

Eliminating soda from school diets does not affect overall consumption

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With childhood obesity increasing, school administrators and public health officials are reducing availability of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSB) in schools. In a study published in the November/December 2008 issue of the *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, researchers found that reduction or elimination of SSB from school menus has little effect on total consumption by adolescents.

Working with four schools in Maine that reduced SSB availability for one school year (intervention schools) and three other schools that took no actions (control schools), the authors followed 456 students from 6 counties in southern and central Maine over two school years. Consumption of SSB decreased in all students, regardless of whether they attended an intervention or control school.

Writing in the article, Janet E. Whatley Blum, states, "This study suggests that successful reduction of the availability of SSB can occur in public high schools. However, these data suggest the effect of reduced availability of school SSB on consumption of SSB by high school students may be limited." Commenting on the lack of an effect, she continues, "A better understanding of beverage consumption patterns may be needed to determine the efficacy of school food policies on those youth susceptible to obesity."

Source: Elsevier

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