

# NWT HEALTHY COMMUNITIES Toolkit

# Healthy Eating Choices

TENDERS & CONTRACTS IN RECREATION & ALL COMMUNITY SPACES



**Recreation spaces are a gathering place and community hub for people of all ages. They are key community settings that can have a positive impact on the health and behaviour of all residents. They are an ideal location to promote a healthy food environment as they already support physical activity and active lifestyles.**

**There are many benefits to be gained by recreation centres, operators, and facility staff by offering healthy foods and enhancing the healthy food environment within a recreation space, including:**

- Contributing to the overall health of community members and visitors
- Becoming a leader in promoting health and wellness in the community
- Increasing profitability and broadening customer base
- Building partnerships with coaches, community members, parents, and young athletes
- Receiving positive media attention

### **What are the components of healthy food choices within community spaces?**

Healthy food choices exist when there is promotion of healthy eating through both words AND actions. The components consider all elements of the food environment including food and beverage sales (vending machines, canteens/concessions, restaurants, catering), meetings, recreation programs, fundraising and advertising on site. It means going beyond educating community residents about healthy eating and using an approach to create a supportive environment that makes the healthy choice the easy choice.

### **How can you get started with Healthy Eating in your community settings, such as schools, the workplace, and recreation spaces?**

1. Commitment to building a positive healthy eating culture
2. Supportive social environment
3. Access to nutritious, reasonably priced, culturally appropriate food
4. Credible, consistent health messaging and support for community employees and visitors
5. Safe food practices
6. Nutrition policies that encourage a positive healthy eating environment

**Having Healthy Choices available and restricting some unhealthy choices in recreation and community spaces will increase parent's ability to help children make the RIGHT choice.**

## Canteen Favorites to Try Now!

- Fresh Fruit
- Veggie Sticks & Dip
- Real Fruit Smoothies
- Water
- Milk
- Cheese & Whole Grain Crackers
- Veggie or Chicken Wraps
- Yogurt
- Lower-Sugar Granola Bars
- Beef Jerky



## Ideas for Concessions & Vending in the Community

- Work with your facility's canteen and vending operators to offer healthier choices.
- Reduce prices of healthier food (increase prices of less healthy food to make up the difference).
- Remove unhealthy options that are not selling well and replace them with healthier options.
- Offer samples or promotions on new healthier options to draw attention to them.
- Place healthier options where they are highly visible to customers.
- Replace traditional snack vending machines with refrigerated units that can sell a larger variety of healthier options.
- Remove deep fryers from recreation facility kitchens and source healthier alternatives.
- Have all staff and volunteers that handle food trained in safe food handling
- Sell re-usable water bottles with access to tap water, water fountains or refill stations. More information can be found at [www.healthycommunities.toolkitnwtac.com/healthy-eating/](http://www.healthycommunities.toolkitnwtac.com/healthy-eating/) under the Drop the Water Bottle section.

### Best Practice – Be Mindful of the Contract with Food Service Providers

When hiring food service providers for retail/cafeteria outlets, vending machines, functions, and fundraising events ensure the Healthy Choices Agreement Policy is in effect.

This policy can be found under the Contract/Vendors section of [www.healthycommunities.toolkitnwtac.com/healthy-eating/](http://www.healthycommunities.toolkitnwtac.com/healthy-eating/). This will ensure the food service providers are committed to health and well-being of your community residents and visitors and make any healthy changes required in the service provided.

**Important:** If the community buildings are currently under contract with food service providers speak with them about healthy food choices. If the contract is unable to change to Healthy Food Choices – start planning for the next tender or food service contract in your community.

