

A soft drink free event.

Cancer Council Queensland encourages you to host a soft drink free event!

We are concerned about the consumption of sugary drinks in the community as they provide excess kilojoules which can lead to weight gain and obesity. Being overweight or obese can lead to a variety of health problems including type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some types of cancer.

Your event is an excellent opportunity to make a difference to the health and well-being of your community.

Did you know?

- A 600ml bottle of soft drink contains 16 teaspoons of sugar and about 1000 unnecessary kilojoules.
- Sugary drinks account for the greatest proportion of added sugar in the Australian diet.
- Drinking a sugary drink each day significantly increases your risk of tooth decay and erosion.
- Queensland has one of the highest rates of both adult and child obesity nationally, with 64 per cent of adults and 26 per cent of children weighing in overweight or obese.
- At least one third of cancer cases are preventable by simple healthy lifestyle changes, including maintaining a healthy weight, eating a healthy diet, being SunSmart, limiting alcohol, quitting smoking and being active.



Image credit of Rethink Sugary Drinks: <http://www.rethinksugarydrink.org.au/downloads/aboriginal-rethink-poster.pdf>

Creating a soft drink free event can sound daunting but healthy events are engaging, mission focused, important for the community and you might also be surprised by how many people are looking for healthy options. Through using Cancer Council Queensland's handy recourses, creating a soft drink free event will be easier than you think.

Every minute, every hour, every day.

How to create a soft drink free event?

- A soft drink free event promotes availability of free tap and purchased bottled water.
- Other drinks sold at your soft drink free event should be from the healthy choices **GREEN** and **AMBER** categories while **RED** drinks should not be sold.
- As a stepping stone start by removing all soft drinks (fizzy drinks) from your event and then remove the remaining sugary drinks (such as sports drinks, fruit drinks and flavored waters) at any future events you may organise.

GREEN (best choice)

AMBER (choose carefully)

RED (limit, have less or none)

Food and drink vendors and community members should be encouraged to promote and sell drinks from the **GREEN** or **AMBER** list. The drinks in each category are outlined below:

GREEN

- ☐ Plain water, plain sparkling water, plain mineral water, plain soda water.
- ☐ Sparkling water with a hint of flavour (no added sugar).
- ☐ Reduced fat plain milk.
- ☐ Plain milk alternatives – calcium fortified (such as soy, oat, rice or almond drink).
- ☐ Reduced fat flavoured milk and milk alternatives 250–300ml.
- ☐ Tea with little/no added sugar (e.g. plain, decaffeinated, herbal, chai).
- ☐ Coffee with reduced-fat milk and little/no sugar.

AMBER

- ☐ Unsweetened fruit juice, up to 250ml portion (no added sugar).
- ☐ Full cream plain (unflavoured) milk and milk alternatives.
- ☐ Reduced-fat and full cream flavoured milk with 900–1,600kJ per portion.
- ☐ Artificially sweetened diet, low-joule, no sugar or zero drinks (with no added sugar). It is recommended these are provided in the smallest sizes available.
- ☐ Ice crushes based on at least 99 per cent fruit juice with no added sugar in serve sizes up to 250ml.

RED (not recommended for events)

- ☐ Regular soft drinks
- ☐ Energy drinks
- ☐ Sports drinks
- ☐ Iced tea
- ☐ Cordials and fruit drinks
- ☐ Flavoured mineral waters
- ☐ Sports and flavoured waters
- ☐ Ice crushes
- ☐ Full cream and reduced-fat flavoured milks >1600kJ per serve

Working with food vendors

Food and drink vendors will be vital to the success of your soft drink free event. Engaging them early and making your expectations clear will be key.

To support you, we have provided some key messages to help you communicate to vendors, other organisers or volunteers involved with your event and members of the community.

- Sugary drinks are linked to an increased risk of weight gain and obesity, which in turn increase the risk of a number of cancers.
- With your support we are aiming to create a healthy event.
- A soft drink free event means that the sale of regular soft drinks and energy drinks is prohibited. In addition, we would like to reduce the sale of sports drinks, iced teas, cordials and any other drinks that falls under the **RED** criteria. We recommend selling drinks that fall under the **GREEN** or **AMBER** criteria.
- Water should be offered as the preferred drink available in meal deals.
- Young Australians are very high consumers of sugar-sweetened beverages, and sugar-sweetened soft drinks in particular. The highest consumers of sugar-sweetened beverages are young males (19 to 24 years of age).
- The Australian Dietary Guidelines recommend limiting the intake of foods and drinks containing added sugars and in particular, limiting sugar-sweetened drinks. These recommendations have been based upon evidence of a probable association between sugar-sweetened beverage consumption and an increased risk of weight gain in adults and children. They are also based upon evidence of an association between soft drink consumption and an increased risk of dental caries in children.
- A regular 600ml bottle of soft drink contains about 16 teaspoons of sugar, and a regular 375ml can of soft drink contains about 10 teaspoons of sugar.
- Research shows that consuming one can of soft drink per day could lead to a weight gain of more than 5kg in one year, if you don't burn off the extra kilojoules.

FAQ's

What about diet soft drinks?

- Although diet soft drinks do not contain the same level of kilojoules as sugar-sweetened versions, Cancer Council still recommends selling water or low fat milk instead. Water is the preferred source for hydration and low fat milk provides important nutrients such as calcium and protein, especially for children. **The primary goal of a soft drink free event will be to avoid selling any soft drink, both diet and sugar-sweetened varieties.**

How do we encourage food vendors to avoid selling soft drinks and energy drinks?

- Food vendors should be contacted in the lead up to the event with plenty of notice and be clearly informed about the justification behind creating a soft drink event.

Additional Resources

- **Rethink Sugary Drink** is a partnership between 13 health and community organisations including Cancer Council and is committed to a series of recommendations for tackling the overconsumption of sugary drinks. A range of supportive resources are available on the website <http://www.rethinksugarydrink.org.au/>
- **Posters:**
- <http://www.rethinksugarydrink.org.au/downloads/time-to-rethink-poster.pdf>
- <http://www.rethinksugarydrink.org.au/downloads/what-are-sugary-drinks-doing-to-your-body.pdf>
- <http://www.rethinksugarydrink.org.au/tips-resources>
- **Smart Choices** – Healthy food and drink supply strategy for Queensland schools <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/healthy/docs/smart-choices-strategy.pdf>
- **Cancer Council Queensland** – Event support - <https://cancerqld.org.au/get-support/community-support/event-support/>
- **QUEST** - <https://cancerqld.org.au/quest>
- **Good Sports** – <http://goodsports.com.au/> poster 1 and poster 2

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