

A large, stylized graphic of an apple in shades of orange and white, positioned in the background. The apple is composed of several overlapping, rounded shapes that create a sense of depth and movement. The colors transition from a light peach to a deeper orange, with white highlights that define the apple's form.

HEALTHIER VENDING: Introduction to Healthier Vending

Why is Healthier Vending Important?

Residents in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, like in many other communities nationwide, struggle with maintaining a healthy weight. In 2010, 64% of Lancaster County adults were overweight or obese. During the 2009-2010 school year, 31.8% percent of students in grades K-12 in Lancaster County were overweight and obese. Selecting unhealthy options from vending machines is one of the contributing factors to this problem.

It is estimated that there are an estimated 216 vending machine operators in Pennsylvania and that vending machine sales in Pennsylvania will reach \$268.8 million. There are approximately 15 operators in the Lancaster County metropolitan area with estimated sales of \$4.1 million dollars. Sales are expected to grow to \$4.2 million dollars in 2013¹. Vendors with 20 or more machines have an impact on 85 to 90 percent of the industry², or 442,000 to 468,000 of Lancaster County's residents.

Although vending machines are a popular channel for convenient snack foods and beverages, they are often a source of less-than-healthy products³. A great majority of options are high in calories, fat, and added sugars, and low in nutrients. Popular items include candy, soft drinks, chips, cookies and cakes^{4,5}. The prevalence of junk food and sugar-sweetened beverages in vending machines does not support healthy nutritional choices and promotes the consumption of energy-dense foods and beverages, which has been linked to weight gain.

Who can use this toolkit?

Any organization with vending machines can use this toolkit. Also, organizations that are considering adding vending machines can use this resource. Here are some examples of organizations that will find this useful:

- Worksites
- Government Offices
- Hospitals
- Social Services Organizations
- Schools
- Youth Serving Organizations
- Community-Based Organizations
- Faith Communities



What Does the Research Say?

Research has shown that as weight increases to reach the levels referred to as “overweight” and “obesity,” the risks for the following conditions also increases⁶ :

- Coronary heart disease
- Type 2 diabetes
- Cancers (endometrial, breast, and colon)
- Hypertension (high blood pressure)
- Dyslipidemia (for example, high total cholesterol or high levels of triglycerides)
- Stroke
- Liver and Gallbladder disease
- Sleep apnea and respiratory problems
- Osteoarthritis (a degeneration of cartilage and its underlying bone within a joint)
- Gynecological problems (abnormal menses, infertility)

What Else Does the Research Say?

The Social-Ecological Model is often used to help individuals and organizations understand the factors that influence behavior. The model considers the complex interplay between individual, interpersonal, school, community, and public policy factors. It allows us to address the factors that put people at risk for preventable disease and injury.

Prevention efforts require a continuum of activities that address multiple levels of the model. To influence change in our community, efforts cannot be concentrated in one area of the model and not others. Therefore, it is not sufficient to address healthy eating in schools or implement programs for individuals, as these levels have limited reach. According to the social-ecological model, these five broad levels of influence — individual, interpersonal, schools, community, and public policy — interact both directly and indirectly to impact health. However, when policy changes are made — in communities, organizations, or workplaces — all individuals affected by these changes benefit.



Social-Ecological Model

What is Being Done in Our Community?

Lancaster County was the recipient of a Community Transformation Grant in 2011 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Since that time, Lighten Up Lancaster County and *LiveWELL* Lancaster County partners have been working to advance the national Healthy People 2020 goal of promoting health and reducing chronic disease risk through: (1) the consumption of healthful diets, and (2) the maintenance of healthy body weights. The Nutrition and Weight Status objectives for Healthy People 2020 reflect strong science supporting the health benefits of eating a healthful diet and maintaining a healthy body weight. The objectives also emphasize that efforts to change diet and weight should address individual behaviors, as well as the policies and environments that support these behaviors in settings such as schools, worksites, health care organizations, and communities⁷.

To help Lancaster County achieve these goals, Lighten Up Lancaster County and *LiveWELL* Lancaster County are encouraging organizations throughout the county to adopt Healthier Vending standards, ensuring that vending machines contain at least 50% healthier options that meet the nutrition requirements on page 19 in this toolkit. This will provide individuals with the choice to purchase a healthier or an unhealthy snack.

In the past, many organizations and wellness programs focused on screening and education to encourage individual behavior change and better health. However, today, there is a growing body of evidence that supports the notion that behavior change is best achieved with education is coupled with an environment that supports healthy choices. Cafeterias, snack bars, and other food service options are ideal areas to create healthier food environments. Vending machines with healthier offerings can also have a substantial impact.

Take the Pledge!

Now that you've downloaded the toolkit, it's time to take the pledge! If your organization is committed to promoting healthier lifestyles through nutrition and want to make improvements to the foods sold in your vending machines, sign the Snack on This! Healthier Vending Pledge today! You can sign the pledge electronically by visiting:

www.surveymonkey.com/s/BCZH6LD

By completing the online pledge form, you will receive resources and tips, access to webinars, and training materials to help you implement Healthier Vending in your organization.



How Does This Relate to My Organization?

You and your organization can play an important role in supporting healthy eating habits by making healthy options available and attractive to youth and adults. Regardless of organization type, this guide will help you choose healthier products by providing:

- Healthier vending guidelines for food and beverage products
- Sample policies to support and sustain healthier vending
- Marketing strategies to promote healthier options

Healthier Vending Success Stories



Healthier Vending Success Stories Across the Nation

- [Boston, Massachusetts](#)
- [New York City, New York](#)
- [Arlington, Virginia](#)
- [Bay Area/ San Diego, California](#)
- [Clark County, Washington](#)
- [Knox County Health Department](#)
- [Alabama Department of Public Health](#)
- [Miami-Dade County, Florida](#)

Geisinger Health System

Geisinger Health System is committed to the health and wellness of its employees and visitors. Recently, Geisinger revamped its dining options in all of its locations. Additionally, Geisinger passed a healthy vending policy in 2011. At the time, Geisinger's vending company was not able to meet the needs of the health system, so a contract went up for bid in the community.

Geisinger has not reported a decline in sales as a result of the change to trans fat-free and 50% healthy vending machines. Geisinger's vendor appears pleased with sales in their machines. The biggest challenge for Geisinger is ensuring that the vending machines are consistently stocked with 50% healthy items.

When Geisinger decided to make the change to offer healthy vending options, they worked to promote the change around their buildings, educating individuals on the new vending machine offerings. Although there have been some challenges along the way, having a good relationship with their vendor has allowed Geisinger to have a successful healthy vending program.

For more information on Geisinger's healthier vending initiative, please contact:

Rebecca Crotti
(570) 808-3530

recrotti@geisinger.edu

Join the other Lancaster County Organizations that have passed 100% Healthier Vending policies:

- Lancaster City YMCA
- JP McCaskey High School
- McCaskey East High School
- Wheatland Middle School
- Reynolds Middle School
- Conestoga Valley High School
- Lancaster Catholic High School

For more information on how to bring 100% healthier vending to your organization or school, please contact LiveWELL Lancaster County staff at Contact@LiveWellLancaster.org

If your organization has a healthier vending policy or a 100% healthier vending machine, please let us know at Contact@LiveWellLancaster.org