
Alliance for a Healthier Generation

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The Alliance for a Healthier Generation – a joint initiative of the William J. Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Association – has worked with representatives of Cadbury Schweppes, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo, and the American Beverage Association to establish new guidelines to limit portion sizes and reduce the number of calories available to children during the school day. Under these guidelines, only lower calorie and nutritious beverages will be sold to schools. This is the Alliance's first industry agreement as part of its Healthy Schools Program, and it affects close to 35 million students across the country.

These science-based guidelines are just one part of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation's overall strategy to help kids live healthier lives by decreasing excess calories consumed while increasing calories burned. Along with the Alliance's other strategies, these guidelines will significantly impact the epidemic of childhood obesity. Launched in February of this year, the Alliance's Healthy Schools Program works with schools to help curb obesity among their students by creating environments that foster healthy lifestyles.

These guidelines will cap the number of calories available in beverages in schools at 100 calories per container, except for certain milks and juices whose nutritional value warrants the higher number of calories -- a logical, and proactive step toward helping our kids live healthier lives.

Under the terms of the agreement, the beverage industry will work to spread these standards to 75% of the nation's schools prior to the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year. The industry will strive to fully implement these guidelines prior to the beginning of the 2009-2010 school year, provided schools and school districts are willing to amend existing contracts.

"This is an important announcement and a bold step forward in the struggle to help America's kids live healthier lives," said President Clinton, a leader of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation. "These industry leaders recognize that childhood obesity is a problem and have stepped up to help solve it. I commend them for being here today and for taking this important step. There is a lot of work to be done to turn this problem around but this is a big step in the right direction and it will help improve the diet of millions of students across the country."

Governor Mike Huckabee, a leader of the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and Chairman of the National Governors Association, said, "This agreement is an important example of industry voluntarily working with others to address one of the most critical challenges facing our nation -- childhood obesity. I commend the parties involved in this agreement and look forward to seeing its positive impact on the health of our children."

In addition to the Alliance's efforts, the National Governors Association and a task force of six governors have also been working on reducing childhood obesity with industry representatives for the past year.

Under these newly established guidelines, elementary schools will only sell water, and eight ounce, calorie- capped servings of certain juices with no added sweeteners and servings of fat free and low fat regular and flavored milks. Middle schools will apply the elementary school standard with portion sizes increased slightly to 10 oz.

In addition to the beverages available in elementary and middle schools, high schools will also sell no calorie and low calorie drinks, such as bottled water, diet and unsweetened teas, diet sodas, fitness water, low calorie sports drinks, flavored water, and seltzers; as well as light juices and sports drinks.

At least half of available beverages in high schools will now be water, no calorie, and low calorie selections. Light juices and sports drinks will be sold in 12 ounce containers with no more than 100 calories per container, while 100% juices and non fat and low fat milks will also be sold in containers up to 12 ounces.

"This really is a groundbreaking agreement," said American Heart Association President Robert Eckel, MD. "Many school districts are headed in the same direction as our guidelines. We commend the many leaders and advocates who have fought for healthier school environments. These new guidelines will help expedite those changes and support parents and students in districts that have not yet been able to improve the nutrition of their schools."

Donald R. Knauss, President, Coca-Cola North America, said, "Our broad product portfolio offers great taste, refreshment, hydration and nutrition, and we're pleased to use that portfolio to join the Alliance in helping to reduce calories and increase nutrition in our schools. By combining our product offerings with the nutrition and physical education programs we support, we can help put schools at the forefront of the efforts to create a healthier generation."

"There are no shortcuts to solving the obesity problem," said Dawn Hudson, President and CEO of Pepsi-Cola North America. "It's a much broader issue than what students eat and drink. It is also about what they learn and what they do. This Alliance provides schools with real-world, common sense solutions that give students the tools they need to lead healthier lives. We're delighted that our products are part of the equation."

"At Cadbury Schweppes, we are incredibly proud of the brands that we make," said Gil Cassagne, president and CEO, Cadbury Schweppes Americas Beverages. "We've created brands people love for over 200 years and are pleased to offer consumers a wide variety and choice of great tasting products that can fit into a balanced lifestyle. We are taking an important step forward by working with parents, community leaders and school officials to collectively focus on healthier lifestyles for children."

Susan K. Neely, President and Chief Executive Officer, American Beverage Association, said, "The American Beverage Association welcomes the opportunity to work with the Alliance for a Healthier Generation in providing new beverage guidelines for schools. The new guidelines will continue our industry's work to provide more lower-calorie and nutritious or functional beverages for students. Limiting calories in schools is a sensible approach that acknowledges our industry's long-standing belief that school wellness efforts must focus on teaching kids to consume a balanced diet and be physically active."

This agreement is the result of several months of talks between the Alliance for a Healthier Generation and representatives of the beverage industry. The parties explored practical ways to provide children with healthier options as part of the Alliance's larger efforts.

The American beverage industry created a school vending policy last year. These new guidelines strengthen the current ABA policy by further reducing the availability of caloric beverages during the traditional school day and applying these same standards to the extended school day when before and after school programs, such as clubs, yearbook, band and choir practice, student government, drama, and childcare/latchkey programs, take place.

Beginning in 2007 and annually thereafter, the beverage industry will compile the percentage of schools they have under contract that are in compliance with this policy. This information will be made publicly available through the American Beverage Association beginning in August 2007.

About The Alliance for a Healthier Generation:

The Clinton Foundation and the American Heart Association partnered in May 2005 to create a new generation of healthy Americans by addressing one of the nation's leading public health threats -- childhood obesity. The Alliance focuses on preventing childhood obesity and creating healthier lifestyles for all children.

The Alliance targets several areas that will spark change and slow the increasing rates of childhood obesity in the U.S. and encourage healthier lifestyles for young people. The effort will focus on four key areas: industry; schools, healthcare professionals and kids. For more information, visit www.healthiergeneration.org.

The Alliance launched its Healthy Schools Program in February of this year. The program takes a comprehensive approach by recognizing schools that improve nutrition in the foods sold in schools; that increase both physical education and physical activity before, during and after the school day; that provide nutrition education; and that establish staff wellness programs. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation is a major funder of the Healthy Schools Program.