What’s Your Game Plan?

If we want our kids to play their best, our concession stands need to provide foods and drinks that will fuel their bodies. Yet, standard concession stand fare—candy, chips, soda and hot dogs—doesn’t score points for supporting health or athletic performance.

By offering healthy foods and drinks in our concession stands, we win in so many ways - athletes get the energy they need to start and end strong: spectators, parents, and siblings can enjoy a nutritious dinner while cheering on their athlete and team, and teams can make money!

Georgia Shape has teamed up with Real Food for Kids and Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta Strong4Life to help take your concession stand to the next level. The Strong Start Program provides strategies for developing your Strong Start concession stand, sample Strong Start food and drink offerings to sell, and an opportunity to be recognized for your efforts in creating a Strong Start for your athletes, spectators, parents, siblings, and team!
Strong Start Strategies: The 4 Ps

Promote
Promote your Strong Start options. Instead of focusing on them being ‘healthy’, find ways to make them sound fun, new and performance boosting:
• Use special menus or stickers to identify Strong Start options
• Announce new choices in newsletters, the website, and through social media
• Brand Strong Start foods with stickers

Tip - buy small quantities of new items. It’s OK to run out! Buy more as demand increases.

Placement
It’s all about location, location, location. Individuals are more likely to choose the first thing they see, so make healthy choices more visible:
• Place Strong Start foods, like a fruit bowl or some yogurt on ice, at the point of sale (like the cash register).
• Keep less healthy items, like candy or soda, out of plain sight or farther away from the point of sale.

Price
You can offer healthy choices and remain profitable- or even raise more money for your team!

a. Create a pricing strategy that gives Strong Start foods the advantage. This may mean raising the price of your less healthy foods. For example:
• Pricing a banana less than candy (better total cost).
• Charging the same for a black bean burger as a hot dog (same cost, healthier item).
• Selling a 20 oz water, or 8 oz soda, for the same price (same cost, better value).
• Add a free water to a sandwich and fruit (value pack).

b. Track sales over the season so you can pinpoint which foods are winning, and which ones can take the bench.
Partners

Rally your school or organization leadership, your customers, and the community on your team:

Partner with Leadership:

Schools:
- Principal: the principal has huge influence over any changes that happen at school events. You can discuss your proposed changes, and ask the principal to make a statement to the school and other stakeholders regarding the new changes.
- Athletic Director and Coaches - they can promote Strong Start choices to the students, and remind athletes about the importance of proper nutrition to athletic performance.
- PTA - they can help promote new foods in the PTA newsletter and get parents informed and excited about the changes.
- Food & Nutrition Services - ask about purchasing food items through your school’s cafeteria for ease, better pricing, and options.
- Wellness Council - they can provide support, and connect healthy concessions with other school wellness initiatives.

Youth sports, parks and recreation, aquatic centers, and others:
- Director and Board - you will be most successful with high level support to make changes. Find ways to keep them informed and engaged.
- Coaches - they can promote Strong Start choices to athletes, and talk to them about the importance of proper nutrition to athletic performance.

Partner with Customers:
- Engage parents or students to develop a “signature” item to be sold (sandwich, salad, etc) with team logo
- Conduct surveys to determine customer demand and preferences.
- Provide taste tests to grow consumer awareness and get feedback.
- Engage athletes to help with menu ideas, feedback and implementation.

Partner with the Community:
- Partner with local restaurants to make fresh sandwiches, wraps, burritos, or other healthy items for sale. Ask for preferred pricing.

To get more information and to sign up for the program, please contact healthyconcessions@georgiashape.org
Strong Start Program
Choose the level that works for your team now, and take the first step to go for the Gold!

**BRONZE**
- Offer at least 5 “Strong Start” items on your menu
- Identify the “Strong Start” options with the Strong Start logo or on a special menu
- Prominently display water and other “Strong Start” options, making them the most visible
- Ensure that water is always available

**SILVER**
- At least 50% of menu items are “Strong Start” foods or drinks
- Price “Strong Start” options at a cost that is equal to or less than comparable items
- Limit sugary drink portions to the smallest available quantities (8 oz. soda can, 12 oz. sports drinks, 4 oz. 100% juice boxes)

**GOLD**
- 100% of menu items are “Strong Start” foods or drinks
- No soda on the menu (regular or diet)
- Sugary drinks are limited to sports drinks and 100% juice, and are limited to the smallest available portions (12 oz. sports drinks, 4 oz. 100% juice boxes)
Strong Start Foods and Drinks

Food Options

- **Fruits**, like bananas, tangerines/oranges, apples, grapes, and applesauce pouches
- **Veggies**, like baby carrots or celery with dip (see below for dip options), and pickles
- **Nuts and seeds**, like trail mix, sunflower seeds and boiled peanuts
- **Whole grains**, like popcorn (air-popped or low-fat), crunchy granola bars, plain cereals (like toasted ‘O’s), whole grain crackers, pretzels, pita chips, tortilla chips, and rice cakes
- **Dairy and eggs**, like string cheese, yogurt, and hard-boiled eggs
- **Healthy dips**, like hummus, nut butter or salsa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dip</th>
<th>Serving Suggestion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hummus</td>
<td>Carrots, celery, cucumber, pita bread, pita chips, pretzels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nut butter</td>
<td>Crackers, pretzels, carrots, celery, rice cakes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salsa</td>
<td>Tortilla chips, carrots, celery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Entrees

- Grilled or baked chicken sandwiches
- Turkey wraps or sub sandwiches
- Tuna or chicken salad sandwiches
- Veggie or black bean burgers
- Grilled cheese sandwiches
- Chicken or bean burritos
- Salad with grilled meat or deli meat
- BBQ chicken sandwiches
- Egg breakfast sandwich
- Chicken kabobs

Drink Options

- **Water** — try sports cap tops for athletes, and sparkling water (with no added sugar or sweeteners)
- **Milk** — milk boxes have a long shelf-life and don’t need refrigeration when stored
- **Coffee, tea**
- **Sports drinks** - offer smaller sized sports drinks-12 oz (not artificially sweetened or “lite”)

Healthier Desserts

- Freeze fresh grapes in individual portions
- Frozen tubes of yogurt
- Frozen fruit bars (without added sugars or sweeteners)
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