

Change Catalyst: How to approach small, rural or remote communities

If you are looking to approach small, rural or remote communities about making changes to their food environments the following discussion points may help you to initiate the conversation. You may wish to adapt these discussion topics based on the type of community you are approaching and on your relationship to them.

Food Environments

It's important to understand where food and beverage is being served within the community so that you can discuss which operational areas healthy choices could be introduced.

1. Where is food served in your community?

PROMPT: programs, vending machines, concessions, events

2. What is currently in place in your community that makes it easy for children and families to make healthy eating choices? **Success stories**

PROMPT: promotions, displays, vending, fundraising, special events, concessions, canteens, children's programs.

3. What is currently in place in your community that you think makes it hard for children and families to make healthy eating choices? **Barriers**

PROMPT vending, fundraising, special events, concessions, canteens, children's programs.

4. Is healthy eating important to the community? Is there support from the community for introducing healthy choices?

Programs

5. Is food served during programs? What is typically served?
6. Are children encouraged to bring healthy snacks when food is not provided by the program?
7. Are there any rules or guidelines for serving food and beverages during programs?

Vending

8. Do you have any vending machines? If so, who operates it, the community or an external vending company?

Food Service

9. Do you have any concessions or cafés where food is served? If so, who operates them, community or external contractor?
10. Are there any rules or guidelines for food services?
11. What types of food and beverage are sold?

Events

12. Is food served during events in the community?
13. What is served for these events?

Policy

14. Is there a policy in place for food and beverage served in the community?
15. What would you like to see in a policy?
PROMPT: Vending and Food Services contracts should meet any Provincial or Territorial Nutrition Guidelines, foods are discouraged as a reward in programs, only healthy options are provided at staff meetings/events

Community Needs

16. What types of changes would you like to see toward offering healthy choices in your community?
PROMPT: healthier vending, more awareness of healthy portion sizes, awareness and marketing of the importance of healthy eating, healthier food during children's programs
17. What would assist you in moving toward providing healthy food and beverages?
PROMPT: recipe ideas, help with developing a policy, new equipment such as ovens to replace deep fryers