

WHY HEALTHY VENDING?

In King County, over half of adults and nearly one-third of children are overweight or obese, increasing their risk for serious health problems like diabetes and heart disease. A 2011 [study](#) found that Americans consume an average of 25% of their daily calories from snacks and sugary beverages that are often found in vending machines.

- ✓ There is a growing demand for more nutritious, convenient options where people live, work, and play. According to a 2010 Snack Food Association [report](#), 74% of consumers are trying to eat healthier, and sales of healthier snacks are outpacing traditional snack foods by 3 to 1.
- ✓ Healthy vending can benefit your organization by improving the health and productivity of your staff and by demonstrating your commitment to worksite and community wellness.

WHY USE THE KING COUNTY HEALTHY VENDING GUIDELINES?

The [King County Healthy Vending Guidelines](http://tinyurl.com/HealthyVendingGuidelines) (<http://tinyurl.com/HealthyVendingGuidelines>) distinguish between highly processed foods that are high in fat, salt, and sugar, and healthy, nutrient rich options like fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

	HEALTHIEST	HEALTHIER	LIMITED
Content	Nutrient-rich primarily whole foods with little added fat, sugar, or sodium	Processed or refined foods with some added fat, sugar, or sodium	Processed or refined foods with little nutrients, high in added fat, sugar, and sodium
Snack Examples	Fresh or dried fruit and vegetables, unsalted nuts	Baked chips, 50% or more whole grain bars and crackers, trail mix	Regular potato chips, candy bars, and fruit gummy snacks
Beverage Examples	Plain water, fat-free or 1% unflavored milk, unsweetened tea and essence flavored water	100% juice, fat-free or 1% flavored milk, beverages ≤ 10 calories such as diet sodas and flavored water	Sugary beverages, teas, and energy drinks

WHAT CAN HEALTHY VENDING LOOK LIKE?

- A set percentage (i.e. 50%, 100%) of items meets the “healthiest” and “healthier” criteria of the King County Healthy Vending Guidelines, ensuring that healthy options are available.
- Healthy options are labeled and are placed at eye level in the machines.
- Healthy options are competitively priced and/or are cheaper than the other items
- Healthy options are promoted by marketing materials around the vending machines, in key locations, and in e-mails, wellness newsletters, and social media.

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Be a Leader: Commit to Healthy Vending

WHAT ARE THE STEPS TO GET HEALTHY VENDING AT OUR ORGANIZATION?

From the [King County Healthy Vending Implementation Toolkit](http://tinyurl.com/VendingToolkit) (<http://tinyurl.com/VendingToolkit>)

I. Plan for Change

- Get approval from decision-makers
- Develop a team process
- Gather information from:
 - Your organization - i.e. how vending profits are used, current food policies
 - The vending contractor – i.e. what healthy items they offer
 - Your target audience - i.e. their interests through presentations and surveying
- Develop implementation plan
 - Determine healthy vending percentage (i.e. 50%, 100%) and timeline
 - Select healthy vending products by doing taste tests with your target audience
 - Develop pricing strategy – i.e. healthy items are cheaper than other items
 - Develop a culturally-appropriate outreach plan to market the healthy changes
 - Incorporate decisions into a contract and set a celebratory launch date

II. Implement the Change

- Promote the change by implementing the outreach plan to market the healthy changes
- Have the vending contractor change the products, and launch the new vending program

III. Conduct Evaluation

- Document process and outcomes, and monitor the machines
- Evaluate vending usage and sales

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

How would healthy vending affect our profits from the machines?

Healthy vending profits are dependent on the amount of outreach to your audience (i.e. nutrition education, surveying, taste tests, and marketing) and how the healthy items have been priced and placed in comparison to the other items. The [Financial Implications of Healthy Vending](#) gives examples of organizations that have seen an increase in sales.

Our organization has limited capacity. How important is outreach and marketing?

People may not be as familiar with new healthy options compared to the traditional vending items. Taste tests are a fun and engaging way to encourage people to try the healthy products before having to buy them. In addition, outreach and marketing increases people's awareness of their vending choices while drawing in new customers that are drawn to the healthy choices.

What should I tell my co-workers who are concerned that their favorite items will be removed?

Share with your colleagues that the healthy options being introduced typically replace the unhealthy items that are not selling well. Also, remind your colleagues that they can still bring in their favorite snacks and beverages from home.