

Healthy Schools Healthy Communities

LET'S BUILD A HEALTHIER FUTURE

Healthy Concessions

A snapshot from Jefferson City, Missouri



In many towns across Missouri, schools, community buildings, and sports are central to daily life. Many sporting events and facilities feature food concessions, often sold to support athletic and community programs. For some families, the concession stand may be the only way to feed the family on a busy night! **Adding healthy concessions means that families have the option to make the healthy choice the easy choice.** Check out this snapshot to learn how community leaders in Jefferson City worked together to change policy and increase access to healthy food.



Getting Buy-In

As a first step, sit down with the head of the booster club or athletics department and individuals managing concessions. It's important to work collaboratively with those who are already involved to ensure they support efforts to make healthy concessions available. If you have multiple concession stands in your community, start with one as a pilot project. You'll be able to apply lessons learned to other stands. Where possible, update policies. By changing school or community policies to ensure healthy options are always available, you're guaranteeing long-term access to healthy food in your community.

Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice

At the end of the day, healthy concessions are really about having options. Families can't make a healthy choice if it's not an option. By making items like water, fruits, vegetables, and granola bars available, they have a chance to choose a healthy option over candy, chips, or soda. Purchase food and drinks at wholesale stores so that you can offer healthy concessions at the lowest price possible – making it more accessible for all families.

Tips to Create the Program

- Don't forget to promote the healthy snacks! Use a chalk board to promote the healthy options and costs. Place those items in view so kids and families know they are available.
- Engage high school athletes to promote healthy options. In Jefferson City, football players were featured in magazine ads promoting the new healthy snacks. As a bonus, the athletes were given leftover fresh fruit as a post-workout snack, leaving no waste.
- Update policies to ensure healthy options are part of the concessions stand long-term. Check out the Healthy Schools Healthy Communities [Healthy Concessions Toolkit](#) for guidance and templates.



Healthy concessions supported the Football Booster Club with revenue proceeds of over **\$2,500** in the 2016-2017 school year. Proceeds have remained steady over time. With the implementation of the Wellness Policy district-wide, these funds will support athletic needs across the district.

"With the addition of Healthy snack options in our concessions program here at the Jefferson City School District, we are able to provide nutritious, affordable options to busy families involved in our athletic activities. We are grateful to the work of Healthy Communities Coordinator, Ashley Varner for helping to support the health and success of our student athletes."

DISTRICT ATHLETIC DIRECTOR EHREN EARLEYWHINE AND JC HEAD FOOTBALL COACH DAMON WELLS

Top Tips from Ashley Varner, former Healthy Communities Coordinator

1. **Build relationships.** If you are working to update existing concessions, you'll need to work in partnership with the people running the stand.
2. **Get buy-in.** Concessions play an important role in supporting community and athletics programs. Work closely with the leaders of those organizations to ensure you are supporting their goals, too. Healthy concessions are mutually beneficial!
3. **Let your passion shine.** Everyone could see that I was determined to create healthier spaces for families and quickly realized they didn't have the energy to slow me down!

