



Central California
REGIONAL OBESITY
PREVENTION PROGRAM
Healthy Environments • Healthy Choices • Healthy People



Department of Public Health
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEW "RETHINK YOUR DRINK" MEDIA CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED TODAY TO IMPROVE THE HEALTH OF CENTRAL VALLEY RESIDENTS

California Project LEAN Encourages Central Valley residents to "Rethink Your Drink" and Take Control of the Health of their Family and Community

Fresno Calif. Sep.6, 2011 – In an effort to shift public opinion about sugar-loaded drinks, Central Valley residents are being urged to rethink their drinks through a campaign launched today at Al Radka Park by California Project LEAN (Leaders Encouraging Activity and Nutrition), the Central Valley Health & Nutrition Collaborative, Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program, Fresno County Department of Public Health and multiple partners.

"We are pleased to launch this new Rethink Your Drink media effort in the Central Valley to help families choose healthier beverages such as water and unflavored low fat 1% or non-fat milk," said Peggy Agron, Program Chief of California Project LEAN, a program of the California Department of Public Health.

California Project LEAN funded the "Rethink Your Drink" media campaign through its American Recovery and Reinvestment Act grant, which seeks to combat overweight and obesity. This grant supports educational efforts and policy and environmental changes that promote increased access to healthy beverages while reducing access to sugar-loaded drinks in school and community settings. Noting that the healthy choice should be the easy choice, Agron added, "Families deserve access to healthy and affordable beverages."

There are 22 packs of sugar in a 20-ounce soda. Sugar-loaded drinks may lead to obesity, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and some cancers.

The “Rethink Your Drink” campaign highlights the amount of sugar in various beverages, offers examples of healthier alternatives and encourages residents to choose healthier drinks. Campaign materials are in English and Spanish and include 30-second radio spots, posters, pledge cards and fact sheets.

In California, 62 percent of adolescents ages 12-17 and 41 percent of children ages 2-11 drink at least one soda or other sugary beverage every day. Some of the highest sugary beverage consumption rates by California children aged 2-11 are in San Joaquin Valley counties. In Kings County, 57 percent of 2-11 years olds drink one or more sodas per day with 55 percent in Kern County and 53 percent in Fresno County.

“Parents play an important role in the health of their children,” states Dr. Edward Moreno, Fresno County Health Officer. “By offering water or plain milk to their children instead of sugar-sweetened beverages, parents can reduce their children’s risk of becoming overweight or developing diabetes.”

For children, each extra can or glass of sugary beverage consumed per day increases their chance of becoming obese by 60 percent. In California, the prevalence of overweight and obesity is higher among adolescents who drink sugary drinks than those who do not.

To receive more information about this program, or to learn about ways Central Valley residents can make a difference for their families, log onto www.CaliforniaProjectLEAN.org or call 1-916-552-9907.

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