ACTION TO PREVENT OBESITY





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## Preface

Voices for Healthy Kids®, a joint initiative of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and American Heart Association (AHA) works to help all young people in the United States eat healthier foods and be more active. Nearly one in three kids and teens are overweight or obese. By engaging, organizing and mobilizing communities across the country, Voices for Healthy Kids aims to ensure that every child has access to healthy foods and drinks at home and in school, safe streets for biking and walking and safe places to play after school. This toolkit is designed to walk coalitions through the entire process of recruiting, engaging, and mobilizing volunteers as well as developing promotional activities to make this vision a reality.

There is growing evidence that kids eat healthier and move more when there are policies in place that increase access to healthy foods and safe places to be active. It just makes sense.

Voices for Healthy Kids actively supports policy changes to reduce obesity across the country. While childhood obesity affects the entire country, it does not affect all communities equally. For this reason, Voices for Healthy Kids is committed to reaching communities that are disproportionately affected by the epidemic. These communities include communities of color, high-poverty urban, suburban and rural populations of all races and ethnicities, and Native Americans.

State and local policy changes are effective strategies to reverse the obesity epidemic. Elected officials have both the right and responsibility to ensure communities have access to healthy foods and safe places to be active. Our policy priorities to achieve healthier communities are:

- Improving the nutritional quality of snack foods and beverages in schools.
- Reducing consumption of sugary beverages.
- Protecting children from unhealthy food and beverage marketing.
- Increasing access to affordable healthy foods.
- Increasing access to parks, playgrounds, walking paths, bike lanes and other opportunities to be physically active.
- Increasing children's physical activity levels when they are out of school.

In this toolkit, you will find tactics to help your community **reduce consumption of sugary beverages** and, more specifically, to **promote pricing strategies that will discourage consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages**. Voices for Healthy Kids is excited to offer this toolkit—as well as one for each of our policy priorities—to support communities striving to live, learn and play in healthy environments.

In order to ensure the most successful community advocacy possible, we encourage everyone using this toolkit to engage the staff and partners of Voices for Healthy Kids. Stay connected to our work on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and on [www.VoicesforHealthyKids.org](http://www.VoicesforHealthyKids.org) or you can reach us directly at [VoicesforHealthyKids@heart.org](mailto:VoicesforHealthyKids@heart.org).





## Introduction

America's obesity epidemic affects both children and adults, and multiple solutions are needed to address this complex issue. One important way to improve the health of everyone living in America is by reducing the consumption of added sugars, especially from sugar-sweetened beverages. Soda, sports drinks, sweetened waters and teas, energy drinks and fruit drinks have been identified as the primary source of added sugars in our diets.<sup>1</sup> Consumption of these beverages has increased 500 percent in the past 50 years and soda, energy and sports drinks, and sweetened bottled waters are the largest source of added sugars in the diets of 2-18 year olds, with fruit drinks following as the second largest source.<sup>2</sup>

The good news is that there are a variety of strategies that you can use to reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages. A few possible options are listed below, but your activities can be as simple or as in-depth as you want them to be, depending on your resources and those of the partners you engage to help. The most important step is for you to be an advocate.

The following are examples of strategies your community may want to consider:

1. **Create pricing incentives and disincentives through state and, where available, local taxation strategies:** Many public health experts and policymakers consider increased taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages to be a promising strategy to reducing consumption of unhealthy beverages. They also have the added benefit of raising funds for obesity prevention efforts. In fact, a 2011 study conducted in Illinois estimated that a state-wide penny-per-ounce tax on sugar-sweetened beverages would result in a 9.3 percent decrease in the number of obese youth ages 2-17 in the state.<sup>3</sup> In addition, removing taxes or lowering prices on bottled water could lead to reduced consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.
2. **Voluntary pricing and stocking policies:** Action can be taken outside of creating new laws. Entities, such as healthcare systems, school districts, convenience stores, and state and local governmental agencies, can pursue their own pricing strategies for foods and beverages they sell directly.
3. **Organizational actions to promote drinking water:** Community-level organizations can have an important impact by ensuring that water is always available at events and gatherings, and by encouraging children to drink water or low- or non-fat milk instead of sugary drinks. They can also collaborate with state and local health departments and community leaders to launch public awareness campaigns that promote healthy beverages. Groups can also work with restaurants and other food retailers to limit portion sizes of sugar-sweetened beverages and remove them from kids' menus.
4. **Education at home:** Parents can teach children about the amount of sugar in popular beverages, and create a home environment in which healthy beverages are available, and children are

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<sup>1</sup> Reedy J and Krebs-Smith SM. Dietary sources of energy, solid fats, and added sugars among children and adolescents in the United States. *J Am Diet Assoc* 110.10 (2010): 1477-1484.

<sup>2</sup> Reedy. Op. cit.

<sup>3</sup> Chaloupka FJ, Wang YC, Powell LM, Andreyeva T, Chiqui JF, Rimkus LM. Estimating the potential impact of sugar-sweetened and other beverage excise taxes in Illinois. Oak Forest, IL: Cook County Department of Public Health, 2011.

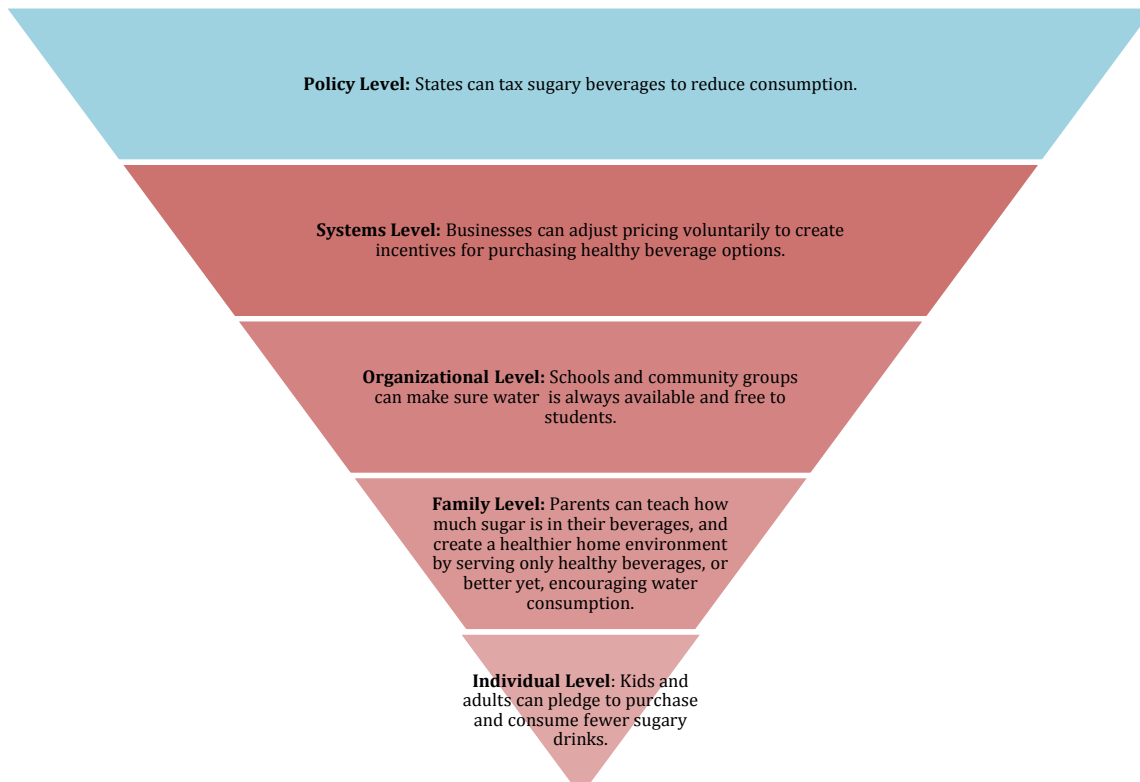


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encouraged to drink water and low- or non-fat milk. Parents can be encouraged to model this behavior.

5. **Individual pledges:** Every person can make a pledge to help improve his or her own health by reducing or eliminating consumption of unhealthy beverages.



Let's work together to reduce sugary beverage consumption. While we encourage all of the above steps and related advocacy, this guide is focused on the changes that can be made at the Policy Level (shown in blue above).

To get started:

We have made it easy to become an advocate by creating model tools and providing guidance on different ways to use them. In this kit are guides to identifying and recruiting volunteers, spreading the word online, alerting local media, holding events, and meeting with state and local public officials to encourage policies that enable communities to reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.

- **Review the contents of this toolkit** and think about the types of activities that would work best in your community. What, if any, state or local laws are in place? What stakeholders might support reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages? Should you start with a pilot program?
- **Identify your core planning team** and think about the type of activity that will make the biggest difference for your state or community. Does your core planning team reflect the diversity of the communities that could benefit most from reducing sugary drink consumption? Would an



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event that features a well-known community member attract media attention? Does it make sense to activate—and educate—government leaders, schools and community members through social media?

- **Consult the engagement section** of this toolkit for specific tips for recruiting, engaging and recognizing a diverse group of volunteers from communities and neighborhoods most impacted by these issues.
- **Customize and translate the sample outreach materials** included in this toolkit for your activities.

Thank you for taking action to ensure that your community considers reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages as part of a multi-pronged approach to address the childhood obesity epidemic. Thank you for joining the call of children and communities: **Don't sugarcoat our future™**—because the future of our children, and therefore our communities, is at stake.



## A Note on Lobbying

It is always important to understand whether any activities you are planning could fall under the IRS definition of lobbying. This is especially true if you receive a Voices for Healthy Kids grant to support your efforts, because no Voices for Healthy Kids funds can be used to support lobbying. Generally, any activity or communication that takes a position on specific pending or proposed legislation—for Congress, a state legislature, a city council or a town meeting—could be considered lobbying in some circumstances.

Below are some examples of communications that may be considered lobbying or non-lobbying.

Lobbying	Non-Lobbying
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Contact your legislator and ask him/her to support bill number XXXX.”</li><li>• “Click here to sign the petition to support bill number XXXX.”</li><li>• Communication to legislators that supports bills not yet introduced: “New Jersey should adopt New York City’s proposed ban on sugar-sweetened beverages.”</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• “Ask your legislator to support reducing our children’s soda consumption!”</li><li>• “Sign the petition to get the school board to keep sugary drinks out of our schools!”</li><li>• “As a concerned St. Louis parent, I ask all my neighbors to join me in reducing the amount of sweetened drinks our children consume.”</li></ul>

Look for the following icon throughout this toolkit, which identifies areas where lobbying may come into play:



When you engage in activities that may involve lobbying, consult your lawyer, as well as the checklist in the appendix of this toolkit, to help you determine whether you need to use lobbying funds for any of your efforts. Lobbying efforts must be supported with other funds, and these costs must be tracked separately from non-lobbying efforts. All types of activities, both lobbying and non-lobbying, can be valuable in helping to promote healthy lifestyles in your community. However, if your ultimate goal becomes the passage of legislation, you will probably need unrestricted funds to conduct some of your work.

This toolkit is written for organizations that are legally able to lobby and have lobbying and non-lobbying funds available. (Public charities are able to conduct a limited amount of lobbying, private foundations are not. Governmental entities are subject to different rules; check with your lawyer for details.)

Along the way in this toolkit you will find important tips to understand the distinctions between lobbying and non-lobbying activities, as well as when to use lobbying funds versus non-lobbying funds. We have provided examples to help you understand the distinctions between lobbying and non-lobbying activities so you can plan your activities strategically, without violating restrictions on your non-lobbying funds. Please also be aware that some states have rules that may be relevant to your activities and may have registration and other requirements; this guide does not address those state rules.



## Engagement Phases

No matter what the issue or which organization leads it, there are four key phases to each campaign: recruit, engage, mobilize and evaluate. The plan below outlines each of these phases; as you plan your campaign, make sure you have designated time for each one of these key steps.

### Phase 1: Recruit

This first phase of the campaign is where you lay the groundwork that will ensure your success. It's where you recruit key advocates to your cause. Think about these questions: Who can be your spokespeople? Are there families in your community who would be willing to share their story through an op-ed or a letter to the editor? Where do members of various ethnic, cultural, socio-economic and racial groups in the community regularly congregate? What are the organizations in your community that advocate on behalf of different racial and ethnic communities? Are there any alliances with doctors, dentists, dietitians, nurses, researchers, school nutrition association, PTA, or academics that could be explored? Who do you want to be your "everyday advocates," the large group of people who speak out about the issues at hand? Do these "everyday advocates" represent the diversity of the communities most affected by the need for policy change?

Consider reaching out to specific audiences who would be in favor of reducing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption in your community. For example, if you are trying to encourage businesses to voluntarily raise the prices of the sugar-sweetened beverages they sell, reach out to business owners who have shown interest in health issues or organizations specifically devoted to healthy living.

On the other hand, if you're trying to promote healthy drinks at home in your community, reach out to local families. For example, you could partner with your local Parent Teacher Association (PTA) and send one of your representatives to a meeting to share your mission with parents. You could also reach out to parenting groups at churches or local parent blogs or online forums.

Reach out to these people via all channels available to you: social media, existing member databases, personal emails, blogs, paid advertisements, community outreach, tables at street fairs and festivals, public announcements at places of worship, etc. Be sure to provide culturally and linguistically appropriate materials, too; the wider you're able to cast your net, the more likely you are to recruit a diverse audience that cares about the changes you want to make. Stretch beyond your comfort zone.

Once you determine who is on your side, start thinking about how to garner support from public officials and other important leaders. In many cases, you will want to share your message with supporters and ask them to send a letter to their representatives or key officials. You can do that through letters, e-communications, blogs, public service announcements, letters to the editor, op-eds, social media, etc. Check the appendix of this toolkit for examples of many of these tactics.

Finally, before you execute on any of the tactics in this toolkit, make sure you establish your metrics of success. Determine how you'll measure the effectiveness of your communications: Media impressions? Likes? Comments? Open and click-through rates? Offline actions taken, such as signing up for educational opportunities or to volunteer? Set these parameters before you get started so you can measure your success throughout the campaign.





More information on how to implement the Recruitment Phase is found in the sections on [Potential Allies](#), [Recruitment Basics](#) and [Recognition Plan](#).

## Phase 2: Engage

Phase 1 is for making introductions; phase 2 is for educating. This is when your introductory/educational email, initial media outreach (both traditional and social) and event planning takes place.

This is the perfect time to start building relationships. Stay in regular communication with your activists, keeping them engaged, informed and ready to take action when you need. Start working with the media, who tend to respond best to people who are organized, clear, polite and have newsworthy things for them to write about. Media engagement should include ethnic and mainstream press. This toolkit provides you with intro language for your social media and e-communication efforts directed at advocates and media.

Additionally, this is the time to start working with a diverse group of spokespeople relevant to the community in which you are working. Use the media tips in this toolkit as a place to start and make sure your spokespeople are familiar with your talking points so they are confident when speaking in public or with media. Schedule your press conferences and events so that you give reporters and community members ample notice.

More information on how to implement the Engagement Phase is found in the sections on [Diverse Audiences](#), [Social Media Resources](#) and [Tips for Using Social Media to Reach Journalists](#).

## Phase 3: Mobilize

Now that your planning is done, it's time to act. Reach out to your advocates, your spokespeople, the media, etc., and let them know your campaign is in full swing. Make sure you keep a pulse on your evaluation metrics of success so you can deploy different communication methods to increase engagement as needed.

Keep in regular touch with diverse community members to keep them informed and engaged. During all stages, but especially this one, make sure you track the movement of the policy at hand so you know how to instruct your supporters. You may need them to do educational outreach at local gatherings to build popular support in the community. At other times, a social action may be best to help bolster recruitment. They may need to write letters to their legislators because a vote in the statehouse is just around the corner. (The costs of planning and conducting this last type of activity with legislators will require lobbying funds.)



As for media, this is the phase where you want to follow through on the relationships you established in phase 2. By this time, you have made connections over phone or email with reporters and local bloggers. Keep in regular touch with reporters to keep them informed and give them ideas for covering your campaign.

If you're planning media events like press conferences, this is the time to execute. Get your spokespeople ready to lead events (for more details on media training, take a look at the Media Training Tips section of this toolkit), and make sure they reflect the diversity of the audience you're trying to reach. For example, invite organizations who share your view on sugar-sweetened beverages to the



press conference or ask your local PTA to attend as well. Set up opportunities for new advocates to sign up to join the cause. Let media know the event is happening and give them special incentives to cover the story, like a behind-the-scenes press pass that grants them an interview with your spokesperson and photo opportunities. To learn more about planning a media event, check the Hosting a Media Event section of the toolkit.

More information on how to implement the Mobilizing Phase is found in the sections on [Action Alerts](#), [The Value of Phone Outreach](#), [Hosting a Media Event](#), [Media Training Tips](#), [Why Op-Eds Matter](#), [Meeting with Legislators](#) and [Days at the Capitol](#).

## Phase 4: Evaluate

Don't forget about evaluation—it's just as important as the rest of your campaign. Start by reviewing the metrics you put into place at the beginning of the campaign. That will help you determine what worked and what didn't, and help you make changes for next time.

In whatever ways your campaign has been successful, make sure you let your advocates know so you can celebrate the wins together. Advocates need to know that their efforts meant something to the campaign, especially if they are going to return to your organization or to the cause to see how they can help out again.

## Key Takeaways

- Recruiting a diverse group of advocates, especially one that represents the communities most affected by the need for policy change, will be key to your initiative's success.
- Make sure to educate volunteers, the community and local media about the issues that are important to you.
- Keep advocates and media informed and engaged by staying in touch regularly.
- Establish metrics for your campaign's success and regularly evaluate your progress.



## Recruit: Potential Allies

Creating local support for taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages will be key to your success, and working with state and local partner groups is one of the best ways to build that support. Consider the list of tips below as you begin outreach to other organizations, and consult the appendix for a detailed list of potential allies.

## Who Can Help

There are many organizations working to promote healthier beverage drinking and prevent childhood obesity. Some are singularly focused on sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives, while others look at broader issues, including school lunch programs and increased physical activity. While some groups may not perfectly align with your sugar-sweetened beverage goals, it's still worth reaching out to them—they may be valuable partners for other programs you are pursuing or some of your long-term organizational goals.

Below is a list of issues whose champions may be potential partners:

- Social justice and civil rights in communities of color
- Food justice
- Educational justice
- Ethnic media
- Local faith leaders
- Increasing healthy food or beverage options in grocery stores
- Reducing childhood obesity
- Improving school food or beverage options
- Hunger for low-income families
- Health and wellness for historically underserved communities
- Child welfare
- Healthy foods or beverages manufacturing
- Ethnic and mainstream Chambers of Commerce
- Economic development
- Pediatric dentistry

## Potential Challengers

Sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives are divisive issues for some organizations. As you begin your efforts, you should be aware of potential opposition, including:

- Organizations that have questioned the link between sugar-sweetened beverages and childhood obesity
- Groups opposing taxes as a way to reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages
- Beverage manufacturing organizations that may not want to change current marketing practices (e.g., food and beverage and marketing trade associations)
- Organizations that have received support through grants and scholarships from beverage companies and may be hesitant to support efforts to reduce sugar-sweetened beverage consumption
- Groups or organizations that emphasize personal responsibility and choice over policy action or government intervention



Although some potential allies and opponents will be publicly outspoken about their opinions on initiatives aimed at reducing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption, others will take a more subtle approach. Before making a decision on any potential partner or opponent, be sure to look at their goals, mission statement, programs and activities.

## Key Takeaways

- Partners can come from a wide variety of backgrounds—from faith groups to those solely committed to reducing childhood obesity. Cast a wide net to make sure you reach as many potential allies as possible.
- Make sure you understand your potential allies' or opponents' goals, priorities and programs before engaging with them.



## Recruit: Recruitment Basics

Deploying a campaign isn't just about mobilizing your supporters to take action or helping bring taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages to your community. It's an opportunity to draw more supporters to your cause and hopefully retain them for future campaigns to improve the health of your community. The following recruitment guidelines will help you accomplish these goals.

Note that these tips are suggestions, not requirements. Choose the approach and tactics that work best for your organization and your community. Regardless of how you decide to recruit new supporters, make sure you acknowledge the diverse needs of the audience you hope to engage. For instance, if you are hoping to reach Latino audiences, consider the need for translators and translated materials; if your target group does not have access to or utilize the Internet, emphasize offline recruitment opportunities.

## Recruiting at Events

Every event your organization initiates and those events you attend should include an easy way for people to join your efforts to help reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages in your state. There are several ways to collect information at events; a few ideas are listed below.

- **Be sure to have the ability to speak the relevant language of the event.** If you do not speak the language, find another supporter who does.
- **Bring tablet computers.** Easy to use and extremely portable, tablet computers can be a simple and effective way to collect names and emails on site.
- **Offer sign-up forms.** Tried and true, this option is easy and cheap to initiate. Asking people to fill out a pre-written postcard to an elected official can provide a compelling reason for people to share their personal information. Remember that transcribing these names into a computer-friendly format will take time.
  - Asking people to write their legislator about a general policy issue is not lobbying, unless the request is tied to specific legislation or a specific legislative proposal.
- **Try business card recruitment.** The less effort it takes to sign up, the more people will do so. For example, if you're hosting an event with key business leaders in your community, ask everyone to leave their business cards behind to join the cause. You may pull in more names than with a traditional sign-up form campaign because this sign-up process is so easy.



## Recruiting on Issues

It is important to show potential advocates that joining you will make a difference. Potential recruits are much more likely to take action when they believe that doing so will have an impact.

- **Expand the ask.** When recruiting, ask for more than just a name. Ask your potential advocates to take part in an action, like signing a petition or sending a letter to their legislators about reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.
  - Asking people to write their legislator about a general policy issue, such as reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, is not lobbying, unless the request is tied to specific legislation or a specific legislative proposal. Because there are many ways to reduce consumption of sugary drinks (e.g., making water more available; voluntary price increases at local businesses and organizations who sell beverages; asking community members to pledge to consume fewer sugary beverages), a general policy statement is not a reference to any specific legislative proposal. However, urging legislators to adopt







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a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages likely would be lobbying, because you are telling the legislators to pass specific legislation.

- **Address issues head-on.** Don't be afraid to use conflict or controversy where appropriate. People like to engage on issues where there are strong opinions.

## Recruiting Online

Don't limit yourself to recruiting via in-person events. There may be a large pool of new advocates you can reach online.

- **Engage social media friends and followers.** If you have affiliate or state online properties, use posts to ask your fans to tell their friends about your organization and sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives, or ask your followers to retweet invitations to join your efforts.
- **Add a sign-up form to Facebook.** If you add a special tab to your Facebook page, fans will be able to take advocacy actions without leaving the Facebook platform.
- **Use Facebook advertising.** Advertising on Facebook can be inexpensive, targeted and effective. Studies have shown that nonprofits use this medium to get people to sign petitions, volunteer and/or attend free events, as well as generate awareness for a campaign. You can even narrow the reach down to the city level and localize content to make engagement more likely.

## Recruiting via Word-of-Mouth

Are your advocates telling their friends and families about reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages? Healthy living is not just a volunteer opportunity, it is a way of life—so encourage advocates to mention it at the other groups in which they participate (e.g., civic organizations, fitness classes, etc.). Be sure to include culturally and linguistically appropriate materials for these recruitment opportunities. In addition to some obvious potential advocates such as health care professionals and educators, there are several other groups to consider:

- **Ask parents** to get their local PTA to support efforts to reduce consumption of sugary drinks. Other parents may see the benefit of promoting healthier beverage drinking in the community and become advocates for your cause.
- **Ask professionals** to mention reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages to the regional Chamber of Commerce. A business-minded group may see an economic benefit to promoting healthier beverage drinking in the area. A recent study indicated that a sugar-sweetened beverage tax proposed in Illinois and California would lead to modest job growth.<sup>4</sup>
  - For example, if you're trying to encourage local businesses or organizations to voluntarily raise the price of sugary beverages, or reduce the price of healthy ones, you could encourage water or milk distributors to coordinate with local businesses to provide more healthy options.
  - Business leaders may be particularly supportive of a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages as a way to support local anti-obesity initiatives and improve the health of the community—and therefore decrease the costs of healthcare. Note that if your efforts to involve business leaders in this manner include specific mention of legislation and are directed at lawmakers, they could be considered lobbying.
- **Ask faith leaders** to get involved. Approaching leaders of the faith community is a great way to connect with community members, especially in under-resourced communities.



<sup>4</sup> Powell LM, Wada R, Persky JJ, Chaloupka FJ. (2014) Employment Impact of Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Taxes. *AJPH*. Published online ahead of print February 13, 2014.



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- Faith leaders may also be willing to increase the price of sugar-sweetened beverages they sell at local churches, synagogues, etc. They could also choose to change the beverages they serve at events or activities.
- **Reach out through civic organizations** in your community. Ask to speak at a meeting or luncheon of the Junior League, Kiwanis Club, Delta Sigma Theta sorority or other local organizations.
  - If they sell beverages on-site or at events, these organizations may be interested in increasing prices of sugar-sweetened beverages, or choose to only sell healthy beverages. As an alternative or an addition, these organizations could make water more available or free at their events.
  - Additionally, if you're trying to promote healthy drinks at home in your community, make sure to emphasize this when you speak to these leaders as they are often examples to and influencers in their communities, and could lead by example.

## Recruiting via Competition

Some healthy competition among your existing advocate base can help bring new followers to your organization.

- **Challenge your existing advocates** to recruit friends and family. Then, host a celebration to welcome new advocates to your organization.
- **Offer a prize** to whoever can recruit the most new friends and followers online. Create pre-written tweets and Facebook posts and then count shares and retweets. When possible, make sure the prize is health-related or at least does not send an unhealthy message.

## Recruiting in the Community

What does your target audience like to do? Instead of creating new events, meet them where they currently gather.

- **Attend community festivals.** Host booths at street fairs, cultural festivals or carnivals and ask attendees to sign up.
- **Partner with universities.** Host a table at school fairs and encourage students to form a club around promoting healthier beverage drinking.
- **Reach out to local places of worship.** Recruit members to attend local events and organize meetings through bulletin advertisements and in-person announcements.

## Recruiting via Politics

Leverage the response of your state legislators to encourage advocates to recruit more friends to the cause. For example:

- **Send emails** with subject lines or topics featuring legislator opposition or support—and encourage existing advocates to recruit their friends and family. For example, “We need more people to tell Senator Jones that we want to reduce consumption of sugary drinks!” or “Please thank Senator Garcia for supporting healthier beverages!”
  - This email would not be lobbying unless “reduce consumption of sugary drinks” or “supporting healthier beverages” clearly refers to legislation pending in Senator Smith’s or Senator Garcia’s statehouse. Usually, general statements about promoting healthier beverage drinking aren’t lobbying, although urging the adoption of sugar-sweetened beverage taxes may be.





## Key Takeaways

- There are many different ways to recruit new advocates. Make sure to use the recruitment methods that are the most appropriate for building a diverse group of supporters that can best connect with the audience you hope to engage.
- Make the recruitment process as easy as possible for your potential supporter. Offer different ways for them to sign up and take action.
- Not all potential volunteers will have regular access to the Internet, so make sure you recruit both on and offline.
- Some recruitment tactics may constitute lobbying. Make sure to check with your lawyers before referencing specific initiatives or legislation.





## Recruit: Recognition Plan

Recognition: we all want it. It's no surprise that happy advocates are more likely to submit a letter to the editor, sign a petition or attend a rally. As you conduct your campaign, recognizing your advocates for their contribution to your efforts will be crucial in gaining and retaining your support base.

## Volunteer Recognition

### Recognize New Volunteers

A strong campaign starts with a strong recruitment push. By creating a foundation of supporters early, you will have them ready to activate when the time comes. Consider the following to grow your base of support and recognize new advocates.

- **Small gifts branded with your organization's logo** (for example, water bottles or USB drives) can be a fun reward for signing up. To make resources stretch a bit further, consider offering incentives to the first 50 or 100 people who sign up on a specific day or giving prizes to advocates for recruiting the largest number of new supporters.

### Recognize Existing Volunteers

Gaining new advocates is never the end of the story. It's also important to maintain a good relationship with your existing supporters, making sure they know how valuable they are to your cause. One of the best ways to show appreciation is through recognition. Consider offering the following:

- **Exclusive opportunities**, like the chance to meet with your organization's leadership or serve on a volunteer advisory panel.
- **Certificates or trophies**, especially when presented at a public event.
- **Invitations** to attend volunteer after-hours, receptions or trainings.

### Choose the Right Time

Whether you're reaching out to new or existing advocates, we suggest taking advantage of specific times of the year when engagement is traditionally high.

- **Leverage local festivals.** Consider creating recognition pieces around local street fairs or festivals, like free entry or food tickets.
- **Speak up when it's time to vote.** If the local government is voting on measures pertaining to sugar-sweetened beverage taxes, this is a key time to recognize existing and potential advocates. If you have the lobbying resources to do so, asking advocates to contact their legislators to vote for the measures you care about—and then thanking the advocates when they do—is an important step.
  - This will be grassroots lobbying, because it's a communication to the public that reflects a view on legislation and contains a call to action. Make sure you have the resources to pay for these activities and track them appropriately.
- **Use the calendar to inspire you.** Create recognition pieces around key health observances taking place throughout the year (e.g., National Nutrition Month in March or National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month in September) where you spotlight and thank advocates for their efforts to improve community nutrition.



### Staff Recognition

Volunteers aren't the only ones who make a campaign a success. As you thank your volunteers for their efforts, make sure to also thank the staff members who keep the campaign running every day.



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- **Celebrate them publically.** If you hold an annual celebration, highlight the good work the staff has done over the past year. Offering awards or opportunities to publically acknowledge good work lets employees know their work has been noticed and is valued.
- **Ask your strongest recruiters of new advocates to lead a call** or webinar, so they can share their tips with other staff members.
- **Conduct a staff contest** to see which members can bring in the most new advocates over a specified period. In return, offer a day off or a gift card as an incentive.
- **Highlight the diversity of your staff** to demonstrate its importance in engaging all members of the community.

## Key Takeaways

- It's important to recognize and thank volunteers for their commitment to your cause.
- Rewarding new volunteers with small gifts can help increase sign-up rates.
- Don't forget about your staff—they deserve thanks too.





## Engage: Diverse Audiences

No matter the issue you're working on or the policy goals you're trying to advance, engaging with diverse audiences should be a core part of your campaign. This is especially true if you're working on an issue that will have a direct impact on communities that are different from the ones in which you or your team lives. Engaging with diverse audiences makes good sense: the most successful campaigns are often the ones that speak to and engage as many different people as possible. Priority populations (people living in high-poverty urban areas, particularly African-American and Latino individuals; people living in high-poverty rural areas; people living in the South; and people living in Tribal Nations) are particularly important to engage as partners and advocates.

Below are some questions designed to make you think about who you're reaching out to and how. The following are intended to be thought-starters, not an exhaustive list.

- **Who's on our team?** Take a look at your volunteer base, your advisors and your staff. Are your teams made up of leaders and advocates representing priority populations? Do they represent the communities where you want to have the most impact—particularly if those communities are historically underserved? If not, where are the opportunities to do more?
- **How are we recruiting and engaging?** If your teams are less diverse than they could be, consider expanding the ways you recruit and engage volunteers and staff. For instance, not everyone has access to the Internet; if your campaign is heavily based online, you may be limiting who is able to join your efforts. Pen-and-paper recruitment and offline volunteer opportunities can help make sure more people are able to get involved.
- **Where are we recruiting and engaging?** When it comes to getting people involved, location is just as important as technique. Are you reaching out to local faith communities and the ethnic small business community? Many faith communities have separate services in different languages. If you aren't already, try having a presence or table at events that draw a diverse crowd or partnering with a local ethnic Chamber of Commerce.
- **Who are we talking to?** Make sure you're working with non-mainstream news outlets in your area. There may be newspapers, radio stations or television networks geared towards diverse communities, particularly non-English-speakers and people of color. Ethnic media coverage can both provide new and different angles on your campaign and encourage diverse audiences to get involved with your work.
- **Is language a barrier to access?** If there are non-English-speakers in your area, consider having your materials translated and easily accessible at events and online. If you're planning on hosting phone banks, engage multilingual volunteers. And if you're planning on having a presence at events where people are likely to speak another language, make sure you have people staffing your table or booth who speak those languages.
- **Do our team members feel welcome and listened to?** Getting people to sign up or take action is one thing; fostering a welcoming, affirming environment is another. Listen to what your volunteers, advisors and staff members say about your campaign, and strive for an environment where everyone has a seat at the table.
- **Are we considering unique cultural perspectives?** Every culture has their own nuanced way of thinking and talking about issues. Try to learn what these issues are ahead of time.
- **What else can we do?** Throughout your campaign, keep asking yourself the types of questions listed above. There are always opportunities to open your doors wider and expand your reach further.



## Key Takeaways

- Diversity should be a core part of your campaign, from start to finish.
- Language and cultural barriers can prevent people from getting involved with your campaign.
- Think strategically where you are recruiting and engaging. It is important to go to the communities you hope to engage and not expect interested parties to come to you.
- There are always opportunities to create a more inclusive, welcoming community.



## Engage: Social Media Resources and Tips

It's going to take community support to reduce sugar-sweetened beverage consumption in your area. Fortunately, social media allows you to share your message with a wider audience than traditional door-to-door grassroots work can. With a few clicks, you can access the right people at the right moment, making them aware of the issue and garnering their support. The following tips were created to help you do just that: extend your community of advocates online to create an even bigger groundswell of support for reducing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption. National experts may already have examples of resources you can model or tailor for use in your campaign.

### Using Images and Videos

Posts with multimedia drive higher engagement rates and increased reach—people like looking and clicking on images and video. Below is a quick overview of how you can best put multimedia to use on Facebook and Twitter.

#### Images

- **Choose a diverse range of people.** It's important that different groups see people that look like themselves in the images you use.
- **Only use content you own.** The images, videos or graphics you post should be either created by your team or purchased on stock photography sites. If your organization has an existing photo library, search to see if anything can be repurposed.
- **Ask your advocates to sign release forms.** Photos of real-life advocates are always ideal. Just remember that anyone you spotlight online—whether in stories, photos or videos—must sign an authorization release form. Ask your organization for the appropriate forms.
- **Repurpose print materials online.** The postcard, flyer and fact sheet included in this toolkit can easily be posted or linked to on Facebook and Twitter.
  - The postcard is especially useful as a featured image to supplement your Facebook posts.
  - Invite advocates to print the flyer and post it at work or around their neighborhood.
  - Save a PDF of the fact sheet and link to it from your post, inviting advocates to read and learn more or share it with friends and family.

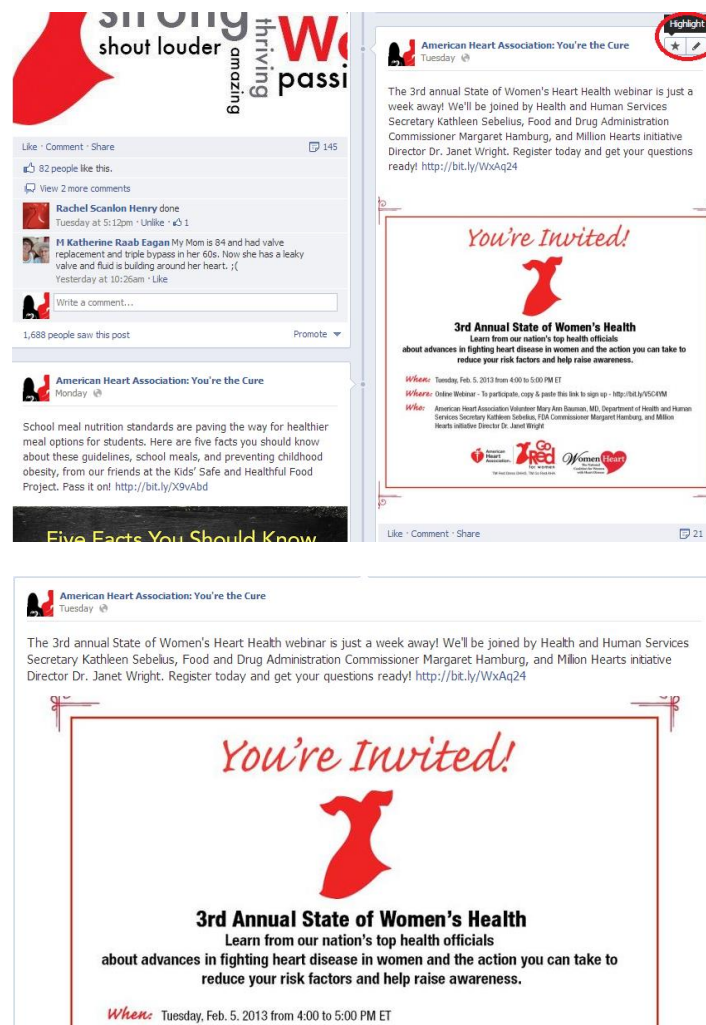
#### Videos

- **Highlight your advocates.** If you have access to a video camera or even a smartphone, consider creating a video of advocate stories. Ask your advocates to talk about their role in the campaign and why they support reducing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption.
  - Stories of real-life advocates can be one of the most effective measures for swaying decision-makers, because they represent actual constituents' opinions on the policies you care about.
- **School footage and photos.** Get permission and obtain releases to film children at school. Take photos of healthy or unhealthy beverage machines or other school beverage options.
- **Create mini-documentaries.** A short film (keep in mind that the most viewed and shared videos are less than 90 seconds) following someone shopping at a local convenience store or grocery store can highlight the overwhelming abundance of sugar-sweetened beverages (e.g., sodas, sweetened teas and energy drinks) which makes it difficult to encourage consumers to choose healthier drinks (e.g., water, milk and small amounts of 100 percent fruit juice). This can emphasize the importance of enacting policies designed to reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.

## Facebook

Especially if you already have an established presence, Facebook can be an excellent way to engage your existing advocates and recruit new ones. Below are a few tips for spreading the word on Facebook.

- **Use your existing account.** Don't create a new page just for sugar-sweetened beverage taxes. This way, when new people "like" your page because of sugar-sweetened beverage reduction, they will also stay in the loop on your other initiatives.
- **Recruit new members right from Facebook.** Consider creating a registration app on your page so users can sign up to be a part of the effort without even leaving Facebook. You can point potential advocates to the registration app through Facebook ads and posts on your wall.
- **Highlight key posts.** Facebook allows you to select posts you would like to draw specific attention to and expand them across your page to catch your readers' eyes. See the following graphics for an example.



- **Use images to help advocates identify with your cause.** The postcard in this toolkit can be repurposed to create an image advocates can use on their own profiles. Consider using the front side of the postcard to do the following:



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- Make it your page's cover photo and ask advocates to tag themselves and their friends in the image. That way, their tags show up on their newsfeed and in their friends' notifications.
- Encourage advocates to make the postcard their cover photo or profile picture as well. The advocates' friends will see the images on their profiles, helping to raise awareness about the issue. Make sure to give advocates a caption to go with their post telling viewers to go to your site to help out.
- On Twitter, encourage advocates to make the postcard their banner picture, so their followers will see the image.
- **Share the message with decision-makers.** Many states' decision-makers have an online presence, which can be an effective venue for them to hear from advocates.
  - As advocates tag themselves in your cover photo, encourage them to tag their decision-makers as well. Note that some decision-makers may have set their privacy to restrict this.
  - Encourage advocates to tag their decision-makers in their Facebook posts about sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives. Check the appendix for examples of what these posts could look like.

**Note:** A post that does not tag a legislator is a public communication and will be lobbying only if it reflects a view on specific legislation and it includes a call to action. Note that if a social media post constitutes lobbying, the staff time related to writing the post is attributable to lobbying, however small the cost of that staff time may be.

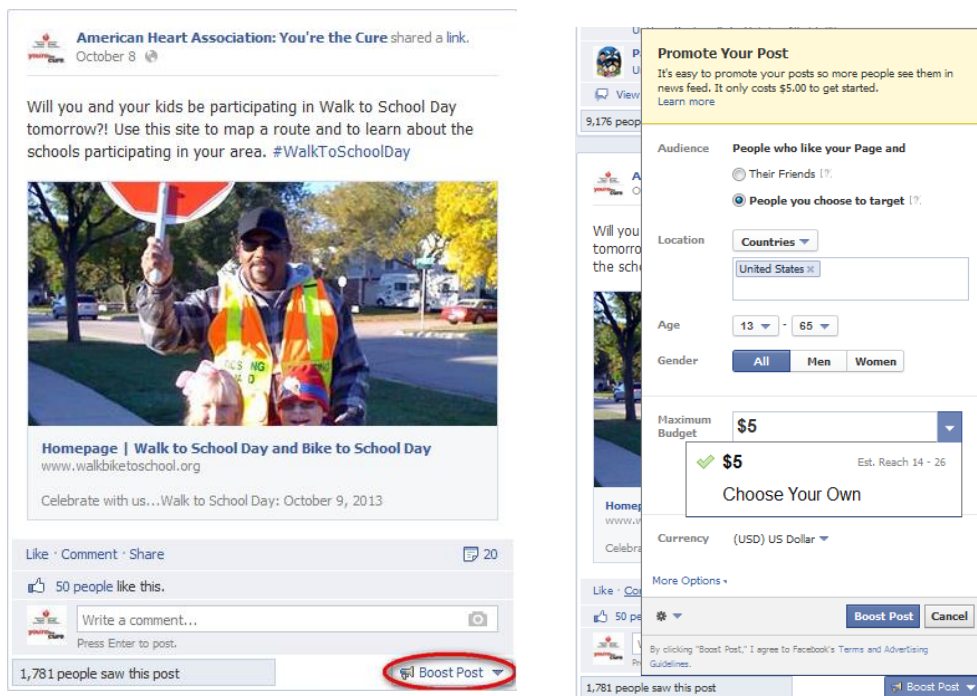


- Ask questions: "Do you know the benefits of cutting back on sugar-sweetened beverages?" "How do you think people in America should promote healthier beverage consumption?"
- Encourage story-sharing: "What does the beverage selection at your local convenience store look like? What would you change?"
- Keep them accountable: "How have you helped to promote healthier beverage drinking in your community?"
- **Highlight partners.** There may be other community organizations that are also working to bring healthy beverages to communities.
  - Consider working with them to highlight each other's efforts in Facebook posts. That way, your mention will show up on their social media channels (and vice versa), giving you leverage to reach their community for recruitment purposes.
- **Take online actions offline.** There are many creative ways to share several items in this toolkit—the poster, flyer, fact sheet, etc.—on Facebook and encourage people to distribute them in their communities.
  - Ask advocates to print the flyers and hand them out at events in their town or post them on community message bulletin boards in parks, libraries or coffee shops.
    - Bring the action back online by asking advocates to post a picture of themselves putting up the flyers.
  - Post the decision-maker fact sheet on your Facebook page so that it is available to advocates to use in their own meetings with decision-makers. And of course, ask them to come back to the Facebook page to report on what they are doing, and how their own meetings went.



## Ad Campaigns

- **Promote your posts.** Promoted posts take highlighted posts one step further by elevating them in your fans' feeds. Promoted posts have a nominal cost and their benefits are far-reaching. *In this toolkit, we have provided a suggested image for a promoted post. Use the image and then assign corresponding text to it, such as: "Our kids drink more sugar-sweetened beverages than they do water or milk. These types of drinks are part of a big problem: today, nearly one-third of children in the United States are overweight or obese. Initiatives that reduce sugar-sweetened beverage consumption could go a long way toward fighting childhood obesity across the country and in [STATE]."*
  - Promoted posts come with a range of pricing options, depending on how many fans your page has and how many people you would like to reach with your post. You will have the option to elevate your post in your fans' newsfeeds or in both their newsfeeds and their friends' newsfeeds. On top of this, you can target promoted posts by age, gender and location.
  - You can promote posts right from your Facebook page; look in the lower right-hand corner of the post you want to elevate. Click on "Boost Post," select your dollar amount and audience reach, and then enter credit card details for payment.



- **Create an ad campaign.** You can also turn promoted posts into a wider Facebook advertising campaign, which will allow you to target specific audiences in a way not feasible from your Facebook page.
  - Visit <https://www.facebook.com/ads/create>.
  - Select your destination page (this should be your organization's Facebook page)

- Select the Promoted Posts option:

**Advertise on Facebook**

What do you want to advertise?

Choose a Facebook destination or enter a URL:

Enter a URL, a destination name, or a destination ID... [?]

Search

Search by URL  
Enter an external URL or a Facebook URL.

Search by Destination ID  
Enter an ID to load a Page, an app, an event, etc.

Pages and Places

American Heart Association: You're the Cure

Page

What would you like to do?

Get More Page Likes  
Build a bigger audience.

Promote Page Posts  
Get people to see and engage with your important messages.

See Advanced Options  
Configure advanced creative and pricing options, such as bidding for clicks (CPC).

- Select the page post you would like to promote:

Edit Text and Links

Choose the Page post you want to promote:

Behind every face is a story... ▼

☐ Keep my ad up-to-date by automatically promoting my most recent post

+ Create New Page Post

Sponsored Stories

☒ Help people discover your business through their friends. No increase in budget is required.

Show Advanced Options ▲

- Now you are ready to choose your audience. First, select age and gender targeting and then type in interests. Remember to include broad interest topics to reach as wide an audience as possible.
  - For targeting based on location, workplace, behavior, school, relationship status or languages, click the appropriate button and add in targeting criteria. Consider groups of people who may have a natural interest in fighting childhood obesity—parents or teachers, for example—and target them based on related interests like local parenting groups or the PTA.
  - You can also target audiences based on whether they are already fans of your organization on Facebook.

**Create Your Audience**

Age: [?] 13 - No max

Gender: [?] ☒ All ☐ Men ☐ Women

Precise Interests: [?]

Advanced Targeting ▲

+ Interests + Behavior + Location

+ Gender and Age + School + Workplace

+ Languages + Relationship Status

- Finally, select your budget. Even a small amount can help you get results.

**Account and Campaign** [Help: Campaign](#)

**Account Settings**

These settings cannot be changed once you create your ad.

Account Currency:

Account Country:

Account Time Zone:

**Campaign and Budget**

Name:

Budget: [?]

Schedule: [?] ☒ Run my campaign continuously starting today ☐ Set a start and end date

## Key Takeaways

- Social media can be a powerful way to share your message to a broader, more diverse audience.
- People respond well to posts with multimedia, so try to include images and video you own whenever possible.
- Use social media to encourage advocates to interact on social media channels and as a way to support your offline activities.
- A small investment in paid advertising, like Facebook ads, can make a big difference for your campaign.



## Engage: Using Social Media to Reach Journalists

With more than 6.9 million active users on Twitter every day and 552 million daily active users on Facebook, social media can serve as a powerful tool to amplify your message and reach highly targeted audiences.

Just as consumers are increasingly turning to social media for news, so are journalists. While they use social media to follow items of personal interest and to interact with their own networks, they also use it to research stories and follow trends.

### Reach Media through Social Channels

- **Start with research.** Before you begin engaging with journalists, make sure to research their backgrounds. This will help you personalize your messages, reference relevant past articles and explain why you have contacted them.
- **Try email, too.** Most journalists prefer to be contacted through email, not on social media. If you do not have an existing relationship with a journalist, a well-written email may be more effective than a tweet. You can also post a comment on the news outlet's webpage under the online version of the news story.
- **Don't begin with a pitch.** Though it is generally not appropriate to pitch over Twitter, you can use it to get on a journalist's radar. Start by following the reporter on Twitter and retweeting or commenting on content you find interesting.
- **Be respectful.** It is important to be mindful of journalists' time and to remember that all interactions are public. Don't mass tweet pitches to several reporters and outlets.
- **Be careful with direct messages (DMs).** Don't ask a journalist you aren't following to send you a direct message. Only people who follow one another can send each other direct messages.

### Sample Tweets

Below are a few sample tweets designed to build relationships with journalists and get on their radar as a thought leader on sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives. Included below are references to specific approaches to help you see how they could fit within a tweet. Note, however, that you can use all of these tweets for any of the approaches by tweaking the language. The Key Messages earlier in this toolkit can help with that.

- In response to a journalist tweeting an article on a related topic/issue: ".@[JOURNALIST] Really interesting take on #healthydrinks. Love your point on XXX."
- Sharing an article by a journalist: "[INSERT QUOTE OR PARAPHRASED TEXT] via @[JOURNALIST] [LINK TO ARTICLE] #healthydrinks"
- Sharing an article by the journalist and generating discussion among your followers: "Read [article title] via @[JOURNALIST] [LINK TO ARTICLE]. How can we promote healthier drinks during sporting events in [STATE]?"
- In response to a journalist tweeting an article on a related topic/issue: ".@[JOURNALIST] Loved this piece, such an important topic! Would love to chat about our program sometime #healthydrinks"
- In response to a journalist tweeting an article on a related topic/issue: ".@[JOURNALIST] Really great point on drink price increases. Have you thought about sugary drinks initiatives like [LINK TO WEBSITE]? #healthydrinks"



## Social Media Engagement Tips & Tricks

- Be transparent and disclose your job/purpose/association in your bio.
- Employ a conversational tone and avoid buzzwords.
- Always begin by listening to the existing conversation.
- Identify opportunities to be current and relevant.
- Be human.
- Be timely.
- Be prepared to carry on a conversation with your followers.
- Include hyperlinks for additional information.
- Use relevant hashtags when appropriate to help your comments show up in larger conversations.
- Use handles of people (e.g., policymaker, organization, reporter) whose attention you are trying to garner.
- Focus on facts and avoid entering editorial disagreements or arguments.

## Key Takeaways

- Engaging with journalists on social media can help build valuable media relationships.
- Make sure to research journalists' backgrounds so you can tailor any messages you send to them.
- Don't start off with a pitch. Use social media to get to know journalists and engage with them, not to ask them for coverage.
- Always be transparent about identifying yourself and your campaign goals.





## Mobilize: Action Alerts

Your existing database of supporters is perfectly positioned to become an army of grassroots activists. By joining your email list, these individuals have already indicated they want to learn more about who you are and the issues important to you. The next step is converting their interest into a deeper level of commitment to your mission—and to helping kids across America—by getting your supporters to complete an action, such as signing a petition, communicating directly with policy-makers and other decision-makers or attending events.

As you begin a conversation with your supporters through email, keep these goals in mind:

- **Educate them** through issue updates or updated Web content. Communications like this allow you to:
  - Provide advocates with information and cultivate their interest in an issue.
  - Identify the message areas that resonate best with subsets of the audience, allowing you to better tailor outreach.
  - Keep individuals engaged and updated during periods where critical action is not required, making it easier to engage them when the time comes.
- **Engage them in opportunities** to deepen their activism through surveys, “share your story” opportunities or social media engagement. These activities give individuals actions to take that help you:
  - Learn more about what type of participation people want to have.
  - Train activists how to be good stewards of issue messages.
  - Expand your reach by amplifying your message through individuals’ social networks.
  - Show activists the importance of their participation, so they are ready to respond in times where urgent action may be needed.
- **Activate them** with new and varied calls to action based on the way in which their unique voices can make a difference. Your advocates can reach the public through:
  - Participation in public dialogue on key issues by commenting on news articles, blog posts or polls.
  - Recruitment of new individuals to join the cause.
  - Attendance at public meetings, town halls or hearings in support of your position.
  - Contacting decision-makers via email, phone, postal mail or in person to contribute their opinions.
    - If your request reflects a view on specific legislation, asking advocates to contact their legislators likely will be lobbying.



Email action alerts also allow you to communicate with supporters personally, measure their interest through open rates and track their support through clicks on the links in your email. Because email communications have the capacity to be uniquely micro-targeted to recipients, sending alerts to your audience can be one of the most powerful ways to inspire mobilization around sugar-sweetened beverage taxes.

## Key Takeaways

- There are lots of different ways to engage your volunteers over email—action alerts can educate, motivate and activate.
- Keep advocates interested by offering updates and new and varied ways for them to participate.
- Surveys or requests for feedback can make your email program even stronger.



## Mobilize: The Value of Phone Outreach

Even in today's digital era, person-to-person contact remains one of the most effective means of relationship building. Below is an overview of how to train volunteers, as well as two different types of phone outreach: phone banks and phone patch programs.

### Phone Banking

Operating a phone bank connects your organization's volunteers with new potential advocates—people you hope will want to learn more about your issues, get involved with your campaign and act to achieve your goals. In order to host a successful phone bank, make sure you address the steps below.

#### Recruit and Train Volunteers

- **Enlist your team.** Find people who would be willing to make calls on a regular or semi-regular basis. Current staff members at your organization or existing volunteers are the best resources.
- **Identify your manager.** Designate someone from your team to manage the call center. Train them to lead the volunteers and ensure program success.
- **Train your callers.** Be sure volunteers are briefed on the issues and can discuss these topics with callers and exercise cultural sensitivity whenever appropriate. Conduct a training session where they can learn your talking points and practice making calls to familiarize themselves with the process.
- **Identify any unique language needs.** Does your community include non-native English speakers? If yes, be sure to recruit bilingual volunteers or enlist the help of volunteer translators.

#### Find a Location and Supplies

- **Decide where people will call.** Before moving forward in this process, you must determine if you want callers to work from a centralized location or not. People can make calls from their homes, but without supervision they might not stick to the script and could damage potential or existing relationships. Your offices could be a good location for local, targeted calls.
- **Equip yourself.** Make sure your call center has enough lines and telephones for volunteers.
- **Set time limits and provide refreshments.** Establish how long you want the call center to be open. If it is for a long period of time, make sure you provide food and drinks to volunteers.

#### Create a Call List

- **Develop your list.** A call list is essential to any successful phone bank but, like all communication, it must be targeted. You should target individuals based on a known or potential interest in decreasing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages—parents, people with an interest in finding solutions to America's obesity problem, past attendees at healthy living events, members of coalition partner organizations, health professionals, school leaders, local health department officials, etc. A number of resources are available to help discover target audiences, including U.S. Census data.
- **Start with existing advocates at your organization.** You already have their information, and it will make sense to them when they hear from you because they have expressed previous passion for related issues.
- **Consider buying lists.** It's also possible to buy lists with phone numbers and other advocate information. Prices vary based on the amount of targeting and number of people in a list, but InfoUSA ([www.infousa.com](http://www.infousa.com)), Caldwell List Company ([www.caldwell-list.com](http://www.caldwell-list.com)) and Dataman Group ([www.datamangroup.com](http://www.datamangroup.com)) can be good resources if you wish to purchase a list.



## Develop a Script

- Prepare a script and some one-pagers to be sure volunteers have the materials they need for effective and informative conversations. Make sure your script includes the following information.
  - **Introduction:** Provide a brief introduction of who you are and the organization you represent. There's no need to begin explaining the issue at this point. Ask the caller if they have time to talk about the issue.
  - **Outline of the Issue:** If the caller has the time, explain the issue and why it is important. This is the point where targeting is most important. Be sure you know the person you're talking to, and tailor the conversation to them.
  - **Request for Assistance:** Following the explanation of the issue, ask the advocates for another point of contact, e.g., their email or mailing address. Having this information will allow you to follow up later and provide further details about the issue.
  - **Closing:** If someone declines to hear about the issue, ask if there would be a better time to call back. And whether advocates want to speak or not, always thank them for their time.
- Below is a sample phone banking script. You may need more than one script depending on your intended reach. Feel free to customize it for your needs—to include any cultural variations for particular audiences of interest—and be sure to enlist your bilingual volunteers.
  - Hi **[ADVOCATE NAME]**. My name is **[YOUR NAME]**, and I'm calling on behalf of **[YOUR ORGANIZATION]**.
  - We're working to help reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages like sodas and energy drinks. Do you have a few minutes to talk about how this initiative will help you?
    - **IF YES**
      - Great! There are lots of ways we can help people choose healthier drinks, and making water more available at events is just one of them.
      - *The Ask:* If you join us, we will keep you up-to-date on all the issues and progress being made in your area and nationally. **Will you join us in this mission?**
        - **IF YES:** Wonderful. Let me get your **[EMAIL, MAILING ADDRESS, etc.]** so we can keep you updated.
        - **IF NO:** Well, thanks for your time, and if you want to learn more about the program, you can visit **[WEBSITE]**. Have a great **[DAY, EVENING, etc.]**
    - **IF NO**
      - Is there a more convenient time I can call you back? (*If yes, write when to call back and make a note. If no, then skip to...*). Thanks for your time, and if you want to learn more about the program, you can visit **[WEBSITE]**. Have a great **[DAY, EVENING, etc.]**.
  - **IF ANSWERING MACHINE**
    - Hi **[ADVOCATE NAME]**. My name is **[YOUR NAME]**, and I'm calling on behalf of **[YOUR ORGANIZATION]**.
    - We're working to help reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages across the nation, including in **[ADVOCATE CITY]**.



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- *The Ask:* There are lots of ways we can help people choose healthier drinks, and making water more available at events is one of them. When people reach for water instead of soda it can make a big difference. This is especially clear when adults choose a healthy beverage and set the example for children. Please call us at **[PHONE NUMBER]** or visit our website at **[WEBSITE]** to learn more about how efforts like these can have a real impact on our health.
- Thank you and have a great day!

## Compile Data

- You'll want to make sure you track the data garnered from these phone calls—who you're calling, how many people are reached, how many volunteers sign up, how often people are called, etc.
  - Set standards and guidelines for recording data, and be sure volunteers are trained on the proper way to record information.
  - Consider creating a template in Excel for volunteers to record the data. Determine what you want to know about each person. You should at least have first name, last name, phone number (home or mobile) as well as whether they picked up or you left a message and whether they wanted to talk or not. If possible, try to record their email address and mailing address.

## Maintain the Relationship

- Phone calls are the beginning of a relationship, not the end. In order to keep working with these advocates, you must follow up with them, either with another call or via email.

## Phone Patches

A phone patch, as opposed to a phone bank, connects advocates with their elected officials. In order to host a phone-patching program, you'll work with a third-party organization that calls advocates, explains the issue and asks if the advocates would like to be connected with his or her representative to voice support for a cause or issue. This is a supplemental method to the phone bank program and should target existing advocates, not new ones.

If you ask advocates to contact a legislator to support or oppose specific legislation, your phone patch calls will be considered grassroots lobbying. Make sure you budget lobbying funds to cover these costs. You can use non-lobbying funds for phone patches by avoiding references to any specific legislation, but that may dilute the calls' impact.



## Select a Vendor

- Find a company that will call individuals on your behalf. Some companies that can assist in the program implementation include:
  - [Mobile Commons](#)
  - [Winning Connections](#)
  - [Stones' Phones](#)
  - [Strategic Consulting Group](#)



## Create a Call List

- As with phone banks, you will need to create a list of contacts to provide to the vendor. The vendor will use this list during the outreach process.

## Develop Scripts for Messages

- When individuals answer their phones, they will hear a prerecorded message and will be connected to a representative by pressing a designated number. A script that highlights the importance of the initiative should be written to serve as this recording. There should also be an option for non-English speakers to press a number to hear the message in their language.
- An additional message could be written to record on an answering machine if the person misses the call.
  - **Script for Initial Recording**
    - Hi! I'm calling on behalf of **[YOUR ORGANIZATION]**. Our nation is in the midst of an obesity crisis. More than 31 percent of America's children are overweight, and more than 12 million of those kids are obese. We're working to change this by decreasing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages across the nation, including in your city. If you'd like to learn more about this issue and how you can help this effort, please press one.
  - **Script for Leaving a Message**
    - Hi **[ADVOCATE NAME]**. My name is **[YOUR NAME]**, and I'm calling on behalf of **[YOUR ORGANIZATION]**. We're working to help reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages across the country, including in **[ADVOCATE CITY]**. We'd love your help in improving the health of millions of people in America. Please call us at **[PHONE NUMBER]** or visit our website at **[WEBSITE]** to learn more about how reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages can make a real difference for people's health. Thank you and have a great day!
  - **Script for Phone Operator**
    - Hi. How are you? Thanks so much for agreeing to take the next step to help reduce consumption of sugary drinks.
    - To implement this change, we need advocates to speak with their representatives to support policies to reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages. (*Note: Advocates will have varying degrees of knowledge about this issue, so at this point it's good to let them ask questions.*) Before I connect you with your legislator, what questions can I answer for you about these policies or about the process?
  - **Script for Connecting Advocates with Representatives**
    - Now that you have all the information, I can connect you with your representative. Just so you are aware of the process, I will transfer you to your legislator **[LEGISLATOR NAME]**, and someone on **[HIS/HER]** staff will talk with you. You will need to tell the person who answers the phone your name, that you're a constituent and that you support efforts to reduce consumption of sugary drinks in **[STATE]**.
      - As written, this phone script is not lobbying, because it does not refer to a specific legislative proposal. If, instead of referring to the general policy of "efforts to reduce consumption," the script urged people to tell their legislators to support "taxes on sugary drinks," the calls would be lobbying and would need to be paid for with unrestricted funds.





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- Note: Your phone bank operator will need to be trained to answer frequently asked questions and know where to refer questions he/she is unable to answer.

## Record the Results

- Typically, a phone patch operator will provide a daily report with the results of the program. Collect that data and keep it for your records to help you strengthen future outreach efforts.

## Additional Things to Consider

Whether you're phone banking or phone patching, there are some universal tips to keep in mind so your process runs smoothly.

- Avoid using computer or auto-dialing systems exclusively, as some states prohibit these and federal rules restrict autodialed calls to cell phones. Instead, have people dial numbers by hand. Hand-dialed phone banks also have a higher completion rate (50 percent compared to 15 percent with automated dialing systems, according to The Voices of America).
- Hybrid systems also exist. These systems allow you to download to the phone so that you just hit "dial." Volunteers can record the answers to the survey on the phone, which can then be downloaded to a computer. It also allows you to record a voicemail, so the volunteer can push a button that automatically plays your recorded message after the beep without having to stay on the line.
- Try to make your calls between the hours of 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. on weekdays and 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends, as these are the hours you will most likely find people at home.
- Make sure volunteers know how to react in different situations, e.g., leaving a message on a machine or speaking with a hostile individual. Keep in mind that if you are making calls in bi-lingual communities, you need to have bi-lingual volunteers placing calls.
- Be sure the efforts of the campaign aren't limited by do-not-call lists.
  - Typically, these apply only to telemarketing sales calls. At the federal level, the do-not-call provisions do not cover calls from political organizations, charities, telephone surveyors, or companies with which a consumer has an existing business relationship.
  - Most states follow the standard set by the federal government, but state laws can vary. Check [state government websites](#) to ensure compliance with these laws.

## Key Takeaways

- There are two different types of telephone programs: phone banking and phone patching. Phone banking is for recruiting volunteers, while phone patching is for connecting advocates with elected officials.
- To ensure a well-organized phone bank, brainstorm all potential questions and responses volunteers may receive and build a script to equip your volunteers with the best way to react.
- If your community has non-English speakers, make sure you recruit phone volunteers who can speak those languages.
- Consider the best time to make these calls to reach the highest number of people. The hours between 6 p.m. and 9 p.m. are recommended.
- Check your state's laws on phone outreach to ensure you're complying with all do-not-call provisions.





## Mobilize: Hosting a Media Event

Working with local media is a key way to raise awareness about your campaign, priorities and goals. Media coverage can help you educate communities, create conversation and recruit new advocates. But before you can do any of these things, you must first thoughtfully develop and carefully plan how you want to present the issue to reporters. Building relationships with media and pursuing media advocacy well in advance of hosting a media event will help to ensure your message frame is understood and you are well-positioned by reporters.

Start by thinking about what you want to accomplish and who you want to reach. Do you have news to release, such as a report or study? If not, what is your media hook? Do you want your efforts to reduce sugar-sweetened beverages to appear on the nightly news? What about in your local paper? Would you be better served by engaging with community bloggers? Be sure to include ethnic media in this outreach. Once you decide what your goal is, you can start identifying opportunities that match up with your goals.

One way to engage members of the media is by inviting them to an event. A well-run media event—one with compelling speakers, stories, clear facts and easily explained goals—will give reporters the tools they need to amplify your story in newspapers, on-air and online.

## Where and Who?

Hold your event in a place where people are actively working to reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages. Choose an outdoor public location where sugary drinks are easily accessed, such as by a soda vending machine. Other options include a meeting room in a city hall or other municipal building – or by the vending machines in these buildings, or in a place of worship where leaders are working to reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages for their community. Be careful not to conflate the issue with a setting that brings in other issues, such as hosting a meeting in a school or on a playground.

As you structure your event, consider speakers who can talk compellingly about the importance of promoting healthy beverage consumption and the role this plays in promoting the health of our future generations. This can include executives from your organization, but don't be afraid to think beyond the obvious. Consider bringing in a local mother who has cut back on sugary beverages in her home because she wants to set the right example for her children or a local doctor or dentist who can speak about the real impact that better beverage choices could have on a community's health. A diverse mix of speakers who can converse in all languages spoken in the community will provide your media attendees with a range of perspectives about sugar-sweetened beverages taxes and the importance of promoting healthier beverage drinking in every community in America.

## Event Tips

The following tips cover some of the basics of event hosting. However, the list below is not comprehensive—every event is different, and you'll need to adapt your planning to each event's unique requirements.

- **Establish a point of contact.** Your event point of contact should manage all logistics. This person could be a paid staff member or a trusted volunteer. Whoever you choose, make sure they have experience with event coordination and execution.



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- **Send invitations.** For some media events like salon dinners or press conferences where you will focus on specific issues, make sure key influencers are in the room. Even if they aren't speakers, their presence can lend an air of credibility to your efforts. Make sure to issue personal invitations to these influencers and follow up with them if necessary to secure their confirmation.
  - If someone on your staff has an existing relationship with these influencers, ask that person to try calling them on the phone or sending a personal email. People are more likely to respond to messages from names they recognize.
- **Create briefing books.** Prior to the event, you will want to share briefing books with media and key influencers who will be in attendance. Consider sharing your organization's policy position statement on sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives, the fact sheets from this tool kit and relevant news articles.

## Media Engagement

- Research recent media stories—newspaper articles, TV segments, radio shows, etc.—to determine which media figures or outlets might be most friendly to sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives. Be sure to include ethnic media. Based on this research, you can intentionally reach out to the media you would like to cover the event.
- Once you have established your media list, you can immediately begin pitching editorial board meetings. As the editorial board makes significant decisions on media placement, meeting with them in advance of major stories can ensure your story is not only included, but is elevated for greater reach. This work should start at least one month prior to the event.
- Distribute a media advisory to all your selected media outlets, and pitch print and radio two weeks out from the event. Make sure to follow up with reporters to confirm coverage and/or attendance.
- Distribute a press release in the days leading up to the event, and include an embargo to ensure that media adhere to your event date for releasing any new data.
- If you are planning a TV spot, follow-up with the producer two days prior to the event and the morning of the event. Also reach out to unconfirmed print reporters two to three days prior to and the morning of the event.
- Depending upon media interest, coordinate media availability on-site before or after the event to facilitate media questions and interviews.
- Prepare an op-ed to submit to a target newspaper about the event and the news you are releasing. Take a look at the sample op-eds provided in this toolkit for ideas on how to shape yours, but also make sure to include information that is relevant to your community.

## Blogger Engagement

- If you have local bloggers in your town or city, consider inviting them to the event, especially if they write about topics relevant to sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives like obesity, community development or healthy living.
  - Consider reaching out to parents who blog about healthy living for their family. If your efforts involve encouraging your community to set the example of healthy living at home, a post from a well-known blogger could be a good help.
- As with any other media, develop an outreach plan and engage bloggers accordingly. Make sure your outreach is personal and calls out direct reasons why that specific blogger should come to the event.
- Track confirmations/declines, and shape your outreach accordingly.



- Monitor for and report on any mentions of the event by targeted bloggers, both leading up to the event and after.

## Database Growth

- On the day of your media event, set up a table where people can sign up to learn more about sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives. Because they are already attending the event, it's logical to assume they may want to join the campaign.
  - Consider using the sign-up opportunity for a dual purpose. For example, at the end of the event, attendees may be motivated to make some sort of commitment to help reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages in their community. Combine the sign-up with a pledge where they can share the specific way they will help the cause.
    - This will also help you keep track of the types of people in your database and the specific ways in which you can engage them based on their stated interest in sugar-sweetened beverage reduction initiatives.
- Transcribe the sign-up forms and upload your new advocates to your organization's database. Send them a follow-up email welcoming them to your email list, thanking them for their attendance and asking how they want to be involved in the future.

## Post-Event Activities

- Leverage the event by posting the speeches, photographs and videos to all relevant websites and social media platforms as appropriate.
- Follow up with local influencers and potential advocates as appropriate to gauge their interest in further involvement.
- If there are media, including bloggers, who could not attend the event, provide them with information and an event synopsis with photos so they can cover the event retroactively.

## Key Takeaways

- Start working on this event early. Between identifying speakers, inviting journalists and coordinating a run of show, a well-executed media event can take weeks to plan.
- In order to make sure you get the right people in the room, research journalists and their beats before inviting them to your event.
- Location of and speakers at your event are important to its success. Hold your event in a community striving for healthier beverages with compelling speakers on the subject.
- Once your event is over, follow up by making photos, speeches and videos available online.



## Mobilize: Media Training Tips

Speaking to the media can seem a bit daunting, but it presents a prime opportunity to tell a compelling story that brings home why sugar-sweetened beverage taxes are important. Unlike any other tactic for your campaign, an interview with key media could allow you to access a wide audience in a personal manner.

In many cases, your media team will have pitched reducing the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages to local media, offering your spokesperson as an expert who can weigh in on their story. Remember to reach out to media who have natural connections with the issue at hand (e.g., health, community development or food section reporters, as well as statehouse reporters) so they're more likely to respond to your pitch. You're more likely to reach targeted mainstream and ethnic audiences when you create a pitch specifically targeted to those outlets.

With the appropriate preparation and practice, your speaker will become comfortable with your messaging and able to speak articulately and passionately about the issue. The guidelines below will help you prepare a speaker for success.

## Choose Spokespeople

Develop a small cadre of spokespeople whose perspectives are especially important to the cause and who the media might be interested in interviewing. For all of these, strive for diversity that represents your community, and be sure to include spokespeople who can speak on your behalf in other languages as it makes sense for your community.

- Advocates—especially parents and youth—with stories about the consequences of consuming sugar-sweetened beverages can provide a personal appeal that no one else can. For example, feature a parent who wants his or her children to have healthier beverage options at school sporting events.
- Doctors and dentists who see the impact of obesity on their patients will add an air of credibility.
- Researchers who can share data on obesity's impact on a specific city or state will add quantifiable evidence to your stories.
- Finally, top-level executives from your organization are always important faces to add to your campaign. They can speak specifically about your efforts to reduce sugar-sweetened beverage consumption in your state.

Reach out to these types of spokespeople, ask if they would be interested in speaking on behalf of your organization about sugar-sweetened beverages, and begin preparing them for the task.

## Develop Content

Begin preparing your speakers for interviews as soon as possible. The more your speakers prepare, the more comfortable they will be, the better their delivery will be and the more effectively your message will resonate with the right audience. But before you compose your responses, make sure you answer the following questions:

- **Who is your audience?** Before developing your messages, it's important to consider the audiences you'll be reaching through the publication conducting the interview.
  - What media outlet will your speaker be presenting to?



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- What is the media outlet's readership or viewership?
  - What are the demographics of the readership or viewership?
- **What should you say?** Speakers will need to know your talking points about sugar-sweetened beverage consumption, but these core messages are just a starting point. Make your content more relevant by considering the following questions.
  - Are there specific facts you want to highlight during the interview?
  - What is the central theme you want to discuss—the core statement you return to over and over?
  - What would success look like? Provide numbers, statistics and milestones if sugar-sweetened beverage taxes came to your state.
  - Can you make your interview more tangible? Consider adding comments about specific communities.
  - Are there other groups or individuals taking part in the interview? What are their positions likely to be, and will you have to comment on them?
  - Do you need to tailor messages to specific populations or communities?
- **What matters most?** Spend some time thinking about how your speakers can best portray themselves and the issue.
  - How should the interview begin and end? The most important parts of an interview are the introduction and conclusion, because they're what your audience is most likely to remember.
  - Are there more ways to restate the main goal of the campaign? People need to hear things at least three times to remember them, so make sure to keep bringing the messaging back to your core points.
  - Is this still relevant? Reread talking points the day before the interview to be sure the proof points are still relevant. Read local news of the day and reference anything that makes sense.
- **What questions do you expect?** Spend some time anticipating questions and developing direct responses or ways to turn the conversation back to your key message.

## Rehearsal

No matter how familiar spokespeople are with your talking points, it is important to have them rehearse multiple times before the interview. Ask your spokesperson to rehearse your talking points in the following ways, and work alongside them as they do.

- **Read the text alone silently.** Read the content with a critical eye. Do all proof points support the overall story? Is the central theme clear?
- **Read aloud alone.** Spokespeople might be surprised to hear themselves speaking aloud, especially if it is their first time participating in an interview. Watch your speakers talk and make note of places where they take natural pauses or get tripped up on words.
- **Stand and read in front of a mirror (if the interview is on television).** When spokespeople read the content aloud standing, they will begin to get a feel for their natural body movement and non-verbal cues that will help bring the content to life.
- **Stand and read in front of peers.** Gather your colleagues to listen to the spokespeople deliver their talking points. This can help increase speakers' confidence and provides a safe place for them to receive feedback. At this point, they should be able to deliver their content without reading directly from papers.



- **Record their delivery and learn from it.** One of the best ways to rehearse is to make a video recording of your spokespeople presenting. This allows them to see what the interviewer sees, and will make speakers aware of any distracting movements or phrases they may unknowingly use.
- **Rehearse in a comparable setting to where the interview will be held.** You may not be able to take your spokespeople to the actual interview location, but try to create a setting that feels similar. Spokespeople can practice their movement in this similar space, developing a sense of how to move and talk effectively when they are in the interview room.

## Interview Delivery

As your spokespeople arrive for the interview, they should be friendly and engaging, greeting reporters and producers confidently. This confidence is especially important when the spokesperson is a top-level executive from your organization.

- **Own the space.** When you are on-site in the room, remind your speakers of the movements they practiced. If it's the right setting, encourage them to move around.
- **Engage the interviewer and the audience.** Remind spokespeople to maintain eye contact with the reporter as often as possible. They are the window to the viewers who are watching or listening. If there is an audience present, make sure spokespeople speak directly to them.
- **Relax and enjoy.** By this point, your spokespeople will have mastered their text and be comfortable with their delivery, so remind them to relax and enjoy their time on stage.
- **Say thank you.** Thank the reporter at the end and suggest meeting with them at a later date for a follow-up interview.

## Key Takeaways

- Identify a core group of spokespeople who can consistently speak with the media about your campaign.
- Develop smart talking points and customize them to be relevant for each interview.
- Practice makes perfect—ask your spokespeople to rehearse their speeches or talking points to get comfortable with their comments before they speak with journalists.





## Mobilize: Why Op-Eds Matter

Public commentary has long been one of the most powerful ways to broadly communicate ideas. By having an opinion editorial, commonly called an op-ed, published, you'll be able to convey your campaign's essential messages to decision-makers, journalists and the community.

In the past few years, competition from expanded news and information sources like blogs and social media has made publication easier but competition for attention tougher. This means that you'll have to offer your best thinking and most influential voices in order to maximize your chances of having a newspaper print your op-ed—and have people care who you are and what you have to say.

## Op-Ed Tips and Tricks

- **Choose your signer carefully.** To ensure the best chance of earning placement on a news platform or gaining people's attention, enlist a high-profile influencer to sign and submit your op-ed. Ideally, this influencer should be well-known within your community and the audience of the publication, such as a doctor, researcher, teacher, store owner or politician.
- **Ask yourself: "Who cares?"** Make sure your piece will clearly resonate with or be meaningful to the public. Start by writing from the reader's point of view.
- **Keep things tight.** News outlets have limited space, so keep your op-ed to approximately 500 words. Some outlets have even shorter limits, while a few will accept up to 700 words, so check your paper's requirements before submitting.
- **Speak conversationally.** Avoid jargon, fancy words and slang. Your op-ed must be comprehensible to the general public, including people with no knowledge of sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives.
- **Get to the point.** Make your key points early and often, and back them up with facts and examples.
- **Offer a short, snappy headline.** A good headline gives readers a preview of what your op-ed has to say. (Keep in mind that some news outlets will write their own headlines, regardless of what you submit.)
- **Be prepared to be edited.** Op-ed submissions are subject to revisions, editing and fact-checking. Editors usually do NOT need your approval to make revisions or edits to accommodate space limitations, provided they do not change the context of your position. Sources for factual statements should be listed at the bottom of your op-ed to expedite review and placement processes.
- **Include your contact information.** Be sure to include your name, title, organization (as needed), email and phone number in case the editors want to contact you.

Two samples of op-eds are available in the appendix. A rational op-ed appeals to reason; an emotional version appeals to the heart. For example, if you choose to write an op-ed about implementing sugar-sweetened beverage taxes in your community, you could ask a local representative from the Chamber of Commerce to sign an op-ed on the economic benefits of a tax; this would be considered a rational op-ed. On the other hand, if your goal is to encourage families in your community to drink healthier at home, you could ask a local mother to write about how she is setting the example in her home by drinking more water throughout the day and milk during meals instead of sugary beverages.



## Key Takeaways

- Choose your signer carefully. Having a local leader's signature on your op-ed can help increase its chance of being published.
- Be brief and keep to the point. 500 words is a good target.
- Op-eds can be either rational or emotional, depending on the story you want to tell.



## Mobilize: Meeting with Legislators

Some advocates may be willing to visit elected officials. Whether you meet with representatives in local home offices or take a special trip to the state capitol, you can have a strong impact when you can look legislators in the eye and answer their questions about the problem of sugar-sweetened beverage consumption in your community, as well as proposed solutions. Decision-makers want to know what's important to their constituents, so when your representative is available, take advantage of that time by scheduling an in-person meeting.

Here are some helpful tips to make the most of your meetings.

### Save the Date

- Making an appointment is easy—simply call your legislators and talk to the office's scheduler. Here are a few things to keep in mind.
- Be flexible with the date and time. Legislators have busy schedules and meetings usually last 15 to 45 minutes.
- You may end up meeting with a staffer rather than a legislator, which is fine. Many legislators rely heavily on staff to keep them informed and make decisions about issues.
- Choose one to two issues to discuss so you can talk about them comprehensively in even a short amount of time.
- Feel free to bring a colleague or an advocate with you who can also offer their insight on the issues. Be cognizant that bringing an advocate to demonstrate diversity can come across as a token appearance. Be sure to have a strong role for each person engaged in the meeting.
- Research your legislator's stance and voting history on the issues you plan to discuss, as well as opposing viewpoints, to help you frame your talking points.

### Essentials for Success

Nervous about how the conversation will go or what to say? Bring these essentials to the meeting to help it run smoothly.

- A pen or pencil to take notes during your meeting.
- A business card to leave with your representative.
- Cameras, so you can share appropriate photos from a local underserved community or take a picture with your legislator while you're visiting his or her office.
- A customized version of the decision-maker fact sheet in this toolkit.
- A clear "ask" for the meeting—for instance, a site visit, newspaper column or op-ed to move the issue forward.
  - Each of these could be a non-lobbying request, if your communication with the legislator focused on the policy goal of reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, and the various ways this could be achieved, rather than discussing specific tax proposals.



### Make the Most of Your One-on-One

- Dress professionally when visiting your representative.
- Introduce yourself and talk about your position on the issues you've prepared to discuss.
- Share personal stories and examples to illustrate how the issues affect you and your community.
- Listen to your legislator's response and be prepared to answer questions. If you can't answer his or her questions, jot a note down and get back to him or her.



- Even if you don't see eye-to-eye, always be respectful and polite.

## Thank Your Legislator

- After taking time out of his or her very busy schedule, your member will definitely appreciate a brief thank-you note or email.
- It's also a great opportunity to remind them of the stories you shared, your stance on the issues you discussed and how their actions affect people in your community.
- Based on the response to your request or "ask," determine what appropriate steps are for following up with your legislator.

## Key Takeaways

- You may end up meeting with a member of your legislator's staff, which is fine. Decision-makers rely heavily on input from their staffers, especially on policy issues.
- Come prepared for your meeting with fact sheets, business cards, cameras and—most importantly—a clear "ask" for the meeting.
- Always be respectful and polite.
- Remember to thank your legislator or a member of their staff and use this opportunity to reiterate your "ask."



## Mobilize: Days at the Capitol

Individual meetings can go a long way toward making a difference with your legislator—but sometimes, there's strength in numbers. If you're looking to combine a media event and a legislator meeting, consider hosting a day at the state capitol where advocates hold a rally and then attend scheduled meetings with legislators.

Here are some things to think about as you plan your own day at the capitol.

### Choose the Right Day

Planning a day at the capitol takes a lot of time and work. It's a large investment for one short day. Therefore, it's important to make sure you schedule the rally for when it will be most effective.

- There are certain points in the rhythm of legislation when a day at the capitol could be particularly helpful. If a vote is coming up or a particular committee is viewing the legislation, legislators may be more focused on your issue. By talking to them at this point, you can grab their attention and remind them why this issue matters to you. If you talk about the legislation with a legislator and reflect a view on the bill, it will be lobbying.
  - If you reflect a view on specific legislation in this type of meeting, make sure you have ample unrestricted dollars to cover the costs of both planning and hosting such an event. These activities will be lobbying expenses, since they involve communicating directly with legislators about specific legislation.
- The legislative calendar lends itself to slightly different opportunities for meeting. Try to attend at a time when things are slower at the capitol, not at the start of a new legislative session. That way you may be able to secure more quality face-to-face time with your legislator.
  - If you focus your message more generally on the need for reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, it may be possible to use non-lobbying funds for this activity, because you will not be communicating about specific legislation with the legislator.
  - When using non-lobbying funds, you must stick to educating legislators on the problem of sugary drinks, securing their general backing for your issue or obtaining support for non-legislative projects like endorsing new water fountains in your community's schools.
  - Alternatively, if you want to use your visit to influence legislators to introduce or support a specific excise tax on sugary drinks, you must use lobbying dollars to pay for these activities.



### Invite the Right People

When you schedule these types of events, remember that legislators and their staff want to hear from constituents and people with direct experience with the issues at hand. It's important to bring advocates who are deeply educated about and invested in reducing consumption of sugary drinks. And don't forget to bring people who can talk about the positive fiscal impact. This can be a key issue when it comes to improving the health of a community, especially in under-resourced communities.

If you have existing relationships with your advocates, try to choose those with particularly engaging stories that include a diversity of perspectives and who can tell them well.



## Help Advocates Attend

- If you have the resources, make plans to help your advocates get to the capitol, especially those with financial limitations. Consider offering gas money or assistance in paying for their plane ticket. An investment like this, to get the right people on the front end, can help ensure a successful visit. If the capitol is within reasonable driving distance, identify who can drive and who would like or need to carpool with others.
- Settle on a hotel and send out the booking information well in advance of the rally so people can get the cheapest rates (this may be another opportunity to help individuals out with the costs, if you're able). Always ask the hotel if they have group discount rates.
- Make sure your accommodations are pleasant and have sufficient space for group training meetings. They should also not be too far from the capitol so it doesn't take long to get there from the hotel. We recommend visiting the hotel in advance to make sure it's suitable for your advocates. Remember—you want people coming back next year, and comfort—even modest comfort—is important!
- Ask advocates if they have any barriers to participating, such as transportation or childcare, and brainstorm ways to help overcome these issues to ensure full participation.

## Create a Schedule

Plan a clear itinerary that you distribute to advocates when they arrive; you can even place it in their hotel room with a gift bag to make them feel welcome. An itinerary will communicate that this trip is important, purposeful and they are going to get something out of it. On the itinerary, note the key message for advocates, and emphasize what the common ask and next steps will be for follow up. Be sure to schedule time at the end of the day to receive immediate feedback and debrief on key conversations.

## Build Time for Fun

Beyond meeting with their decision-makers, this is an excellent time for advocates to connect. Connected advocates are often more committed and inspired to support the issue at hand. Although your advocates are connecting online, they may have few opportunities to connect in person so they can learn from each other. Make sure to schedule intentional times for this to happen in the form of meetings as well as fun outings.

## Create a Leave-Behind

Make sure your advocates are armed with tools that will help drive the point further home to decision-makers. That could be the decision-maker fact sheet in this tool kit or something more, like a petition from advocates in their community or some symbol of the need to implement sugar-sweetened beverage taxes in their state. If your visit is a lobbying visit, the materials you create specifically for the visit are likely to be considered lobbying materials; developing and printing materials must be paid with lobbying dollars.



## Follow up with Successes

After the day at the capitol is finished, make sure you follow up with advocates about the meetings, reporting any successful interactions or resulting legislative movement. The important thing here is to let advocates know their efforts were worth it so they will continue to be active for your cause.





## Key Takeaways

- Look at the legislative calendar and pick a day that makes sense for your visit.
- Think carefully about who should be in the room, and make sure to bring people with direct experience about the issues at hand.
- Do what you can to make the process of traveling to the capitol as easy as possible for your advocates.



## Appendices

**Please Note:** The materials provided in the following pages are meant to be general examples for you to learn from as you create your own pieces. There are a couple of exceptions which refer specifically to sugar-sweetened beverage taxes to help show how to message on this complex policy. For each tactic, please refer to the key messages outlined earlier in this document and craft your messages according to the specific policies that best apply to your community.



## Key Messages: Pursuing Solutions to Ending Childhood Obesity

We established the objectives related to reducing sugar-sweetened beverages at the beginning of this toolkit so you can pursue a concrete solution to ending childhood obesity that is right for your community. Take some time before starting your campaign to map out the specific objectives of your efforts, according to the policies outlined.

After you have determined which specific policies and improvements make the most sense for your organization to pursue, it's important to fold those solutions into all of the communications you produce so you can establish a consistent voice across all outreach.

Because you may advocate for different solutions at different times, we have bundled potential messaging for each approach together here. You can then use these messages in the various communications templates, including op-eds, action alerts and blog posts, that follow.

## Overarching Message for Reducing Consumption of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages

*This messaging thread should connect all communications, no matter your approach to the issue. Due to the controversial nature of sugar-sweetened beverages, pair the following messages with statements on how your coalition is addressing the obesity epidemic with a wide range of strategies.*

### Sound bite

A sugar-sweetened beverage costs a lot more than the price on the sticker. It's time to leave sugary drinks on the shelf for good.

### Key Message

Making the switch from unhealthy drinks to healthy ones cuts calories kids don't need. Communities have a lot of tools they can use to help make healthy beverages more appealing and affordable than unhealthy ones.

### Visualizing Impact

Parents want to do what's best for their kids. It's easier for them to do that if the healthier choice is more affordable than the unhealthy one. Let's help parents leave sugary drinks on the shelf for good.

### Messaging to Adults

Sugary drinks can cost you your waistline and your health. They cost many people the opportunity to enjoy a healthy life, and contribute to chronic diseases and obesity. And chronic diseases and obesity can cost all of us by contributing to higher healthcare costs. It's time to leave sugary drinks on the shelf for good.

### Messaging to Kids

Sugary drinks can actually cost you your energy and your health. Don't let others sugarcoat your future. If you're thirsty, reach for water, milk or 100% juice. It's time to leave sugary drinks on the shelf for good.



## Specific Policy Messaging

### Tax/pricing incentives and disincentives

When our kids drink sugar-sweetened beverages it comes at a high cost...everywhere except the checkout line. It's time to change that.

Creating a penny-per-ounce tax on sugary beverages can reduce consumption of unhealthy drinks and support other programs to prevent obesity. A price difference between high-calorie sugary drinks and healthier, low- and no-calorie beverages can provide customers with a financial incentive that supports their health.

Spending the revenue generated on local efforts to prevent obesity and provide health education reinforces the need to make comprehensive changes to address this epidemic. Continuing down our current path is only sugarcoating our children's future.

Raising the price of sugar-sweetened beverages sends a clear message that sugary drinks shouldn't be the cheapest, most attractive option. Ask our policymakers to make these reforms and take a stand for a healthier future for all of us.

### Voluntary price incentives

All communities can take steps to help people enjoy healthier drinks. Reducing the price of water, low-fat milk and other low-calorie beverages will help reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.

- **Business message:** Meet more consumers where they are by offering healthier drink options. Making healthier drinks relatively less expensive will help meet growing demand for low and no-calorie beverages like water and low-fat milk.
- **Organization message:** Schools, gyms and worksites—any business or organization can make healthy drinks more affordable by charging less for them in vending machines and other venues. Local leaders and businesses can help make sure the healthy choice is the easy choice for everyone in the community.

### Promote healthy drinks at events

Most local events—from family gatherings to community carnivals—happen with beverages on hand. We can set the right tone in our community by making sure healthy beverages, like water and low-fat milk, are widely available. It helps keep empty calories out of our children's bodies, and it shows that our community is serious about making a change. Talk to your school, faith leaders and friends. Tell them you don't want to sugarcoat our children's future.

- **Parents' message:** If you want to raise healthy kids, let others know you don't want to sugarcoat your child's future.
  - Make sure safe water is freely available at your school.
  - Ask local businesses to promote healthier choices, such as water, low-fat milk and other low-calorie drinks on signs and in menus. Let restaurants know that the default choice should be a healthy one.
  - Ask your local officials to have only healthy drink options for you and your children at government facilities like parks, libraries, transit stations and clinics.



# DON'T SUGARCOAT OUR FUTURE



## Start at home

Healthy habits and positive changes start at home. Parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends—all of us have a role to play in making sure our children learn healthy behaviors. By not serving sugary drinks—including to ourselves—we can set a good example that will extend beyond the home. Encourage your neighbors, friends and family members to lead by example and serve water, low-fat milk and other low-calorie drinks.

## Make the pledge to rethink your drink

Healthy habits and positive change start with you. Anyone can make reducing sugar-sweetened beverages a personal effort by drinking water or low-fat milk instead of sugary drinks. Tell your neighbors, friends and family to make a pledge to drink fewer sugar-sweetened beverages.

## Lobbying vs. Non-Lobbying Checklist

The following questions may help you determine whether your efforts might be considered lobbying under the IRS rules and therefore must be paid for with separate, lobbying-approved funding. Each organization's lobbying requirements (and the registration rules that may apply to them) may be slightly different, so make sure you consult your lawyer to share your plans and address any questions. In general, the IRS lobbying rules apply to communications with members of Congress, state legislators, city council members and potentially other elected officials and their staff. In some cases, communication with the general public is considered lobbying too.

- ✓ Will you be communicating directly with a legislator—or to legislative branch staff, executive branch officials or any staff involved in formulating particular legislation?  
*Note:* Communicating with school boards and zoning boards does not qualify as lobbying.
- ✓ If so, will your communications reflect a point of view on specific legislation, such as the following?
  - Bills or ballot measures that have been introduced
  - Specific legislative proposals not yet introduced (e.g., “New Jersey should adopt New York City’s ban on super-sized sugary drinks”)
  - Budget bills  
*Think strategically:* If you are not conveying a viewpoint on specific legislation, your communications with public officials or their staff are not lobbying. For example, telling a legislator that you want to reduce sugar-sweetened beverage consumption in the community is not lobbying, unless it is clear that you are referring to a specific legislative proposal (e.g., an excise tax pending in the legislature).
- ✓ Will you be communicating to the general public about a view on a particular ballot measure or piece of legislation—through op-eds, social media, email newsletters, advertisements, speeches, etc.?
- ✓ If so, will your communications to the general public include a call to action, such as the following?
  - Asking the public to contact a legislator
  - Identifying someone’s legislative representative
  - Providing contact information for a legislator
  - Providing a vehicle for contacting the legislator (e.g., form email, petition)
  - Identifying a legislator’s position on the legislation or identifying the legislator as sitting on the voting committee  
*Think strategically:* In most circumstances, if communications to the general public do not include a call to action, they are not lobbying unless the legislation discussed is a ballot measure. For example, if you talk about the benefits of a penny-per-ounce excise tax bill currently pending in the legislature, without asking readers to contact their legislators (or any other form of a call to action), the communication will not be lobbying.





## Sample Emotional Op-Ed

A few decades ago, everything was different—even the way we enjoyed drinks. Back then, kids quenched their thirst with water, juice and milk. Soda came in 8-ounce containers and was a special treat. Sports drinks belonged to sweat-soaked players on the sidelines.

But things are different today. Consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages has increased 500 percent in the past 50 years and those drinks are now the single largest source of added sugar in kids' diets. That's a lot of calories with no nutrition.

All those sweet drinks are part of a major problem: childhood obesity. Nearly one-third (about 24 million) of our kids are overweight, and of these, almost 13 million are obese. It's going to take hard work to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic, but with numbers like that, our kids need us to make changes and make them now.

Efforts that reduce consumption of sugary drinks can be part of the solution. Public health experts around the country agree that taxing sugar-sweetened beverages has the potential to help. Making sure sugary drinks aren't sold or given away in schools will help, too. Also, making only healthy drinks available in places that kids play, like zoos, parks, day care and after-school programs.

It's time we take a hard look at the extra sugar and empty calories in our kids' cups and do all we can to help them form the best and healthiest habits to last a lifetime.

Please join me [us] in taking action **[INSERT LINK HERE]** and tell your local leaders to support initiatives aimed at reducing consumption of sugary drinks.

**Note:** In the last paragraph, we chose language that made this a non-lobbying communication. By referring to "local leaders" instead of "legislators," the request to "tell your local leaders to support initiatives" is not a "call to action" under the definition of lobbying (see pg. 51), because you are not urging readers to contact their legislator. Readers could contact a legislator, or they might contact other local leaders. Further, the request to contact leaders refers generally to sugar-sweetened beverage reduction "initiatives," not to any specific legislative proposal, such as a tax on sugary drinks. If a legislative vote were imminent, and you had the unrestricted funds to do so, you could make a strategic decision to spend lobbying funds on an op-ed that explicitly urged readers to contact their legislators to ask them to vote for the bill. Alternatively, you could save lobbying dollars by writing an op-ed like the one above, which advocates for policy without referring to specific legislation, or by writing one that mentions specific legislation without a call to action.





## Sample Rational Op-Ed

We spend a lot of time talking about how to get our kids to eat healthier food—and with nearly one-third of U.S. children overweight or obese, it's an area where we need to focus. But we can't stop there, because in addition to the food they eat, kids are getting most of the added sugar and empty, nutrition-less calories in their diets from the beverages they drink.

Soda. Sports drinks. Energy drinks. Fruit drinks. Sweetened teas. Even sweetened water! They're everywhere and are marketed to adults, as you would expect, but also directly to children and teens. No wonder the amount of sugar-sweetened beverages we Americans consume has increased by 500 percent over the past 50 years. Here's the not-so-sweet deal: for children, drinking just one extra serving per day of a sugary beverage increases their risk of obesity by 60 percent.

But things don't have to be this way. We can use public policy to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic, starting with efforts to reduce the consumption of sugary drinks. Public health experts around the country agree that taxing sugar-sweetened beverages has the potential to help. Here in **[STATE]**, just a penny-per-ounce tax could bring in \$**[USE RUDD TAX CALCULATOR FOR THE NUMBER]** a year. Imagine how far that money could go toward promoting good nutrition and healthy habits among our children. Making sure sugary drinks aren't sold or given away in schools will help, too. Also, making only healthy drinks available in places that kids play, like zoos, parks, day care and after-school programs.

I [We] hope you'll join me [us] in working to reduce childhood obesity. Reducing the consumption of sugary beverages is a good place to start. We all deserve to live in communities that promote healthy habits.

To learn more about what **[STATE]** can do to reduce the amount of empty calories our kids drink, visit **[INSERT LINK HERE]** and tell your local leaders to support initiatives aimed at reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.

**Note:** This is not lobbying because there is no call to action. In the last paragraph, if it said "It's time for we here in **[STATE]** to adopt New York City's proposed ban on large sugary drinks," that would be a reference to specific legislation (as a "specific legislative proposal"). But even if it referred to specific legislation, it would only become lobbying if a call to action (e.g., "Call your state senator") were added to the op-ed.





## Action Alerts

### Issue Introduction

When reaching out to your advocates about a new issue area or campaign, your first message should be educational. Instead of asking people to get involved right away, spend some time sharing the facts. By laying this groundwork, you'll ensure that people understand your campaign—and people who “get” your goals are more likely to sign their names to petitions or contact their legislators.

Dear **[NAME]**,

Our nation is in the midst of a childhood obesity crisis: nearly 32 percent of kids in America are overweight and, of those, 12.7 million are obese. It's time to start changing that today.

Childhood obesity is caused by many things, but sugar-sweetened beverages play a significant role. Consumption of sugary drinks has increased 500 percent in the past 50 years, and today they are the single largest source of added sugar for kids. In fact, today's children drink more sugary beverages than milk.

**Find out the facts about sweetened beverages and how we can help reduce their consumption. [LINK TO INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES]**

Sugary drinks don't help our kids grow up strong—they just fill diets with empty, unnecessary calories.

It's time to take a stand. **Learn more today about how we can help reduce kids' consumption of sugary drinks. [LINK TO INFORMATIONAL RESOURCES]**

**[ORGANIZATION LEADER OR MAIN POINT OF CONTACT]**

### Contact Your Legislator

If you want taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages implemented in your state, your elected officials need to know these kinds of programs are important to their constituents. The following message asks supporters to send letters to their representatives championing a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages.

Nearly all communications urging adoption of a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages are lobbying if they either are directed to a legislator or if they urge the public to contact a legislator (or if they involve another form of a call to action). To avoid having a communication treated as lobbying, refer generally to a policy of reducing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption without mentioning a tax, or omit a call to action and don't direct the communication to a legislator.





# DON'T SUGARCOAT OUR FUTURE



For the following alert,

Dear **[NAME]**,

Today, 21 percent of all healthcare costs are because of obesity-related conditions.<sup>5</sup> And with nearly 32 percent of children in America overweight or obese, those costs don't seem like they'll be lowered anytime soon—**unless we start acting now.**

We can help prevent childhood obesity by cutting down on sugar-sweetened beverages, and a tax on sugary drinks could be an effective way to make that happen. Historically, taxes have successfully discouraged consumption of unhealthy products like tobacco, and research shows it's likely that the same would hold true for sugary beverages.

**Join us in the fight to reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks. Click here to contact your state representative to take action. [INSERT LINK TO ACTION]**

Let's show our kids that water, milk and juice—not sodas and sports drinks—are the sweetest choices around. Contact your representative today! **[REPEAT LINK TO ACTION]**

Thank you,

**[ORGANIZATION LEADER OR MAIN POINT OF CONTACT]**

## Subject Lines

The subject line on your email can help catch your supporters' attention and encourage them to open your email. Here are some suggested subject lines to try with your audience:

- Don't sugarcoat our kids' future!
- Thirsty for change
- What do 32 percent of kids in America have in common?
- The sweetest choice of all
- We need your help
- Take action: reduce consumption of sugary drinks

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<sup>5</sup> Cawley J and Meyerhoefer C. The medical care costs of obesity: an instrumental variables approach. *J Health Econ* 31.1 (2012): 219-230.



## Social Media Sample Messaging

The following sample messaging can help you spread the word about your campaign on Facebook and Twitter. Some examples are considered non-lobbying messages; however, others may fall under the definition of lobbying and will need to be paid for out of your lobbying funds.

### Twitter

#### Non-Lobbying Messages

- Water: it's the sweetest drink around. Support more water and fewer sugary drinks! #reduceSSBs **[INSERT LINK]**
- Millions of ppl in America, including kids, are obese. Programs that help limit sugary drinks are a way to prevent that. Learn more: **[INSERT LINK]**
- It's not just food that makes our kids obese – it's drinks, too. Support initiatives that limit sugar-sweetened drinks. **[INSERT LINK]**
- Let's raise our glasses to water and say no to sugar-sweetened drinks. Learn more today: **[INSERT LINK]** #reduceSSBs
- More than 31% of kids in the USA are obese. Sugary drinks are a big part of the problem: **[INSERT LINK]** #reduceSSBs
- .@[LEGISLATOR'S NAME], our kids thrive when they drink water, not sugary beverages. **[INSERT LINK]**
- We're thirsty for change! Say YES to more water and NO to sugar-sweetened drinks. RT this if you agree!

#### Lobbying Messages

The following tweets are considered lobbying messages if they're sent while the legislature is considering a bill related to sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives, or if the communication refers to a specific law or program from another state:



- .@[LEGISLATOR'S NAME] hasn't voted for the SSB bill in [STATE]. Tweet a reminder today! #reduceSSBs
- .@[LEGISLATOR'S NAME] Kids and adults in #[STATE] want more water and less soda! Support the SSB bill today!
- In a country with rising #obesity rates, we're so glad @[LEGISLATOR'S NAME] supports a bill to reduce sugary drinks.
- .@[LEGISLATOR'S NAME], your colleagues in [STATE] support reducing sugary drinks. Are you going to join them?
- We need to tax sugary drinks. We hope @[LEGISLATOR'S NAME] agrees.

### Facebook

#### Non-Lobbying Messages

- In a world full of sodas and energy drinks, let's remind our kids that water's the sweetest drink around. **[LINK TO WEBSITE]**
- Our kids drink more sugar-sweetened beverages than milk. Learn how we can change that in [STATE] and then share this post with your Facebook friends. **[LINK TO WEBSITE WITH FACTS ABOUT SSB REDUCTION]**



# DON'T SUGARCOAT OUR FUTURE



- Millions of children and teens in America are overweight and obese, and sweetened beverages are part of the problem. It's time to take a stand: don't sugarcoat our kids' futures! **[LINK TO INFOGRAPHIC ABOUT THE IMPACT OF SUGARY DRINKS ON KIDS' DIETS]**
- Our kids don't need empty calories from sugary drinks. Urge your decision-makers to support regulations on sugar-sweetened beverages in **[STATE]** today. **[LINK TO WEBSITE WITH PLACE TO TAKE ACTION]**
- Are you spreading the word about reducing the amount of sugary beverages our kids drink? This flyer will help. Print it and pin it up around your community! While you're at it, snap a picture of yourself in action and come back here to share it. **[LINK TO FLYER]**
- Help bring more water and fewer sugary drinks to **[STATE]**. Make this your cover photo and ask your friends to support limiting SSBs. **[INCLUDE SAMPLE COVER PHOTO]**

## Lobbying Messages

The following Facebook posts are considered lobbying messages if they're sent while the legislature is considering a bill related to sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives or if the communication refers to a specific law or program from another state:



- It's time to take a stand and tell **[DECISION-MAKER]** not to sugarcoat our kids' futures. Ask **[HIM/HER]** to support **[BILL NAME]** to reduce sugar-sweetened beverage consumption in **[STATE]**. **[LINK TO WEBSITE]**
- Cutting down on sugar-sweetened beverage consumption could make a real difference in America's obesity rates. Send a letter to **[INSERT DECISION-MAKER'S NAME]** and support initiatives that reduce sugary beverage consumption today! **[LINK TO WEBSITE WITH LETTER TO DECISION-MAKER]**





## Newsletter Blurbs

Newsletters can keep your advocates engaged and up to date about the issues that matter to your organization. If you currently send out a newsletter on a regular basis, use it as a platform to help promote your work to reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.

Below are two sample newsletter blurbs to get you going. They should serve as teasers to longer, more detailed information about initiatives to reduce sugar-sweetened beverage consumption held on your site.

### Childhood obesity: it's not just about food (informational)

Our nation is in the midst of a childhood obesity crisis: nearly 32 percent of kids in America are overweight and, of those, 12.7 million are obese. And while we often blame fast food or between-meal snacking, there's another major place our kids consume empty calories. **It's in the beverages they drink.**

Sugar-sweetened beverages—which include soda, sports drinks, sweetened waters and teas, energy drinks and fruit drinks—are the primary source of added sugars in our diets. Consumption of sugary drinks has increased 500 percent in the past 50 years, and today these drinks are the single largest source of added sugar for kids. In fact, today's children drink more sugary beverages than milk.

**Click here for more information about how to prevent childhood obesity by reducing consumption of sugary beverages.**

### Take action – support more water and less sugary drinks! (advocacy)

How many sugary beverages do you think kids drink? The answer may surprise you: most kids have at least one sugar-sweetened drink every single day. Sodas, sports drinks and energy drinks are edging out healthy choices like water, milk and 100 percent juice.

It's time to take action. **Contact your local leaders today**, and tell them to support programs designed to reduce the amount of sugar our kids drink and direct money to community health programs.

There are a broad variety of ways we can reduce consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, ranging from efforts to ban them from schools, hospitals and government buildings; to incentives to drink healthy beverages; to efforts to ensure all schools have water fountains; to taxes and other methods of dissuading people from choosing sugary drinks.

But changes like this won't go into effect unless we tell our local leaders to support them. Send a letter to your local leaders today. **Tell them not to sugarcoat our kids' future.**

We're working to make people in [STATE] healthier. Join us in the fight **by contacting your local leaders today.**

**Note:** This blurb is non-lobbying because it talks about supporting programs generally without referring to any specific programs. Calling for a tax on sugar-sweetened beverages likely would be a reference to a specific legislative proposal, even if a bill had not yet been introduced. Further, this example refers only to "local leaders," not to "legislators," so there is no "call to action" —and there wouldn't be one, even if it did refer to specific legislation. However, if the legislature were considering a bill on the topic,





## DON'T SUGARCOAT OUR FUTURE



and the message referenced legislators instead of the more general “leaders,” it would be considered a communication to the public that reflects a view on specific legislation and includes a call to action—and thus would be lobbying.



## Sample Blog Post: Letters to the Editor

### FEATURED ACTION: Support healthier beverages by submitting a letter to the editor (LTE)

If your organization has its own blog, customize the post below and use it as part of your campaign. The sample post below asks advocates to write letters to the editor of a local newspaper, but you can substitute any action you'd like advocates to take.

Today, 21 percent of all healthcare costs are because of obesity-related conditions.<sup>6</sup> And with nearly 32 percent of children in America overweight or obese, those costs don't seem like they'll be lowered anytime soon.

We tend to blame fast food or snacking for America's obesity problem, but there's one major source of calories many people don't think about: sugar-sweetened beverages.

Over the past 50 years, sweetened beverages like soda, energy drinks and sports drinks have become the primary source of added sugars in Americans' diets. What's worse, they're now the largest source of added sugars in the diets of 2 to 18-year-olds, with fruit drinks following as the second largest source—in other words, kids drink more sugary beverages than they do water, milk or 100 percent fruit juice.

We can help prevent childhood obesity by cutting down on sugar-sweetened beverages, and a tax on sugary drinks could be an effective way to make that happen. Historically, taxes have successfully discouraged consumption of unhealthy products like tobacco, and there's no reason we shouldn't try to see if the same holds true for sugary beverages.

We need your help to reduce the consumption of sugary drinks in **[STATE]**. To help, you could:

- Post information about reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages on your blog, Facebook or Twitter, or email your friends and family and ask them to support this effort.
- Write to your key community leaders and public officials. **[LINK TO AN ACTION ALERT]**
- Write a letter to the editor (LTE) of your local newspaper. It could reach hundreds, if not thousands of people—and it will help create new supporters for bringing new excise taxes on sweetened drinks to **[STATE]**.

If you'd like to draft an LTE, we've provided an outline below to help you get started. Before you start writing, here are a few tips to keep in mind:

- Visit your local newspaper's website to learn how to submit your LTE. If necessary, give your editor a call and ask how he/she prefers to receive letters.
- Make sure you leave your name and contact information (including phone number) when you submit. The newspaper will need to contact you before publication to verify that it was you who submitted the letter.
- LTEs should be short. Try to keep your message to 100 words or fewer. Some newspapers may have specific length guidelines.

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<sup>6</sup> Cawley J and Meyerhoefer C. The medical care costs of obesity: an instrumental variables approach. *J Health Econ* 31.1 (2012): 219-230.



## DON'T SUGARCOAT OUR FUTURE



- Share your story! If you have one about cutting down on sweetened drinks or why students need healthy choices to perform better academically and stay well, consider sharing it here so you can make a personal connection from the start.
- Make sure you include the purpose of your letter, for example (but not limited to): to get public officials and other community leaders to support measures that create beverage taxes in [STATE].
- Support your intent with facts about sugar-sweetened beverage consumption.
- Make sure to direct readers to **[YOUR WEBSITE URL]** so they can learn how to get involved.



## Content Articles

The following articles are examples of how sugar-sweetened beverage taxes are described, both pro and con, in the media.

### St. Louis Post Dispatch: Buying Soft Drinks in Illinois Would Cost More Under Tax Hike Proposal

February 18, 2014

Illinois shoppers could find themselves paying extra for soft drinks under a proposed statewide soda tax. The new plan would add an extra penny on every ounce of sugary drinks sold in sealed containers, along with the syrups and powders used to flavor them.

The tax is part of a broader plan to promote healthy living in Illinois, according to state Sen. Mattie Hunter, D-Chicago, who sponsored the legislation. Revenue from the tax would go toward a range of health services and education initiatives.

“Numerous studies have linked excessive consumption of sugary soft drinks to obesity,” Hunter said in an email. “We as a state need to do a better job of educating the public and children in particular about this issue and the health risks.”

The proposal has drawn criticism from the Illinois Coalition Against Beverage Taxes — an alliance of manufacturers, retailers and union workers who say the tax would harm the economy and kill jobs in Illinois.

“You reduce consumption, and you reduce employment,” said Brian Rainville, a spokesman for Teamsters Joint Council 25 in Chicago and northwest Indiana. “If there’s less being made and distributed, there’s fewer people doing those jobs.”

“Politicians are always talking about creating middle-class jobs, and these are those jobs. These are the good, middle-class jobs that people want to create.”

This isn’t the first time that legislators and business leaders have fought over a tax on soft drinks. In 2011, a report by the Cook County Department of Public Health recommended that legislators impose a tax of 2 cents per ounce on all sugar-sweetened beverages.

Though similar measures have won approval in other states, Illinois lawmakers have been unable to get the tax off the ground.

Others say the tax would impose a burden on families trying to purchase groceries.

Mark Denzler of the Illinois Manufacturers Association said the tax would add \$2.88 to a 24-pack of soda. “It’s nearly a 50 percent increase in the cost of it. So folks that are scrambling to buy groceries are going to have it even harder.”

But Hunter said the plan would save the state money by reducing health care costs.



"Medical expenses associated with obesity cost taxpayers more than \$100 million annually," she said. "My goal with this legislation is to increase awareness, improve public health and promote healthy living alternatives in an effort to save lives and money."

The legislation is Senate Bill 3524.

Link to article: [http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/illinois/buying-soft-drinks-in-illinois-would-cost-more-under-tax/article\\_5eccc299-6c48-5b44-9643-95bce5365dee.html](http://www.stltoday.com/news/local/illinois/buying-soft-drinks-in-illinois-would-cost-more-under-tax/article_5eccc299-6c48-5b44-9643-95bce5365dee.html)

## KWQC: Illinois "Soda Tax" Proposal

By Morgan Ottier  
February 18, 2014

Imagine being taxed for a bottle of pop, by the ounce. That's what one Illinois lawmaker is proposing. State Sen. Mattie Hunter, a Democrat out of Chicago, is sponsoring a bill which she says is intended to promote healthy living.

But not everyone thinks a new tax is the right way to go about it.

Andy Jessen, Moline, buys at least one bottle of pop everyday. He's angry about the proposal -- "The government is targeting people who drink these items and saying, 'what you're doing it wrong so give us more money.'"

Hunter cites studies that link excessive consumption of soft drinks to obesity as one of the reasons behind her proposal. She says revenue from the tax would go toward a variety of health services and education initiatives.

But local businesses that sell the drinks are worried about what the law would do to sales.

"Illinois certainly needs tax money but there's people who come in here and complain already," said True Value employee, Joe Hotle. True Value sells off-brand, craft sodas.

"It's a buck fifty for a bottle of pop. It's already kind of expensive for what it is." Hotle said that Sen. Hunter seems to have good intentions but it might hurt business.

The plan is already drawing criticism from manufacturers, retailers, and union workers who say taxing sodas would hurt the state's economy.

Link to article: <http://www.kwqc.com/story/24759374/illinois-soda-tax-proposal>





## San Jose Mercury News editorial: Sin tax unfairly targets soda manufacturers

January 6, 2014

Drinking lots of soda is as one of Californians' worst health habits and contributes to the state's costly obesity problem. State Sen. Bill Monning is reviving the pat solution -- a soda tax that he says will reduce consumption, cut health care costs and raise hundreds of millions to help fight diabetes and other chronic diseases.

Singling out sodas above other high-calorie drinks and equally harmful junk foods isn't a bad idea for making a point, but it doesn't make for good legislation. To really make a difference in the obesity trend, lawmakers need to look more broadly at its causes and the public cost of unhealthy diets.

Monning cites a new study at UC San Francisco that predicts a soda tax could reduce California's health care costs by between \$320 million and \$620 million in 10 years. But rather than debating predictions, check out the actual experience of a state that has been in the vanguard of soda taxation: that model of progressivism, Arkansas.

Arkansas instituted a soda tax in 1992, as Gov. Bill Clinton's term was ending, for the same reasons Monning and some other Bay Area lawmakers have supported one. But 20 years later, the state's adult obesity rate had risen from 17 percent to 34.5 percent.

In fact, Arkansas was the only state in 2013 to show an increase in its obesity rate, which is the third highest in the nation. It's on a par with neighboring states' that do not have a soda tax: Louisiana, 34.7 percent, and Mississippi, 34.6 percent.

Of course drinking more water and less soda is healthier for everyone, especially children. Anybody who doesn't know that just hasn't been paying attention. But sodas account for only 7 percent of Americans' caloric intake every day. Why should makers of other unhealthy foods skate?

Junk food is every bit as bad for people. The average Californian eats 30 pounds of french fries and 150 hamburgers a year, but no lawmaker is calling for a tax on fast food. Californians enjoy nearly 50 pints of ice cream a year, at 600 calories a pint, but Monning's tax would affect them only if they make root beer floats.

The Carmel Democrat is right about the problem California is facing. The Bay Area News Group's Jason Hoppin reported last week that according to the Centers for Disease Control, 2.5 million Californians had diabetes in 2010, a number that has doubled over the previous 15 years.

Dealing with obesity has to be part of the state's and the nation's strategies to bring down health care costs. But if California goes down the path of a sin tax on fattening foods and drinks, it should develop a thoughtful and comprehensive law, not follow in the pudgy footsteps of Arkansas.

Link to article: [http://www.mercurynews.com/opinion/ci\\_24855893/mercury-news-editorial-sin-tax-unfairly-targets-soda](http://www.mercurynews.com/opinion/ci_24855893/mercury-news-editorial-sin-tax-unfairly-targets-soda)



## Fairfax News: Fairfax schools test ban of sugary drinks in 7 schools

August 19, 2013

Beginning in September, Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) will be conducting a pilot program that would ban sugary soda drinks in seven of its 25 high schools. Soda products are not currently available in any Fairfax County public school during the school day, except for adult purchases in teachers' lounges.

Death from diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and cancer are being laid at the doorstep of drinks sweetened with sugar, much of it from consumption of soft drinks. According to research presented at the American Heart Association's Epidemiology and Prevention/Nutrition, Physical Activity and Metabolism 2013 Scientific Sessions, sugar-sweetened soda pop, sports drinks and fruit drinks may be associated with about 180,000 deaths around the world each year.

"In the U.S., our research shows that about 25,000 deaths in 2010 were linked to drinking sugar-sweetened beverages," said Gitanjali M. Singh, Ph.D., co-author of the study and a postdoctoral research fellow at the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston, Mass.

The ban will remove regular soda products from the after-school soda machines in each of the seven participating schools, which include Chantilly, Falls Church, Langley, Marshall, and West Potomac High Schools; Lake Braddock Secondary School; and Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology. Student and parent after-school fundraisers such as snack bars and booster clubs are excluded from this pilot.

In the participating schools, 47 existing soda machines will be replaced with 37 new, state-of-the-art glass front beverage machines, with the costs of the new machines covered by the Coca-Cola Company and PepsiCo.

The new items will include diet sodas, diet and unsweetened teas, coconut waters, V-8 Fusion Juice, SoBe Lifewaters, Propel® Zeros, and G2 Gatorade® products.

An evaluation of the one-year pilot will be conducted by FCPS' Office of Food and Nutrition Services and will include an examination of revenues, students' product preferences, and acceptance of new products.

Link to article: <http://fairfaxnews.com/2013/08/fairfax-schools-test-ban-of-sugary-soft-drinks-in-7-schools/>



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## Potential Allies



**YALE RUDD CENTER**  
FOR FOOD POLICY & OBESITY

### Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity

The Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity is a non-profit research and public policy organization devoted to improving the world's diet, preventing obesity, and reducing weight stigma. The Center serves as a leading research institution and clearinghouse for resources that add to our understanding of the complex forces affecting how we eat, how we stigmatize overweight and obese people, and how we can change. We are a leader in building broad-based consensus to change diet patterns, while holding industry and government agencies responsible for safeguarding public health. The Rudd Center pursues its bold goals through strategic science; interaction with key players in media, industry and government; and mobilization of grassroots efforts. Standing at the intersection of science and public policy, we develop innovative measures to combat obesity and improve health. Reducing sugar-sweetened beverage consumption is a key focus of our research and policy efforts.

Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity  
Yale University  
309 Edwards Street  
New Haven, CT 06511  
(203) 432-6700  
[www.yaleruddcenter.org](http://www.yaleruddcenter.org)

### Positioning

The Rudd Center stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in nutrition, food marketing and public health
- Involved in educating decision-makers and the public on the potential positive impact of sugar-sweetened beverage initiatives such as taxes, to reduce consumption and improve public health
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, including thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, including federal, state, and local decision-makers and public health departments
- Strong, coordinated, and effective communication in all forms of media
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to improving healthy beverage options
- Provides resources on sugar-sweetened beverage issues:
  - [Legislation database](#) lists state and local bills concerning sugar-sweetened beverages



- Tracks countrywide [initiatives](#) to reduce the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages
- [Revenue Calculator for Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Taxes](#) allows users to see estimated revenue from a penny-per-ounce excise tax in states and 25 major cities
- [Sugary Drink F.A.C.T.S.](#) website gives information about industry, their marketing techniques, products, and nutrition



## American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) is the membership organization representing the specialty of pediatric dentistry. AAPD's 8,800 members work in private offices, clinics and hospital settings and serve as primary care providers for millions of infants, children, adolescents and patients with special health care needs. In addition, AAPD members serve as the primary contributors to professional education programs and scholarly works concerning dental care for children. The mission of the AAPD is to advocate policies, guidelines and programs that promote optimal oral health and oral health care for children.

211 East Chicago Ave., Suite 1700  
Chicago, IL 60611  
(312) 337-2169  
[www.aapd.org](http://www.aapd.org)

## Positioning

AAPD stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to pediatric oral health and nutrition
- Involved in activism aimed at expanding access to healthy beverage options in vending machines
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely school officials and parent groups
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support for measures to expand healthy beverage options in vending machines
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options



- Policy [statement](#) on vending machines in schools promotes educating the public about the importance of oral hygiene as it pertains to consumption of vending machine goods
- [Mychildrensteeth.org](http://Mychildrensteeth.org) provides information for parents, including tips on how to choose drink options that are good for oral health

## Media Coverage

### [Spotlight On: Dental Health for Children](#)

By Carla Cano

Examiner.com

February 24, 2014

February is National Children's Dental Month. The American Dental Association has many activities that uses kid friendly characters to teach children about the importance of brushing. They have provided coloring sheets and other fun activities you can do with your children to teach the anatomy of a tooth, how often to brush, and even nutrition for healthier teeth. The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry also has some great activities to help you teach your children the importance of taking care of their teeth by introducing them to Mouth Monsters.

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American Academy  
of Pediatrics



DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN™

## American Academy of Pediatrics

The mission of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) is to attain optimal physical, mental and social health and well-being for all infants, children, adolescents and young adults. To accomplish this, AAP supports the professional needs of its members. AAP works to advance child health and well-being with the understanding that pediatricians are the best qualified to provide child health care.

141 Northwest Point Blvd.

Elk Grove Village, IL 60007

(847) 434-4284

[www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

## Positioning

AAP stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in healthcare, health education and health policy for children
- Involved in activism aimed at promoting research on the link between sugar-sweetened beverages and weight gain in infants and children
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely pediatricians and other healthcare industry influencers





- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support for federal and state penny-per-ounce taxes on sodas and sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to research on children's health and childhood obesity
  - Published [research](#) on the effects of sugar-sweetened beverage consumption on BMI and weight-gain in school-age children
  - [Food Access, Safety and Nutrition](#) initiative urges Congress and the current administration to support policies and programs that invest in food access, safety and nutrition for children and families in their homes and schools

## Media Coverage

### [Questions abound over collection of proposed 'soda tax' on Richmond businesses](#)

By Robert Rogers

*San Jose Mercury News*

October 24, 2012

As the campaign over the tax on businesses that sell sugar-sweetened beverages enters its final days, the focus is shifting from the merits of the proposal to the practicalities of implementing it should the measure pass. If the penny-per-ounce tax called Measure N is approved by a majority of voters Nov. 6, it could mean more than \$3 million in new city revenue annually. It would also mean new work for the revenue division of the city's finance department and for hundreds of markets and restaurants that will have to coordinate and calculate the new tax -- a penny at a time.

SUPPORTERS: Richmond Progressive Alliance, Mayor Gayle McLaughlin, council members Jeff Ritterman, Tom Butt, Jim Rogers, Jovanka Beckles, actor Danny Glover, American Academy of Pediatrics, California Center for Public Health Advocacy.

### [Soda tax war taking shape in two California cities](#)

By Lisa Baertlein and Martinne Geller

Reuters

September 6, 2012

Richmond and El Monte have the dubious distinctions of having some of California's highest proportions of obese and overweight children, with rates above 50 percent. Richmond, which has more crime and is poorer than many of its San Francisco Bay Area neighbors, was first to propose the tax. El Monte, a relatively low-income and mostly Hispanic suburb of Los Angeles, quickly followed. Supporters of the soda tax range from medical groups like the American Academy of Pediatrics to actor Danny Glover, star of the "Lethal Weapon" movies.



## American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan sister organization to the American Cancer Society. ACS CAN works to make cancer a national priority. Specifically, it advocates for better access to care, cancer prevention and early detection programs, cancer research funding, regulation of tobacco, better quality of life for cancer patients, and attempts to raise awareness of and reduce cancer disparities. Members include cancer survivors, caregivers, patients, volunteers and students, including Colleges Against Cancer.

555 11<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20004  
(202) 661-5727  
[www.acscan.org](http://www.acscan.org)

## Positioning

ACS CAN stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in nutrition, children's health and food policy
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely the Department of Health and Human Services
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support for federal and state penny-per-ounce taxes on sodas and sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to improving healthy beverage options in schools
  - [2013 State Legislative Priorities](#) include reducing the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, supporting taxes on unhealthy drinks, subsidizing the purchase of healthy foods for low income communities and funding obesity prevention and education efforts

## Media Coverage

[Are sugary drinks to blame for obesity?](#)

By Jennifer LaRue Huget  
*The Washington Post*  
July 9, 2012



An advocacy group affiliated with the American Cancer Society asked the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services last week to direct the surgeon general to fully investigate the relationship between human health and consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages, or SSBs.

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN) wants the surgeon general's office to produce an "unbiased and comprehensive report" on the matter, much as it did with tobacco use in the early 1960s.

### [American Cancer Society Requests Research on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages](#)

By Mache Seibel  
The Huffington Post  
July 2, 2012

Americans love their soda. (Americans consumed 9.4 billion cases of soft drinks in 2009.) Mayor Bloomberg thinks it is too much and unhealthy and is pushing hard to limit the largest size sodas in New York restaurants to 16 ounces. Now the stakes of unhealthy sugary drinks is reaching a new high. The American Cancer Society (ACS) believes that the health risks of drinking soda should be viewed by U.S. health officials in the same way that they viewed the health risks of using tobacco in the 1960s.

To make their point, the nonprofit arm of the ACS wrote requesting a federal study to make the point and serve as a landmark on this topic -- just like the comparable study in 1964 by the Surgeon General make the point about tobacco.



### American Dental Association

Founded in 1859, the not-for-profit American Dental Association (ADA) is the nation's largest dental association, representing 157,000 dentist members. Since its inception, the ADA has grown to become the leading source of oral health related information for dentists and their patients. The ADA works to advance the dental profession on the national, state and local level. Membership in the national organization includes membership in one of 53 Constituent (state) and 545 Component (local) dental societies. The ADA exists to advance the oral health of the American public.

211 East Chicago Ave.  
Chicago, IL 60611  
(312) 440 - 2500  
[www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)



## Positioning

ADA stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to diet and nutrition, oral health and public health
- Involved in activism that supports federal research on the link between sugar-sweetened beverage consumption and oral diseases
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely Congress and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support for legislation that restricts the sale of sugar-sweetened beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options
  - Submitted [letters](#) to the U.S. Department of Agriculture in support of state efforts to restrict the purchase of sugar-sweetened beverages
  - Conducted several [studies](#) on the links between sugar-sweetened beverage consumption and heart disease, oral diseases and other health issues
  - [MouthHealthy.org](http://MouthHealthy.org) online offers tips on healthy snack options

## Media Coverage

### [Protect Your Teeth From Soda](#)

By Real Simple

Xfinity Lifestyle Blog

October 9, 2013

According to Anthony Iacopino, a dentist and Winnipeg, Manitoba-based spokesperson for the American Dental Association, "The acid content in soda erodes enamel." To prevent hurting your teeth, use a straw to limit the liquid's contact, and be sure to give your mouth a quick rinse with water after you drink.

### [Dental Organizations Want Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Evaluated](#)

Dentistry Today

July 24, 2012

Various dental organizations are asking for a U.S. Surgeon General's report on the relationships between certain food and drink consumption and the impact on oral diseases. The goal of the report is to pinpoint the specific results of sugar-sweetened beverages on oral health. The report calls for soft drinks and soda to be thoroughly studied. Soft drinks and soda need to be distinguished from health beverages like juices and milk. The organizations also want to define natural sugars, added sugars, carbonation and the acidity levels in these types of drinks. The dental issues that arise from sugary and acidic drinks are clear. But a Surgeon General's report will bring this issue to the forefront of American health.



## American Public Health Association

The American Public Health Association (APHA) champions the health of all people and all communities. It works to strengthen the profession of public health, share the latest research and information, promote best practices and advocate for public health issues and policies grounded in research. It combines a 140-plus year perspective, a broad-based member community and the ability to influence federal policy to improve the public's health.

800 I Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
(202) 777-APHA  
[www.apha.org](http://www.apha.org)

## Positioning

APHA stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in public health and policy
- Involved in activism aimed at removing unhealthy beverages and foods from schools
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely Congress, the FDA and beverage manufacturers
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support for federal and state penny-per-ounce taxes on sodas and sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to improving healthy beverage options in schools
  - Released [statement](#) in 2012 in support of taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages

## Media Coverage

### [Sugary Beverage Tax Strikes a Nerve](#)

By Samuel Adams  
*The Watch*  
October 16, 2013

To illustrate the health dangers associated with soda consumption, Ritterman displayed a slide, from a 2012 American Heart Association study of more than 42,000 people, that links consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages to significantly increased development of serious health problems.

To date, the American Heart Association, American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, American Medical Association, Institute of Medicine, American Academy of Family Physicians and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention favor an excise tax similar to the one proposed in Telluride, Ritterman said.

[Coca-Cola, Archer Daniels Fight to Kill Proposed Tax on Sodas](#)

By Jonathan Salant

Bloomberg

June 27, 2009

On the other side, the Center for Science in the Public Interest and the American Public Health Association, both based in Washington, are pushing to keep the tax as an option as long as Congress is struggling to pay the health-care tab. "It's a great way to raise revenue and a relatively painless way to do so," said Georges Benjamin, executive director of The American Public Health Association.



## Berkeley Media Studies Group

Berkeley Media Studies Group (BMSG) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding advocates' ability to improve the systems and structures that determine health. BMSG is a project of the Public Health Institute. BMSG conducts research to learn how the media characterize health issues. Through media advocacy training and consultation, BMSG helps advocates harness lessons from that research and develop the skills they need to shape journalists' coverage of health issues so that it illuminates the need for policies that improve the places where people live, learn, work and play.

2130 Center Street, Suite 302

Berkeley, CA 94704

(202) 777-8354

[www.bmsg.org](http://www.bmsg.org)

## Positioning

BMSG stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in public health and food policy
- Involved in activism surrounding federal, state, local and institutional policies that promote the power of health and social issues in the media
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely journalists, public health professionals and the CDC





- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to improving the power of the media to advance healthy public policy
  - [Healthy Eating Active Communities](#) initiative is designed to prevent obesity through collaborative action that changes the local environment to make healthy living possible
  - Published a [detailed analysis](#) of ad campaigns used in California to promote soda taxes

## Media Coverage

### [When Good Celebrities Promote Bad Foods](#)

By Alexandra Sifferlin

TIME

October 7, 2013

"One reason any campaign wants a popular celebrity spokesperson is because kids are attracted to them no matter what they are doing. Kids look up to them, and they want to be like them. We can't expect kids to turn off that admiration when the same person is selling sugar. At best, kids might be confused. At worst, they'll think the messages about soda are the same as the messages about water, and those two beverages aren't the same," Andrew Cheyne, a researcher at the Berkeley Media Studies Group, told TIME.

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## bridging the gap

Research Informing Policies and  
Practices for Healthy Youth

## Bridging the Gap – University of Illinois at Chicago

Bridging the Gap (BTG) was created in 1997 to assess the impact of policies, programs and other environmental influences on adolescent alcohol, tobacco and illicit drug use and related outcomes. BTG examines these factors at multiple levels of social organization, including schools, communities and states. In recognition of the high rates of obesity among children, adolescents and adults, BTG expanded its efforts in 2003 to include research on the policies, programs and other factors that contribute to physical activity/inactivity, dietary behaviors and obesity.

University of Illinois at Chicago  
Institute for Health Research and Policy  
1747 West Roosevelt Road  
Chicago, IL 60608  
(312) 413-2367  
[www.bridgingthegapresearch.org](http://www.bridgingthegapresearch.org)

## Positioning

BTG stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:



- High impact in diet, physical activity, obesity and children's health
- Involved in activism surrounding research on the link between sugar-sweetened beverages and childhood obesity and the revenue implications of soda taxes
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences and thought leaders in academics, research and policy
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely teens and youth
- Past public support for federal and state penny-per-ounce taxes on sodas and sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to improving healthy beverage options
  - [Sugary Drinks and Latino Kids](#) discusses the need for Latino children to limit consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages
  - [Public Health & Revenue Implications of a Sugar Sweetened Beverage Tax](#) investigates the potential revenue impact of soda taxes

## Media Coverage

### [Latino kids consume "above average" amount of sugary drinks](#)

By Dr. Amelie Ramirez

NBC Latino

October 3, 2013

Raising the price of sugary drinks could reduce consumption among Latino kids, and potentially improve weight outcomes, according to Salud America! and Bridging the Gap, two national research programs funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

### [At-school sales of soda drops, but other sugary drinks remain](#)

By Melissa Healy

*Los Angeles Times*, Booster Shots Blog

August 6, 2012

In 2010-11, 25 percent of high school students had access to sugary sodas during school -- either at cafeteria concessions or from vending machines. That was down from 54 percent of high school students in 2006-07. Middle school students' access to sweetened soft drinks also dropped: in 2006-07, 27 percent had access to sodas and sugary soft drinks; by 2010-11, just 13 percent did.

The study was published Monday in the Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine, and was funded by Bridging the Gap, a research program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

### [Banning Sugary Soda From Schools Fails to Cut Teen Consumption](#)

By Nicole Ostrow

*Bloomberg BusinessWeek*

November 15, 2011

Studies have shown that about 13 percent of the average teenagers' total daily calories come from sugary drinks, according to a statement by Bridging the Gap, a research program of the Robert Wood



Johnson Foundation, which partially funded today's study. The Institute of Medicine recommended in 2007 that all sugar-sweetened drinks be banned from schools to prevent health problems.

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## California Center for Public Health Advocacy

The California Center for Public Health Advocacy (CCPHA) tackles the underlying factors that perpetuate childhood obesity and undermine parents' desire to keep their children healthy: marketing and availability of unhealthy foods and beverages; limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables; schools failing to provide quality physical education; cities designed for cars rather than pedestrians and bicyclists; and lack of safe places for children to play. CCPHA advocates for policy change simultaneously at state and local levels through organizing, strategic research, media advocacy and direct lobbying. CCPHA specializes in building effective advocacy campaigns to ensure that every resident has access to healthy foods and beverages and opportunities to walk, bike and exercise in safety.

1947 Galileo Court, Suite 101  
Davis, CA 95618  
(530) 297-6000  
[www.publichealthadvocacy.org](http://www.publichealthadvocacy.org)

## Positioning

CCPHA stands to support the Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in policy related to children's health, education and community development
- Involved in activism that supports beverage sales tax and excise tax initiatives that incentivize consumers to choose healthy drink options
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely state and local governments
- Past public support for federal and state penny-per-ounce taxes on sodas and sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options
  - [Kick the Can](#) is a statewide campaign to decrease consumption of soda and other sugary drinks, while increasing the consumption of water and other healthy beverages
  - [California City Soda Tax Calculator](#) serves as a resource for policymakers, allowing users to generate expected city revenue from a sugar-sweetened beverage tax



## Media Coverage

### [Big Soda's Front Group Arrives Early in San Francisco](#)

By Michele Simon

The Huffington Post

March 5, 2014

Harold Goldstein, executive director of the California Center for Public Health Advocacy, thinks San Francisco has a real shot at winning this year. (Goldstein's group failed to get a soda tax bill through the state legislature last year.) He told me that one important difference is how, in contrast to both Richmond and El Monte in 2012, San Francisco's measure mandates that 100 percent of the revenues be spent on children's health and community programs. He added:

The beverage lobby killed the tax bill in the state legislature. I expect it to be a different story in San Francisco where city leaders are putting together a highly sophisticated campaign to tell the truth about sugary drinks and the beverage industry that markets them. For perhaps the first time in the country there will be a fair fight between soda marketers and a city that cares about its children.



## Center for Science in the Public Interest

The Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) is a consumer advocacy organization whose mission is to conduct innovative research and advocacy programs in health and nutrition, and to provide consumers with useful information about their health and well-being. CSPI's primary goals are: to provide useful, objective information to the public and policymakers and to conduct research on food, alcohol, health, the environment and other issues related to science and technology; and to represent the citizen's interests before regulatory, judicial and legislative bodies on food, alcohol, health, the environment and other issues.

1220 L Street, NW, Suite 300

Washington, D.C. 20005

(202) 332-9110

[www.cspinet.org](http://www.cspinet.org)

## Positioning

CSPI stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in nutrition, food safety and public health
- Involved in activism that supports beverage sales tax and excise tax initiatives that incentivize consumers to choose healthy drink options
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media



# DON'T SUGARCOAT OUR FUTURE



- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely Congress, the FDA and state and local health departments
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support for federal and state penny-per-ounce taxes on sodas and sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options
  - [California Healthy Beverages Summit](#) convenes public health advocates, researchers and policymakers to improve the availability and consumption of water and other healthy drinks
  - [Liquid Candy Report](#) tracks sugary beverage consumption and its impact on public health

## Media Coverage

[Katy Perry's Pepsi promotion compared to celebrities hyping cigarettes by CSPI](#)

By Joanne Eglash

Examiner.com

October 23, 2013

In their October 22 ad in Variety, the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) and six other organizations slammed Katy for allegedly convincing kids to sip soda through her promotions. "Virginia Slims and other tobacco companies used glamorous celebrities and models to position smoking as hip, sexy and rebellious," the open letter reads. "Today soda companies are using you and other celebrities to convince young people that drinking soda is hip, sexy and rebellious. 'Drink Pepsi and you can be cool like Katy Perry,' is the takeaway message for your young fans. 'Live for now' and worry about the health consequences later."



## ChangeLab Solutions

ChangeLab Solutions (formerly Public Health Law & Policy) believes that, to achieve the common good, everyone must have nourishing food; safe places to live and play; opportunities to bike, walk or take transit; fresh water and clean air. Throughout the nation, ChangeLab Solutions works with neighborhoods, cities and states to transform communities with laws and policies that create lasting change. ChangeLab's unique approach, backed by decades of research and proven results, helps the public and private sectors make communities more livable, especially for those who are at highest risk because they have the fewest resources.



2201 Broadway, Suite 502  
Oakland CA 94612  
(510) 302-3380  
[www.changelabsolutions.org](http://www.changelabsolutions.org)

## Positioning

ChangeLab stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in childhood obesity, health policy and public health
- Involved in activism aimed at reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages and raising awareness of their associated health risks
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely state and local governments
- Past public support for federal and state penny-per-ounce taxes on sodas and sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options
  - [Sugar-Sweetened Beverages Playbook](#) provides a 10-step strategy path to improve health by reducing Sugar-Sweetened Beverage consumption
  - [Policy Brief: Fulfilling the Promise of Free Water in K-12 Schools](#) brings attention to the need for fresh and free water

## Media Coverage

### [Drink Up: Schools Must Provide More Water During Meals](#)

By Jane Meredith Adams  
NPR (via KQED Radio)  
July 12, 2013

"It's really in the hands of school districts, schools, teachers, parents and students" to prod schools to provide water at meal service, said Quang Dang, senior attorney at ChangeLab Solutions. Free, fresh water at meals is just a start, he said. "There could be stronger regulations to make water available to kids throughout the school day."

### [Letter to the Editor: False Choices on Children's Health](#)

By Marice Ashe  
Founder and CEO, ChangeLab Solutions  
*The New York Times*  
July 21, 2010

Re "[Whether a Child Lights Up, or Chows Down](#)" (Week in Review, July 11):

Setting up a false dichotomy between protecting children from obesity or tobacco addiction is the wrong way to discuss two pernicious public health problems. We need the same policy solutions for both: taxes on unhealthy products to internalize the cost of the harm to society, restrictions on advertising to children, and other policies to make the healthy choice the easy choice for consumers.



We need smoke-free air as well as access to fresh fruits and vegetables in every community. There is no need to choose between policy priorities — our children deserve both.

---



## The Food Trust

The Food Trust is a nationally recognized nonprofit dedicated to ensuring that everyone has access to affordable, nutritious food and information to make healthy decisions. Headquartered in Philadelphia, The Food Trust works with neighborhoods, schools, grocers, farmers and policymakers in the city and across the country to develop a comprehensive approach to improved food access that combines nutrition education and greater availability of affordable, healthy food.

One Penn Center  
Suite 900  
1617 John F. Kennedy Blvd.  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
[www.thefoodtrust.org](http://www.thefoodtrust.org)

## Positioning

The Food Trust stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in nutrition, food safety and public health
- Involved in activism that supports beverage sales tax and excise tax initiatives that incentivize consumers to choose healthy drink options
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely Congress, the FDA and state and local health departments
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support for federal and state penny-per-ounce taxes on sodas and sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options
  - [Healthy Beverage Toolkit](#) designed to help parents, teachers, food service professionals, school administrators and community leaders confront the epidemic of childhood obesity by promoting healthy beverage consumption
  - Leads a coalition to remove soda and other sugary drinks from vending machines in Philadelphia schools and working with the School District of Philadelphia to enact one of the country's strongest snack food policies





## Public Statements

### [More Than Half of Philadelphians Support a Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Tax, New Poll Finds](#)

PR Newswire Services

April 29, 2013

A new poll commissioned by the Campaign for Healthy Kids found that 55 percent of likely Philadelphia voters would support taxation equal to 2 cents per ounce on sugar-sweetened beverages if funding was dedicated to support programs to combat childhood obesity. John Weidman, Deputy Executive Director of the Food Trust, also commented on the poll's findings. "The Food Trust supports policies that make healthy food more accessible as well as those that work to limit the consumption of empty calories. It's exciting to see that strong majorities of Philadelphians support these common sense ideas as well."

### [Harnessing the Power of Supermarkets to Help Reverse Childhood Obesity](#)

The Food Trust & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

April 11, 2013

A new report from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF) and The Food Trust examines marketing strategies that may help parents, caregivers and youths select and purchase healthier foods and beverages at the grocery store. Released on April 3, 2011, at the Food Marketing Institute's Health and Wellness Conference in Florida, *Harnessing the Power of Supermarkets to Help Reverse Childhood Obesity* includes case studies and recommendations about marketing tactics, such as in-store promotions, placement and pricing, that can encourage healthy eating, increase customer satisfaction and help food retailers increase profitability.

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## Healthy Eating Research

Building Evidence to Prevent Childhood Obesity

## Healthy Eating Research

Healthy Eating Research is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF). The program supports research on environmental and policy strategies with strong potential to promote healthy eating among children to prevent childhood obesity, especially among low-income and racial and ethnic populations at highest risk for obesity. Findings will advance RWJF's efforts to reverse the childhood obesity epidemic by 2015. Technical assistance and direction are provided by the University of Minnesota. Healthy Eating Research is housed in the School of Public Health and is directed by Mary Story PhD, RD and key program staff with input from senior program advisers.



University of Minnesota School of Public Health  
1300 South Second Street, Suite 300  
Minneapolis, MN 55454-1015  
(800) 578-8636  
[www.healthyeatingresearch.org](http://www.healthyeatingresearch.org)

## Positioning

Healthy Eating Research stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in policy, child obesity and healthy eating
- Involved in activism surrounding policy changes to promote healthy eating among children and taxes on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences and thought leaders in academics, research and policy
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely researchers and national government and education agencies
- Past public support of initiatives aimed at promoting water over sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options and policies for healthy eating
  - [Recommendations for Healthier Beverages](#) provides information on healthy alternatives to sugar-sweetened beverages
  - [Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Taxes and Public Health](#) discusses the importance of policies focused on Sugar-Sweetened Beverages taxes to curb obesity
  - [The Negative Impact of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages on Children's Health](#) investigates how increased caloric intake increases obesity and risk of contracting Type 2 diabetes

## Published Research

### [The Negative Impact of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages on Children's Health](#)

Healthy Eating Research (via Robert Wood Johnson Foundation)  
November 2009

Consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) by adolescents and children in the United States has been linked to less healthy diets, excessive caloric intake and weight gain, increased obesity rates, and associated adverse health effects, including increased rates of type 2 diabetes in adults. This research synthesis reviews evidence regarding the health effects of SSB consumption, outlines conclusions on the basis of these investigations and suggests areas for additional research

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## Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities (Healthy Kids) is a national program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF), whose goal is to implement healthy eating and active living policies, and environmental-change initiatives that support healthier communities for children and families across the



United States. Healthy Kids places special emphasis on reaching children who are at highest risk for obesity on the basis of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status and geographic location. Through the program, RWJF seeks to catalyze and support community efforts to address the causes of childhood obesity through integrated changes in policies, norms, practices, social supports and the physical environment. Healthy Kids maintains 49 community partnerships across the country.

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities  
C/o Active Living by Design  
Gillings School of Global Public Health  
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill  
400 Market Street, Suite 205  
Chapel Hill, NC 27516  
(919) 843-2523  
[www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org](http://www.healthykidshealthycommunities.org)

## Positioning

Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in childhood obesity and healthy eating
- Involved in activism aimed at implementing healthy eating and active living policies
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences and thought leaders
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely community leaders and policymakers
- Past public support for federal and state penny-per-ounce taxes on sodas and sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy eating behaviors in communities
  - [New HKHC Communications Toolkit](#) provides tips, resources and links for communities to promote initiatives to partners, media and funders
  - Proposed [strategies](#) to prevent childhood obesity based on CDC recommendations and [research](#) that explores the link between soda taxes and public health
  - Ongoing participation with Voices for Healthy Kids

## Media Coverage

### [Students to play key role in Buffalo Food Policy Summit](#)

By Scott Scanlon  
*The Buffalo News*  
October 22, 2013

"They make the food in a centralized location," and most of it is processed, he said. Cafeterias across the district where food once was made have become little more than "warming stations."

That's why Rice and dozens of other students in the district have joined Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities – Youth Advisors Council, which is pushing for more farm-to-school ties, local foods, efficient cafeterias and healthier food options.



## Food for thought... "Thinking about food."

By Queenseyes  
Buffalo Rising  
October 14, 2013

For the first time, Youth leaders with Healthy Kids, Healthy Communities – Youth Advisors Council (hkhc-yac) – are speaking out, asking that food sources include healthier options and local organic farm products in school diets. To that end, there is an upcoming opportunity to present these requests directly to the Buffalo Public Schools (BPS) Food Service Department, in conjunction with parents, students, teachers, and administrators.

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## MomsRising

MomsRising is a transformative online and on-the-ground multicultural organization of one million members and more than one hundred aligned organizations working to increase family economic security, to end discrimination against women and mothers and to build a nation where both businesses and families can thrive. MomsRising addresses critical issues facing women, mothers and families, by mobilizing massive grassroots actions. The group strives to bring the voices and real world experiences of women and mothers straight to the nation's leaders, and to amplify women's issues in the national dialogue and in the media. MomsRising also accelerates grassroots initiatives on Capitol Hill and at state capitols across the country and is committed to holding corporations accountable for fair treatment of women and mothers, and for ensuring the safety of their products.

1010 Grayson Street, Second Floor  
Berkeley, CA 94010  
(917) 407.3018  
[www.momsrising.org](http://www.momsrising.org)

## Positioning

MomsRising stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in childhood nutrition, food marketing and public policy at the community level
- Involved in activism aimed at improving healthy beverages in schools
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely parents and Congress
- Strength of communication channels
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options



- [Vocal](#) about supporting local restrictions in New York to limit portions of sugar-sweetened beverages

## Public Statements

### [Joining the Chorus: Food Marketing Policy “Failures” Still Attract New Advocates to the Cause](#)

By Juliet Sims  
MomsRising Blog  
December 6, 2012

Every year, without fail, on talk shows, in magazines, and even among friends and family, the holidays provide fodder for the same lament: how are we to be healthy during a season that holds eating – particularly foods high in calories and sugar – at its core? And every year as I hear this common refrain, I puzzle over the discussion, because it wholly misses one of the largest contributors to poor nutrition year-round: junk food marketing to children and families.

As a health advocate, I grapple with the numbers every day. The food and beverage industry spends upwards of **\$2 billion marketing** to kids every year – with access to children in schools, in stores, on television, and increasingly on the internet.

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## National Council of La Raza

The National Council of La Raza (NCLR), the largest Hispanic civil rights and advocacy organization in the United States, works to improve opportunities for Hispanic Americans. Through its network of 300 affiliated community-based organizations, NCLR reaches millions of Hispanics each year in 41 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. NCLR develops and implements health education and prevention programs and conducts health advocacy activities in partnership with its affiliate network to protect the health and well-being of the Latino community. NCLR works to improve nutrition in the Latino community by increasing access to federal food assistance programs, resources and education to ensure families can meet at the dinner table for a healthy meal.

1126 16th Street, NW, Suite 600  
Washington, D.C. 20036-4845  
(202) 785-1670  
[www.nclr.org](http://www.nclr.org)



## Positioning

NCLR stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in education, health and nutrition in the Latino community
- Involved in activism aimed at removing unhealthy foods and beverages from schools and improving health and well-being of the Latino community
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely Congress, the FDA and leading food and beverage manufacturers
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support of initiatives aimed at promoting water over sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to improving access to healthy foods and combatting obesity in the Latino community
  - [Healthy Kids, Healthy Schools](#) program works to combat childhood obesity in the Latino community through nutrition education in schools about healthy food and beverages

## Media Coverage

[Beautiful but deadly: Latinos' curves put them at risk](#)

By Cindy Rodriguez

CNN

October 17, 2013

Because food and family play such an important role in the Latino community, organizations like the National Council for La Raza are focusing their efforts on implementing more healthy shopping programs like the "Comprando Rico y Sano" (Buying Delicious and Healthy) to help Hispanics make healthier and more economical choices when grocery shopping.

"Familism is very strong in the Latino culture," said Manuela McDonough, program manager for the Institute for Hispanic Health at the National Council of La Raza. "The act of sitting down at the dinner table is more important than the actual food."

[Michelle Obama, Keynote Speaker At NCLR, Discusses Obesity Among Hispanic Children](#)

By Ana Benedetti

The Huffington Post

July 23, 2013

Obama was the keynote speaker for this year's NCLR conference, a huge event held annually that deals with Latino issues from health to immigration. She took the opportunity to discuss an issue that affects the Hispanic community greatly: childhood obesity.

"Forty percent of Hispanic children are overweight and 50 percent are on track to develop diabetes," the first lady said. "While food might be love, the truth is we are loving ourselves and our kids to death. We need to step up, we need to start questioning the behaviors and beliefs that are making our kids sick."



## National Physicians Alliance

The National Physicians Alliance creates research and education programs that promote health and foster active engagement of physicians with their communities to achieve high quality, affordable health care for all. The NPA offers a professional home to physicians across medical specialties who share a commitment to professional integrity and health justice. Believing that the best way to win public trust is to earn it, the organization accepts no funding from pharmaceutical or medical device companies.

888 16<sup>th</sup> Street, NW  
Suite 800, PMB 835  
Washington, D.C. 20006  
(202) 420-7896  
[www.npalliance.org](http://www.npalliance.org)

## Positioning

The NPA stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in public health
- Involved in activism surrounding taxes on sugar-sweetened beverages
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences and the health care provider community
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely Congress, the FDA and beverage manufacturers
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support of initiatives aimed at promoting water over sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options in schools
  - Released a [Policy Statement](#) in support of taxes on sugary beverages to combat obesity
  - [Contacted](#) HHS with a host of other organizations calling for the Surgeon General to prepare a report on the health effects of sugary drinks and to issue a call to action to spur national efforts to reduce sugary drink consumption

## Media Coverage

[Food Day: Some pre-holiday season food for thought](#)

By Jean Silver-Isenstadt

Executive Director, National Physicians Association

*The Baltimore Sun*

October 24, 2011





Some light lifts: eat an apple, reject a soda and drink water instead; rent the documentary "Food, Inc." to learn more about our industrial food supply; read nutrition labels; join the "Meatless Monday" movement; support a local farmer's market; or visit websites like [healthyfoodaction.org](http://healthyfoodaction.org) and the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future (<http://www.jhsph.edu/clf/>) to learn more about food policy and advocacy opportunities.

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## The Notah Begay III Foundation

Created by Notah Begay, III in 2005, the Notah Begay III Foundation (NB3 Foundation) was established as an answer to an overwhelming statistic – one in two Native American children born since 2000 will develop Type 2 diabetes in their lifetime. The Foundation's mission is to prevent Type 2 diabetes and its leading cause, childhood obesity, through sports and health and wellness programs that are based on proven best practices. This holistic approach to programming and evaluation addresses Native Americans' nutrition, physical fitness and community-building needs, with the goal of producing measurable, long-term change in the health of tribal communities.

290 Prairie Star Road  
Santa Ana Pueblo, NM 87004  
(505) 867-0775  
[www.nb3foundation.org](http://www.nb3foundation.org)

## Positioning

The NB3 Foundation stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in nutrition and wellness for Native American children
- Involved in activism that supports beverage taxes that incentivize consumers to choose healthier drink options
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely Congress
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support for federal and state penny-per-ounce taxes on sodas and sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options



- [Turning the Tide for Native American Children](#) report addresses the NB3 Foundation's recommendation to remove sweetened beverages from school concessions, in addition to supporting legislation to tax sweetened beverages

## Media Coverage

### [Health-Food Business Taps Into its Native American Roots](#)

By Christopher Hann  
Entrepreneur.com  
December 1, 2012

For Begay, sustaining tribal culture is just as important as helping kids make healthy choices. "Most of these tribes have been integrated with buffalo for more than 500 years," he says. "Our mission has always been to be reflective of the communities that we work with, and this is a way for us to do that."

### [Notah Begay III targets diabetes](#)

The Associated Press (via ESPN)  
April 29, 2011

A four-time PGA Tour winner, Begay is issuing a challenge to Indian youth to follow his example by exercising every day and eating healthy.

The challenge is part of the work being done by the golfer's charity, the NB3 Foundation, which has a goal of fighting obesity and diabetes among Native-American youth. The foundation is developing programs aimed specifically at helping native youth and at encouraging more tribal leaders to set an example.



## The Pew Charitable Trusts

The Pew Charitable Trusts helps states ensure that all foods served in U.S. schools are healthy. With a long history of informing policy, Pew supports states in improving the nutrition of meals, snacks and beverages available to students across the country. Pew applies a data-driven, analytical approach to developing strategies that make government more effective. The institution's initiatives have delivered results at national, state and local levels.

One Commerce Square  
2005 Market Street, Suite 2800  
Philadelphia, PA 19103-7077  
(215) 575-9050  
[www.pewtrusts.org](http://www.pewtrusts.org)

## Positioning

The Pew Charitable Trusts stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in food policy and public health
- Involved in activism that supports removing unhealthy beverages and foods from schools nationwide and improving access to healthy options
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely Congress, the FDA and leading beverage manufacturers
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support for removing unhealthy foods and beverages from schools
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options

## Media Coverage

### [More Teens Drinking Sugary Beverages, Study Finds](#)

By Jane Meredith Adams

EdSource.org

October 17, 2013

Public perception may hold that iced teas and fruit drinks are a better choice than sodas, yet high concentrations of sugar in the beverages make them something to consume in moderation, experts said.

"If we could control access to all the food choices students have from the moment they step on campus until 30 minutes after school, when most of the kids are getting on the bus for home, we'd be making a major impact on their diet," said Jessica Donze Black, director of the Kids' Safe and Healthful Foods Project, a health advocacy group at The Pew Charitable Trusts.

### [New Guidelines Planned on School Vending Machines](#)

By Ron Nixon

*The New York Times*

February 20, 2013

Jessica Donze Black, director of the Kids' Safe and Healthful Foods Project at the Pew Charitable Trusts in Washington, gave the food industry credit for trying to reduce sugary drinks and fatty snacks, but said the voluntary guidelines did not go far enough.

"What we have is a fragmented system where some schools do a good job of limiting access to junk food and others don't," she said. "We need a national standard that ensures that all schools meet some minimum guidelines."

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## The Praxis Project

The Praxis Project is a nonprofit movement support intermediary and an institution of color that supports organizing efforts and change work at local, regional and national levels. Focused on movement building for fundamental change, the Project's mission is to build healthy communities by changing the power relationships between people of color and the institutional structures that affect their lives.

7731 Alaska Avenue, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20012  
(202) 234-5921  
[www.thepraxisproject.org](http://www.thepraxisproject.org)

## Positioning

The Praxis Project stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- Involved in activism that supports beverage taxes and removal of sugary beverages from schools
- Past public support of initiatives aimed at promoting water over sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to promoting healthy beverage options in schools
  - Partnered with National Alliance on Nutrition and Activity to promote a [letter writing campaign](#) to support the USDA school nutrition standards, noting sugary drinks should not be sold in schools

## Public Statements

### [Fighting for Clean Water in Inner-City Schools](#)

By Makani Themba  
The Praxis Project  
October 2009

The EPA is the agency tasked with oversight of drinking water quality, but it has little power to enforce water safety regulations. Yet safe drinking water is critical to kids' health and academic performance. Water helps brains function efficiently. Drinking water is critical to maintaining healthy weight. When kids do not drink water (and thanks to limited access, many kids don't drink enough water), they often drink soda and other high sugar beverages instead, causing weight issues and poor dental health.

In fact, health research increasingly points to soda [\[PDF\]](#) as a primary factor in obesity.



## **Salud America!**

The RWJF Research Network to Prevent Obesity Among Latino Children

### Salud America! (UT Health Science Center San Antonio)

Salud America! is a national online network of researchers, community group leaders, decision-makers, and members of the public working together to support health policy and environmental changes that can help reverse the Latino childhood obesity epidemic. Salud America! serves as a clearinghouse—with news, research, maps, videos, resources and successful stories of change—on making healthy changes in Latino communities across the nation.

The Institute for Health Promotion Research  
The University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio  
7411 John Smith, Suite 1000  
San Antonio, TX 78229  
(210) 562-6500  
<https://salud-america.org/>

### Positioning

Salud America! stands to support Voices for Healthy Kids' stance on sugar-sweetened beverages based on the following:

- High impact in nutrition, food marketing and public health
- Involved in activism that supports beverage sales tax and excise tax initiatives that incentivize consumers to choose healthy drink options
- High visibility and credibility with its target audiences, academia (University of Texas affiliate), thought leaders and the media
- Ability to impact critical target audiences, namely Latino communities and organizations
- Strength of communication channels
- Past public support for federal and state penny-per-ounce taxes on sodas and sugary beverages
- Alignment of organizational mission with American Heart Association's policy statement on sugar-sweetened beverages
- Relevant programming and educational initiatives, particularly pertaining to healthy beverage options
  - [Sugary Drinks and Latino Kids](#) issue brief outlines research specific to the impact of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages on Latin American children
  - Sugary Drinks 101 for Latinos summarizes research on sugar-sweetened beverage consumption and revenue implications of soda tax and offers lifestyle change strategies to combat childhood obesity

### Media Coverage

[Latino kids consume “above average” amount of sugary drinks](#)

By Dr. Amelie Ramirez



NBC Latino  
October 3, 2013

Raising the price of sugary drinks could reduce consumption among Latino kids, and potentially improve weight outcomes, according to Salud America! and Bridging the Gap, two national research programs funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

[Research: Latino kids consume more sugary drinks](#)

By Sheila Hotchkin  
HSC News  
October 3, 2013

New research, a video and infographic highlight strategies to reduce consumption of sugary drinks by Latino kids. The new package of research materials is produced jointly by Salud America! and Bridging the Gap, two national research programs funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation