



Child Care Centers - Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Act

BILL NO: HB 1276	BILL NO: SB 716
SPONSORS: Delegates A. Washington, Frush, Nathan-Pulliam, and V. Turner	SPONSORS: Senators Ferguson, King, Montgomery, and Pinsky
COMMITTEE: Health & Government Operations	COMMITTEE: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs
HEARING: Tues, March 11, 2014 @ 1 PM	HEARING: Wed, February 26, 2014 @ 1 PM

What does the bill do?

Requires licensed childcare facilities in Maryland to serve healthier drinks, make water freely available, have a trained staff member on site who can support breastfeeding mothers, and reduce non-educational screen time (e.g., time watching television or playing computer games) for children in their care.

Why is this bill necessary (see back for more)?

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 32% of Maryland children aged 2-5 are overweight or obese (CDC, 2013).
- Children from lower-income homes, Black (non-Hispanic), and Hispanic children are more likely to be overweight or obese than White (non-Hispanic) children (CDC, 2013).
- Recent studies have shown the importance of preventing obesity in young children. Those who enter kindergarten obese or overweight are likely to remain at an unhealthy weight through adolescence (New England Journal of Medicine, 2013).
- Overweight adolescents have a 70 percent chance of becoming overweight adults. This increases to 80 percent if 1 or both parents are overweight or obese (American Heart Association, 2012).
- The number of teens being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes and pre-diabetes nationally has grown from 9% in 1999 to 23% in 2008 (Pediatrics: The Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, 2012).
- Supporting breastfeeding mothers, requiring healthy drinks to be served, and reducing screen time are all recommended best practices for childcare. (Institute of Medicine, 2012).

Questions?

Contact Robi Rawl at MedChi if you are able to help – 410-878-9846 or rrawl@medchi.org



Why Serving Healthy Drinks in Childcare is Important

- Sugary drinks contribute more calories and added sugars to our diets than any other food or beverage and are strongly linked to higher childhood obesity and type 2 diabetes rates (Institute of Medicine, 2012).
- Sugary drinks include: soft drinks (e.g., Coke and Pepsi), sports drinks (e.g., Gatorade), energy drinks (e.g., Red Bull, Monster), flavored waters (e.g., Vitamin Water), sweetened teas (e.g., Snapple Tea), and fruit drinks (e.g., Capri Sun, Hawaiian Punch).
- In 2010, there were 644 different sugary drink products distributed nationally. They are manufactured by 14 companies and include 61 brands (Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, 2011).
- In a study of local 6th graders, 58% of Howard County children reported having at least one sugary drink each day and consuming 310 calories on average from these drinks alone. This equals more than 4 times their daily limit for added sugar and more than 20% of their recommended total daily calories (Howard County 6th Grade Student Health Survey, 2012).
- Drinking just one 8-oz sugary drink per day increases a child's odds of becoming obese by 60% (Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, 2012).
- Experience from Howard County suggests that childcare providers may be confused about the difference between 100% fruit juice and juice drinks with added sugar (Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity, 2013).
- Requiring licensed childcare facilities to serve only healthy drinks is a recommended best practice (Institute of Medicine, 2012).

Why Supporting Breastfeeding Moms in Childcare is Important

- Although most mothers hope to breastfeed, and 75% of babies start out being breastfed, only 15% are exclusively breastfed 6 months later. Additionally, rates are significantly lower for African-American infants (CDC, 2014).
- Children who are breastfed for six months are less likely to become obese (US Surgeon General, 2011).
- Breastfeeding protects babies from infections and illnesses that include diarrhea, ear infections and pneumonia (US Surgeon General, 2011).
- Breastfed babies are less likely to develop asthma (US Surgeon General, 2011).
- Requiring licensed childcare facilities to support breastfeeding mothers is a recommended best practice (Institute of Medicine, 2012).

Why Limiting Screen Time in Childcare is Important

- The first 5-6 years of life are critical for development of mental, physical and social skills. Excessive media time reduces creative free play, exploring, interacting with children and adults, and vigorous physical activity (National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education (NRC), 2012).
- Increased TV and other media exposure may influence development and behavior. For example, requesting and eating less healthy foods advertised in the media, delayed language development, and heightened aggressive behavior (NRC, 2012).
- Young children benefit from an environment that promotes development of the whole child; play is the essential work of children. As many children spend much of their day in early care and education programs, caregivers/teachers can model healthy lifestyles and teach children to make healthy choices (NRC, 2012).