

## **Getting Started with *Pledge the Practice! Pass the Policy!!***

### **Why Healthy Beverage and Food Policies?**

The Bay Area Nutrition and Physical Activity Collaborative (BANPAC) has led a regional ReThink Your Drink initiative, including an annual Soda Free Summer campaign originally developed by Alameda County Nutrition Services, since 2008. Hundreds of thousands of Bay Area residents have learned about the amount of sugar in commonly consumed beverages and foods and thousands have pledged to go “soda free” for the summer. A brief summarizing the 2008 survey research study by Field Research and Samuels and Associates concludes that “The Soda Free Summer campaign was successful in engaging a variety of organizations and residents across the Bay Area, with the outcome that many people made healthier beverage choices and many organizations improved their onsite practices regarding beverages.”<sup>1</sup> Despite documented successes, in year four of BANPAC’s initiative many of our member organizations are still serving sweetened beverages at agency events and housing soda machines on their premises—for their employees and clients. Still more have worksite environments with a host of “contributed” or “for sale” snacks such as doughnuts, cake and cookies that employees must face as they struggle to eat a healthy diet. These actions conflict with the message of BANPAC’s ReThink Your Drink campaign.

As we know, the obesity epidemic is a major public health challenge of our time. Regular consumption of sugary drinks has been associated with weight gain and risk of overweight and obesity. In addition to weight gain, higher consumption of sugary beverages is associated with the development of type 2 diabetes.<sup>2</sup> Sugary beverages that used to be served on special occasions or at parties have multiplied in number and now regularly replace water for many of us. The annual soft drink production per person in the US has tripled since 1954.<sup>3</sup>

**It’s time for all BANPAC member organizations to take our commitment to good health to the next level by developing or enhancing healthy beverage or healthy food and beverage policies at our agencies or businesses** Use this toolkit to help you develop or enhance the practices and policies at your organization. Let’s get 100% of BANPAC organizations to lead by example and implement healthy beverage or healthy food and beverage policies!

### **How to Support the Development of Healthy Food and Beverage Policies**

**Identify a champion in your organization** who can lead the effort to improve your organization’s food and beverage environment. Your champion may sit on your organization’s Board or be an executive manager. A champion may be someone motivated to improve their own health through a personal commitment to prevention or an experience with the ravages of type 2 Diabetes—perhaps a relative or close friend has the disease. Research your possibilities and ask coworkers who might know. Even after careful consideration, not everyone can identify a champion in his or her organization, so the next option is to search for allies.

**Identify or develop allies in your organization** who can support the development of healthy beverage or healthy food and beverages policies.

- ✓ If your organization serves children, families, low-income populations or people of color, **your mission or goal could point to such a policy**. All these groups are targeted by manufacturers of sugary beverages. Families can be motivated to make these changes because of concern for their children. Low-income populations consume higher amounts of sugary beverages. They and people of color suffer more from the consequences of obesity, including higher rates of diabetes. Your organization might start by considering what is served to your constituents—and if you are contributing to the community’s health or detracting from it?
  
- ✓ **If your organization’s mission is involved with health, consider the power of changing norms in the Bay Area.**
  - **Show the attached PowerPoint slide presentation entitled Pledge the Practice & Pass the policy: *Let’s Create a Healthy Workplace*** to your co-workers and initiate a conversation about joining with organizations around the Bay Area who have instituted healthy food and beverage policies. The slide presentation can be modified for your organization. You can add your organization’s logo and name—but also the goals, mission, and successes as they pertain to this effort.
  
  - **Your organization may want to join others around your county or in the Bay Area region that are leading by example** and walking the talk, so to speak. Not only have they participated in the ReThink Your Drink initiative and/or Soda Free Campaign, but they want to support that education by improving their beverage and/or food environment where people spend most of their waking hours: at work.
  
- ✓ **Approach your organization’s Worksite Wellness Committee.** Share some of the Assessment Tools in this Toolkit with the committee—and encourage the committee to survey employees about their own health concerns. Prevention of diabetes, heart disease, obesity and overweight are high on many people’s list of personal health concerns.
  - **No Wellness Committee? Get one started by working with your Human Resources Department or whatever department/manager might work with you on this.** In some organizations, Human Resources may want to work with you—in larger organizations it may be another department, such as Risk Management. If HR is not available or interested, approach the manager of another department whose goals may coincide with modeling healthy behaviors to the community or among the workforce at your agency.

- ✓ Once you have identified a champion and/or allies for your effort, **use the tools in this binder to assist you to develop a model policy for your organization and devise ways to help your co-workers implement it.**
- ✓ **Ask BANPAC to help you develop strategies that might work for your organizational environment.** BANPAC ReThink Your Drink/Soda Free Summer County Liaisons can be found at [http://www.banpac.org/resources\\_sugar\\_savvy.htm](http://www.banpac.org/resources_sugar_savvy.htm) . Or contact the BANPAC Coordinator @ [susan.karlins@phd.sccgov.org](mailto:susan.karlins@phd.sccgov.org)
- ✓ **Let BANPAC know what works for you and what doesn't.** We will be updating the binder. **Updates for this toolkit will be available at [www.banpac.org](http://www.banpac.org)**

1. Getting the Soda Free Message: The Bay Area Reduces Soda Consumption Following Soda Free Summer Campaign, Samuels and Associates 2008.
2. Malik, Vasanti S., et al. Sugar-Sweetened Beverages and Risk of Metabolic Syndrome and Type 2 Diabetes: A meta-analysis. *Diabetes Care* 33:2477–2483, 2010)
3. Ritchie, Lorrene, Ph.D., Ten Years of Research on Sugar Sweetened Beverages and Obesity: Where We've Been... Where We're Going. Atkins Center for Weight and Health, UC Berkeley, address to BANPAC meeting 4/28/2010 Available at [http://cwh.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/primary\\_pdfs/Ritchie.Sweetened\\_Beverages\\_Presentation\\_4-28-10.pdf](http://cwh.berkeley.edu/sites/default/files/primary_pdfs/Ritchie.Sweetened_Beverages_Presentation_4-28-10.pdf)