

Improving the food environment in recreational facilities

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Are recreational facilities using the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth?

The Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth were created to **ensure children have access to healthy food** in recreational facilities.

A survey of managers from 151 recreational facilities in Alberta showed:

- ✓ Healthy eating was a high priority for **only 13%** of recreational facilities.
- ✓ **50%** of facilities surveyed had heard of the nutrition guidelines but **only 6%** were using them.
- ✓ The **main barrier** to using the nutrition guidelines was a perception that healthier foods are not profitable.
- ✓ Other barriers included:
 - Some parts of the guidelines were **too complex**.
 - **It is “normal”** to find mostly unhealthy foods in recreational facilities.
 - **Limited ability and time** for staff to implement nutrition guidelines.

The full study is published in BMC Public Health 12:376, 2012.



Taking Action

Evidence shows healthy foods can be profitable:

- 1 Imitate other companies that are selling healthy food:
 - **Offer variety**
 - **Use colorful displays**
 - **Give healthy items creative names**
 - **Place healthy items next to the till**
 - **Advertise healthy daily specials**

- 2 Use the tools and resources available at www.healthyalberta.ca.

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