

## Purpose

Through our Healthy Partnership Program, Healthway provides funding to sport, arts, racing and community organisations to create healthy environments that support Western Australians to live healthy lifestyles.

Our Healthy Food and Drink Provision policy applies to projects where food and drinks are offered for sale. One of the requirements of this policy is that sugary drinks will not be on display. This guideline provides information for implementing this requirement.

## Sugary drinks and unhealthy weight

In 2022, 75.6% of Western Australian adults aged 16 years and over were classified as overweight (37.7%) or obese (37.9%)<sup>1</sup>. Childhood obesity has remained relatively steady since 2004, with one in four Western Australian children aged 5-15 years (25.7%) classed as overweight or obese in 2022<sup>2</sup>. This puts them at an increased risk of obesity and chronic disease in adulthood.

Research suggests that sugary drinks play a significant role in driving obesity trends. Australians are big consumers of sugary drinks<sup>3</sup>, yet evidence shows that regular consumption of sugary drinks can increase the risk of serious health problems including type 2 diabetes, heart disease, tooth decay and stroke<sup>4</sup>.

Children are exposed to large volumes of marketing for unhealthy food and drink products. It is well-established this marketing influences the types of food and drinks children prefer and is likely to contribute to poor diet and negative health outcomes later in life. This evidence underpins the World Health Organisation's recommendation that active steps be taken to reduce children's exposure to advertising for unhealthy products, as a risk factor for obesity<sup>5</sup>. Sugary drinks are commonly available in child and family settings including sports and community venues. This sends an unhealthy message to our kids that sport, recreation and sugary drinks go hand in hand.

<sup>1</sup> Epidemiology Directorate, 2023. Health and Wellbeing of Adults in Western Australia 2022. Department of Health, Western Australia.

<sup>2</sup> Epidemiology Directorate, 2023. Health and Wellbeing of Children in Western Australia 2022. Department of Health, Western Australia.

<sup>3</sup> Miller C, Ettridge K, Wakefield M, Pettigrew S, Coveney J, Roder D, Durkin S, Wittert G, Martin J, Dono J. (2020). Consumption of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages, Juice, Artificially-Sweetened Soda and Bottled Water: An Australian Population Study. *Nutrients*, 12(3), 817

<sup>4</sup> National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) Australian Dietary Guidelines. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council

<sup>5</sup> World Health Organization. (2010). Set of recommendations on the marketing of food and non-alcoholic beverages to children. Geneva: WHO.

## What are sugary drinks?

Sugary drinks contribute almost no valuable nutrients to Australian diets but deliver large quantities of sugar<sup>6</sup>. 'Sugary drinks' refer to all non-alcoholic water-based beverages with added sugar, including sugar-sweetened soft drinks, energy drinks, fruit drinks, sports drinks and cordial. This term does not include milk-based products, 100% fruit juice or non-sugar sweetened beverages (i.e. artificial, non-nutritive or intensely sweetened)<sup>7</sup>. The Department of Health's Healthy Options WA recommends larger cartons (600ml) of flavoured milk to not be on display due to high sugar content. Figure 1 below shows how many teaspoons of sugar are in different types of sugary drinks.

Figure 1: How much sugar is in your drink?



Source: <https://livelighter.com.au/The-Facts/About-Sugary-Drinks>

## Why remove sugary drinks from display?

By removing sugary drinks from display and highlighting the health impact of drinking sugary drinks, Healthway aims to encourage Western Australians to rethink their sugary drink consumption and switch to healthier options.

<sup>6</sup> Miller C, Ettridge K, Wakefield M, Pettigrew S, Coveney J, Roder D, Durkin S, Wittert G, Martin J, Dono J. (2020). Consumption of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages, Juice, Artificially-Sweetened Soda and Bottled Water: An Australian Population Study. *Nutrients*, 12(3), 817.

<sup>7</sup> National Health and Medical Research Council (2013) Australian Dietary Guidelines. Canberra: National Health and Medical Research Council.

## What should and shouldn't be displayed?

### ON DISPLAY



Examples: water (plain, sparkling, with 99% fruit juice), 99% fruit juice, fruit smoothies, coconut water (no added sugar), coffee, artificially sweetened drinks, 99% fruit juice slushies.

### OFF DISPLAY



Examples: soft drink, slushies, energy drinks, sports drinks, iced tea, fruit drinks, flavored mineral waters, and other drinks containing added sugar (except dairy)

Source: <https://www.fueltogether.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/Sugary-Drinks-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

## Additional resources

- Fuel to Go & Play - Sugary drinks fact sheet.
- Cancer Council WA - Sugary drinks are a rotten choice.
- Rethink Sugary Drink. [rethinksugarydrink.org.au](https://rethinksugarydrink.org.au)
- Webinar: Reducing Sugary Drinks Availability in Sport and Recreation Centres.
- Case studies for examples of how other organisations have limited sugary drinks, and the evidence on their financial impact.

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**Review:** This guideline will be reviewed in January 2026.