Addressing The “P’s

A conceptual framework for local action to reduce sugary drink consumption: Examples from New York City

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Life is Sweeter Conference
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The P’s (no - not Pepsi)

The marketing classics:
- Placement
- Pricing
- Promotion

Public health additions:
- Portion
- Public awareness

Pushback

Power
Placement I- Getting Sugary Drinks out of Places

Things we did with little controversy:

- NYC Daycare Regulations since 2007
- NYC Agency Food Procurement and Beverage Vending Standards 2009 (includes schools). Spreading rapidly
- Outreach to Community Organizations, Hospitals and Employers 2010-2011
- Pro-water regulations and campaigns
- Future challenges – Public concessions

Pushback – loss of revenue to schools, pressure from vendors.
Completely feasible but lots of legwork - over 14 months:

- 326 community organizations visited
- 153 made pledges to address sugary drinks
- Reaching an estimated > 1 million people
- Additional outreach to over 100 faith based organizations, hospitals and employers
- Work is continuing
Tough and slow, but critical, need to keep at it:

- NYC Bodega Initiative – limited success getting healthier beverages stocked and at eye level
- Attempts with supermarkets – little success so far, space is contracted out in detailed agreements with suppliers
- Research on the retail environment and disparities in 2011
- National working group studying approaches to this issue
NYC Bodegas
Largest potential impact but heavy political lift:

- Richmond CA soda tax ballet initiative to be voted in November 2012
- New York State Soda tax introduced 2009, 2010, not approved
  - 1 cent per oz excise tax
  - Support from Governor, Mayor, many organizations, hospitals and unions
  - Reduce consumption by 15-20% among New York State residents
  - In 2011, 2012 not able to reintroduce
    - Intensive lobbying by industry in Albany, Pepsi threatened to leave the state

- Proposed New York City pilot excluding sugary drinks from SNAP (food stamp) coverage – would affect 1.8M beneficiaries, denied by USDA
  - Intensive lobbying against by both industry and some hunger organizations

- Testing differential price strategies in City University sites, also encouraged in beverage vending but not taken up by vendors
Tough first amendment limits:

- Nation’s largest school district - Promotion of brand names and sugary drinks not allowed in school vending

- Federal voluntary guidelines on marketing to children met massive industry pushback

- Potential approach – work with marketing intermediaries who manage promotions, circulars, etc.

- Studying options but serious first amendment difficulties to regulation, outside of schools and publicly owned spaces
Potential high impact and legally feasible:

- June 12, 2012 NYC Board of Health will consider proposal to limit portions in restaurants to 16 oz.
- Beverages > 25 cal/8oz
- Dairy, alcohol excluded
- Focus on restaurants as area of traditional city regulatory authority
16 ounces of Coke used to be enough for 3 people!
Exploding Beverage Sizes:
McDonald’s Drinks Have Grown 457% Since 1955

Size (ounces)

- One Size
- Child
- Small
- Medium
- Large
- Super Size

Super-size discontinued except for special promotions

Only size available!!

57% of New Yorkers; 61% of New York Parents Support a Portion Size Cap

Would you be for or against limiting the size of sugar-sweetened drinks that are sold in restaurants?

Overall Support = 57%

- With Kids < 12: 61%
- Without Kids < 12: 55%

Source: NYC DOHMH Public Opinion Poll, March 14, 2011
Next steps for NYC Portion proposal

- To Board of Health in June
- Public comment and hearing, if approved for comment
- Final Board of Health hearing
Public awareness

Feasible, essential, but expensive:

- Awareness and acceptance was relatively low at first, and an obstacle to moving forward, including on tax

- Information on sugary drinks to over 700,000 kids a year in 2004 and 2005

- Annual messages on Fitnessgram reports to over 800,000 schoolchildren and parents with individual BMI and fitness measures 2006-present

- Public Health Detailing of thousands of clinicians on adult and pediatric obesity with reducing sugary drinks as a key action step
Public Awareness II

- Expanding print, internet and TV mass media campaigns: Pouring on the Pounds from 2009 on
- Community toolkit and intensive visits to faith based organizations, community groups, and employers asking them to “take the pledge”
- By February 2010 76% New York City residents supported soda tax to “balance the city budget”
- Focus groups and polls on behavior and social norms: people surprised and moved by health consequences; concerned about artificial sweeteners; overestimate consumption of others; open to policy change; moved by ads to act
Replay of Public Health vs. Big Tobacco

- In 2005, the Coca Cola Company, PepsiCo, and the American Beverage Association spent $1,294,760 lobbying the federal government.

- By 2009, the soda lobby spending $40,279,500

- Every place introducing tax hit with massive lobbying
  - Aggressive anti-tax Ad campaign
  - Front groups – Consumer Freedom, NYers Against Unfair taxes
  - Campaign in defense of soda in NYC
  - Personal attacks on Mayor Bloomberg
  - Orchestrated donations to associations of mayors and counties, churches and community groups, often under guise of fighting obesity
Main obstacle on taxes
The Nanny
You only thought you lived in the land of the free.

Bye Bye Venti
Nanny Bloomberg has taken his strange obsession with what you eat one step further. He now wants to make it illegal to serve “sugary drinks” bigger than 16 oz. What’s next? Limits on the width of a pizza slice, size of a hamburger or amount of cream cheese on your bagel?

New Yorkers need a Mayor, not a Nanny.
Find out more at ConsumerFreedom.com
Like fighting Big Tobacco, to change this situation will require:

- Building political will and coalitions to take on beverage interests (Kick the Can, Big Cities, Life is Sweeter………)

- Increasing public awareness

- Getting people mad about obesity and diabetes, understanding where it comes from, and that it doesn’t have to be that way

- Changing social norms

- Getting the business and insurance interests footing the tab for obesity to act
Power to Change: Coast-to-Coast Decline in Sugary Drink Consumption
NYC 2005-2009

Youth Risk Behavior Survey Soda only*
*Youth Risk Behavior Survey data refers to soda only
**Take Care New York baseline
***Includes adults who can be reached by cell phone
Power to Change:
Coast-to-Coast Decline in Sugary Drink Consumption
California 2003-2009

- In 2003 26.1% of Californians drank 2 or more glasses of soda or sugary drinks per day
- By 2009 down to 14.7%

Source AskCHIS
Summing up

- Pluck the low hanging fruit
- Scale the walls
- Work together
Thank you

- The many staff of the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and other organizations who have worked on this issue

- The scientists and colleagues from around the country who have been resources for this work