

# Alaska Obesity Facts: Sugary Drinks

## WHAT IS A SUGARY DRINK?

Sugary drinks<sup>1</sup> are made with sugar, high fructose corn syrup, honey or other sweeteners that contain calories and include:

- Soft drinks, soda, pop, and soda pop
- Fruit drinks, punches, or ades
- Sports drinks
- Tea and coffee drinks with added sugar.
- Energy drinks
- Sweetened milks or milk alternatives

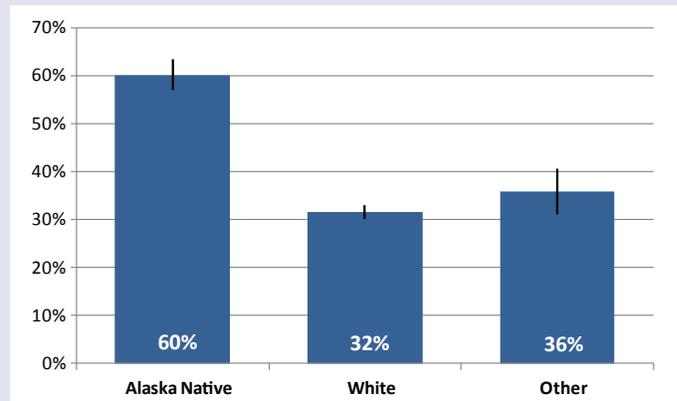
## SUGARY DRINKS ARE A PROBLEM

- High consumption of sugary drinks is associated with obesity and negative health conditions, including diabetes<sup>2</sup> and cavities.<sup>3</sup>
- Reduction of sugary drink intake can lead to weight loss.<sup>4</sup>
- Sugary Drinks:
  - provide 36% of added sugar in the American diet;<sup>5</sup>
  - are the largest source of added sugar<sup>6</sup> in the diet of U.S. youth;
  - provide “empty calories,” with little or no nutritional value; and
  - are a substantial contributor of calories in the U.S. diet.<sup>5</sup>

## SUGARY DRINK CONSUMPTION BY ALASKANS

- 31% of three-year olds<sup>7</sup> 45% of high school students,<sup>8</sup> and 40% of adults<sup>9</sup> in Alaska drink one or more sugary drinks per day; 23% of Alaska Adults consume two or more daily.<sup>9</sup>
- Adults in rural Alaska are more likely to consume one or more sugary drinks daily (63%) than adults in other regions of the state; the Municipality of Anchorage, at 44%, is second. The lowest prevalence of drinking one or more sugary drinks daily is in the Gulf Coast and Southeast regions (34% each).<sup>9</sup>

PREVALENCE OF DRINKING ONE OR MORE CANS/GLASSES SUGARY DRINKS DAILY, BY RACE, ALASKA ADULTS, 2011



SOURCES: ALASKA BRFSS

- Alaska Natives are significantly more likely (60%) than Whites (32%) or those of other races (36%) to consume one or more sugary drink each day.<sup>9</sup>

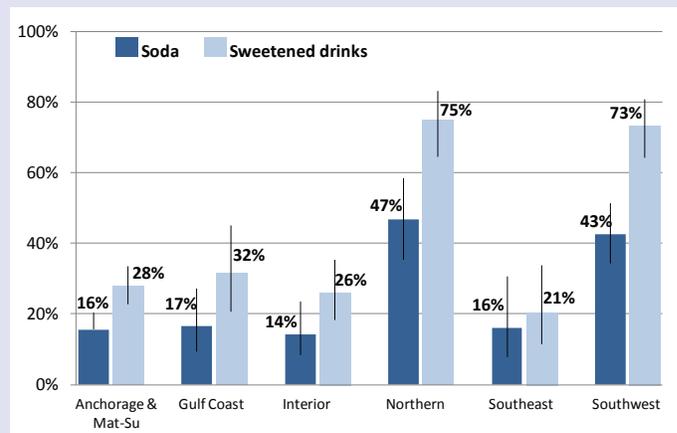
## High School Students

- Alaska Native high school students are more likely (60%) than White students (39%), or those of other races (40%), to consume one or more sugary drinks each day.<sup>8</sup>
- Boys are more likely (62%) than girls (39%) to consume one or more sugary drinks each day.<sup>8</sup>

## Young Children

- Three-year-olds living in the Northern (75%) and Southwest (73%) regions of the state are more likely than those living in the other regions (ranging from 21% to 32%) to drink any amount of sugary drinks on a given day.<sup>7</sup>

ANY CONSUMPTION OF SUGARY DRINKS BY 3-YEAR-OLDS ON A GIVEN DAY, BY REGION, ALASKA 2010-2011



SOURCE: ALASKA CUBS

# Alaska Obesity Facts: Ways to Decrease Sugary Drink Consumption

## **What Can Alaska Schools Worksites & Communities Do?**

- Ensure ready access to potable drinking water.
- Promote access to and consumption of healthy alternatives to sugary drinks.
- Limit marketing of and access to sugary drinks.
- Educate the public about healthy beverage choices.

**96% of Alaska adults agree that drinking sugary drinks causes overweight or obesity.<sup>10</sup>**

## **What Can Health Care Providers Do?**

- Include screening and counseling on sugary drink intake as part of routine medical and dental care.

## **What Can Individuals Do?**

- Drink or serve water, low-fat (1%) milk, or zero-calorie beverages instead of sugary drinks.
- Check the Nutrition Facts label to know the number of servings included in each can, bottle, or cup.
- Compare grams of sugar between different beverages by checking the Nutrition Facts Label.

**SUGARY DRINKS ARE THE THIRD LARGEST CONTRIBUTOR OF CALORIES IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENT DIETS; PROVIDING AN AVERAGE OF 118 CALORIES EACH DAY.<sup>5</sup>**

**36% OF ADDED SUGAR IN THE AMERICAN DIET COMES FROM SUGARY DRINKS.<sup>5</sup>**

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