

Making water the drink of choice in sport

Removing 'red' drinks off display at Gippsland Regional Sport Complex

In line with Wellington Shire Council's goal to decrease the daily consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) in the region by 10 per cent, Gippsland Regional Sport Complex introduced a nudge to promote water over SSBs in the canteen. Baseline data from drinks sales was collected over a four-week period and then SSBs, or 'red' drinks, such as soft drinks and sports drinks, were taken off display and sales data was collected for another four weeks. 'Green' and 'amber' drinks, including water and 100 per cent fruit juice, were displayed on one side of a two-door fridge while 'red' drinks were kept in the other side, hidden behind GippSport posters promoting the consumption of water.

The nudge was successful: sales of cold 'green' drinks increased whilst sales of cold 'red' and 'amber' drinks reduced without impacting revenue. The changes also increased awareness of the sugar levels in soft drinks and the importance of water as the drink of choice in sport.

Impact of the initiative at Gippsland Regional Sport Complex:



Increase in the sales of 'green' drinks while 'red' and 'amber' drink sales reduced.



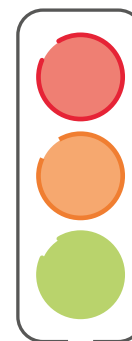
A positive impact on revenue and the added benefit of greater consumption of water.




No negative feedback to the change – those that noticed the change reacted positively.




Increased community awareness of the sugar levels in many drinks and the importance of water.



Gippsland Regional Sport Complex used the Victorian Government's *Healthy choices: food and drink guidelines* traffic light system to classify foods and beverages.

 **Red:** Limit intake

 **Amber:** Choose carefully

 **Green:** Best choice

Impact of the trial on future policy at Gippsland Regional Sport Complex:



The venue is currently working with GippSport to reduce the number of 'red' drinks and increase both 'green' and 'amber' options.



The changes will also be implemented at a number of other sport and recreational facilities within the Wellington Shire.

“
Changes to the way beverages are displayed in canteens can drive change in behaviour. Simply reducing the amount of sugary drinks displayed, or removing them from display altogether ... can increase the sale of healthier alternatives without impacting revenue.”

– Ryan Evans, GippSport Program Coordinator

Keys to success

The Gippsland Sports Complex identified areas that were key to success of the trial:



Posters promoting the consumption of water on the fridges increased the educational value of the nudge.



A simple re-organisation of the fridge means there was little change to the operation of the canteen.



Recording pre- and post-nudge data was a great way to evaluate success of the nudge.



Aligning to local health and wellbeing plans was a motivating factor.

“

It just makes sense to promote the consumption of sugar-free beverages to complement an active lifestyle.”

– Ryan Evans, GippSport Program Coordinator

Recommendations for making healthy choice the easy choice in sport and recreation centres



Use the opportunity to educate the community about healthy choices.



Record baseline sales data to give a true evaluation comparison.



Keep it simple – hide ‘red’ drinks behind posters to keep the canteen operating smoothly.

The Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 requires all public organisations in Victoria to facilitate an environment and culture where healthy choices are easy choices for all Victorians.

For more resources and information about how to support sport organisations create welcoming and healthy environments, including healthy food and drink choices, visit: <https://vicsport.com.au/healthy-welcoming-sport>

For more information about other organisations making the healthy choice the easy choice, visit: www.vichealth.vic.gov.au/easychoice

For more information and support with implementing The Victorian Government’s Healthy Choices guidelines in sport and recreation centres, visit: www.heas.health.vic.gov.au/healthy-choices/sport-and-recreation-centres-and-parks



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