



1. Organisation and contact details

a. Main organisation for all awards correspondence

(in the event this entry receives an award, these details will be used)

Organisation	YMCA Victoria
Address	582 Heidelberg Road
Town/Suburb	Fairfield
State	Vic
Postcode	3078

b. Main contact for all awards correspondence

Name	Ariana Kurzeme
Position	Manager - Advocacy
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Email	ari.kurzeme@ymca.org.au

c. Head of organisation

Name	Peter Burns
Position	Chief Executive Officer
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d. Please complete the following table if this nomination is a joint submission between multiple partner organisations. Add as many rows as required

Entrant organisation 2	
Entrant organisation 3	
Entrant organisation 4	
Entrant organisation 5	
Entrant organisation 6	

2. Nomination details

a. Entry title

Please write the entry title as you wish it to appear on all promotional materials associated with the award	YMCA Victoria's Soft Drink Free Summer
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b. Nomination web address

Please enter a web address that relates specifically to the nominated project (if applicable)	
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c. Budget

\$0 - \$50,000 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	\$50,001 – \$500,000 <input type="checkbox"/>	\$500,001+ <input type="checkbox"/>

d. Timeframe

Time period	October 2015 – February 2016
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e. Award category

Please indicate the award category for your nomination	Healthy Eating
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f. Population groups targeted

Eg. Koori/Aboriginal Victorians, CALD/new migrant groups, local communities, workforce, women, children etc	Local communities with a focus on young people and children attending community recreation facilities
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g. Health promotion setting

In what setting did your project/initiative/campaign take place? Eg. Education, workplace, sporting club, arts, local government area etc	60 recreation facilities including health clubs, multipurpose stadiums and aquatic facilities (including seasonal outdoor pools) located in communities in metropolitan Melbourne, and regional and rural Victoria.
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3. Assessment criteria

Executive summary

<p>Outline the project, aims and objectives, settings, timing, population groups, health promotion activities and outcomes achieved</p> <p>Maximum 400 words</p>	<p>YMCA Victoria introduced its first Healthy Food and Beverage Policy in 2014. A key element is to remove all sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) in YMCA Victoria managed recreation centres by 2017. As a critical step towards this goal, we held a 'Soft Drink Free Summer' campaign from October 2015 to February 2016. The campaign challenged our aquatic and recreation centres to remove all soft drinks from their cafes, canteens, vending machines and kiosks. Centres were asked to change their drink fridge layout to promote healthier choices and reduce remaining sugary drinks (sport drinks) to a maximum of 10% of fridge space.</p> <p>YMCA Victoria is the largest provider for community recreation in Victoria managing community recreation centres on behalf of 24 local governments. We managed 60 community recreation centres in metro Melbourne and regional and rural Victoria. Collectively these facilities attract 17 million visits every year, with approximately 58,000 children participating in swimming lesson each week.</p> <p>In Australia, 47% of children consume SSBs every day.¹ While YMCA Victoria aims to improve the health and happiness of Victorians by encouraging them to be more active more often, historically the food and drinks available in our centres could only be described as junk: energy dense, high in fat, salt and/or sugar with little or no nutritional value. We recognise the role we play in shaping the eating preferences and behaviours of the communities we work with.</p> <p>The campaign had three components:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Raising awareness of the sugar content of SSBs, the health risks associated with high consumption, and promoting the health benefits of water. This was done via infographics, Healthy Choices marketing collateral at the point of sale, a social media campaign and through internal communications.
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¹ Australian Government Department of Health 2007, 2007 *Australian National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey- Main Findings* Commonwealth Scientific Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO), Preventative Health National Research Flagship, and the University of South Australia, Canberra

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Collaborating with our drinks supplier to develop an approved product range and fridge layouts (planograms) that met the campaign aim and to support the removal of soft drinks from fridges using their network of sales representatives. 3. Provision of a 'Toolkit' and working with centres to remove soft drinks, change fridge layouts and build capacity around the promotion of healthier choices. Drinks were also classified using a traffic light system 'green' (best choice), 'amber' (choose carefully) or 'red' (limit intake).
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Criteria 1 Promote healthier choices, interest from other orgs, sharing knowledge/resources, Schweppes change in approach, product reformulation, healthier approach. Sales data - positive

<p>Be a catalyst for change that has potential to result in positive and sustainable improvement in the health of Victorians</p> <p>Maximum 800 words</p>	<p>YMCA Victoria is the first sports and recreation peak body and known organisation of its size to make such a strong commitment to removing sugary drinks, including sports drinks which along with water is our biggest seller. We believe that this will not only impact the communities we work with by reducing consumption, but will also pave the way for other organisation to follow.</p> <p>YMCA Victoria has taken the following steps to create real and sustainable change in the health of the communities we work with by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partnering with Deakin University to evaluate the impact of the policy, to collate data and build an evidence base that will benefit others 2. Actively working to share our experience removing sugary drinks and the knowledge we gained along the way with our partners, other organisations, health services and sporting groups 3. Working towards collective impact by forming alliances and collaborating with other organisations focussed on promoting healthy eating and reducing sugary drink consumption, including the Rethink Sugary Drink Alliance and Victorian Healthy Eating Alliance. <p>Professor of Epidemiology and Equity in Public Health Anna Peeters, and her team from Deakin University's School of Health & Social Development</p>
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and World Health Organization Collaborating Centre for Obesity Prevention, is evaluating the overall implementation of the policy, and also collected data on the YMCA Soft Drink Free Summer campaign.

The evaluation is part of a broader project evaluating the economic and health costs and benefits of implementing healthy food and beverage policies in key public settings such as aquatic and recreation centres. The aim is to use the data gathered to create an evidence base to help translate policy to practice, create public debate, and generate public support for the adoption of similar policies by other organisations. The evaluation is being supported by VicHealth and aligns with their three-year priority *“More people choosing water and healthy food options”*.

The policy, particularly the removal of sugary drinks, has attracted a lot of attention and generated interest from numerous councils, community and sports organisations, state sport associations and health services. They are particularly interested in the outcomes of our YMCA Soft Drink Free Summer campaign, the financial impact, and customer feedback.

YMCA Victoria values the role we can play in sharing our experience and knowledge to facilitate change in other organisations and settings. We regularly present at industry and community forums - and knowledge and resource sharing events - viewing this as an important way we can encourage others to implement similar policies to reduce access to sugary drinks and positively influence the health of their communities.

YMCA Victoria is a partner in the ‘Rethink Sugary Drinks’ Alliance, which works collaboratively on policy development and strategies to reduce sugary drinks consumption in the Australian community. We are also a member of the Victorian Healthy Eating Enterprise (VHEE), which provides a collaborative platform for organisations committing to improving the diets of Victorians. Recently YMCA Victoria partnered with other VHEE members to submit an abstract to present at the 2017 World Congress on Public Health, to be held in Melbourne. The panel presentation will explore how the VHEE has linked innovations and policy to research and captured real-world changes in SSB consumption across organisations and settings, empowering others to act. We were involved in a similar panel that presented to the Dietetics Association of Australia this year.

Through taking the unprecedented step of removing all sugary drinks from our Centres and encouraging and supporting other community organisations to adopt similar approaches there is the potential to have a

	<p>profound and sustainable impact on the health of Victorian communities.</p> <p>The Soft Drink Free Summer campaign achieved its goals of significantly reducing the sale of sugary drinks while not having a negative impact on overall drinks sales – a key outcome to assist in the sustainability of the Policy and the final goal of removing all sugary drinks. YMCA Victoria analysis of sales data from a sample of centres found that for the same period the previous year (December – February)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Green’ drink sales increased from 34% to 49% • ‘Amber drinks sales increased from 4% to 8% • ‘Red’ drink sales decreased from 63% to 43% • An estimate 234kg of sugar removed from sale by YMCA Victoria during the three month period • Drink sales per attendance actually went up 2%
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Criteria 2 - Y's role in modelling healthy eating, Partnerships rethink, HC guidelines underpin, Deakin evaluation share knowledge

<p>Demonstrate a firm commitment to health promotion by using evidence-informed actions and initiatives</p> <p>Maximum 800 words</p>	<p>YMCA Victoria employed a range of health promotion strategies in the roll-out of the YMCA Soft Drink Free Summer campaign including:</p> <p><u>Building Healthy Public Policy</u></p> <p>The campaign was a strategic step towards all YMCA centres going sugary drink free by 2017 as part of our Healthy Food and Beverage Policy. The policy, developed by a steering group of public health experts and YMCA leaders, was endorsed by our Governance Board. This signifies the level of commitment from the organisation and willingness to be held to account, to provide supportive environments that promote healthy eating as well as physical activity. Additionally, the organisation-wide policy is underpinned by the Victorian Department of Health's Healthy Choices Guidelines, an evidence based framework for improving the availability and promotion of healthier foods and drinks in community settings.</p>
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Creating supportive environments

There is a correlation between what we eat and the places where we live, work and play. Promoting healthy food and limiting unhealthy options in environments where we spend our time can positively influence eating preferences and patterns. This is particularly true for children. In addition to removing soft drinks, a key focus of the campaign was the display of drinks, with the aim of placing healthier choices like water in prominent position and reducing the display of sugary drinks, placing them out of the line sight of children.

Developing personal skills

A range of resources were developed to raise awareness and build capacity in our staff to feel confident about why we are going sugary drink free and how to promote healthier choices to customers.

1. A set of infographic posters were developed to raise awareness about the amount of sugar in soft drinks; the health risks associated with high consumption of sugary drinks; and to educate that water as the best way to rehydrate after exercise.
2. A Toolkit aimed to communicate changes to staff, volunteers, members and community, and contained:
 - Approved product range of drinks
 - Drinks fridge planograms
 - Marketing collateral pack
 - Marketing & display guide
 - Communications resources
 - FAQ & 'What's wrong with sugary drinks' information sheet.
3. A Healthy Choices marketing collateral pack was distributed to centres with aim of making 'the healthy choice the easy choice'. The packs included posters, flyer size brochures and traffic light stickers for display on and around drink fridges.

Strengthening community action

YMCA Victoria has become an advocate for the removal of sugary drinks from publically funded facilities and actively calls on Councils to consider creating healthier environments that enable and encourage communities to make healthier choices. Prior to our Summer Campaign, YMCA Victoria held a Sugary Drinks Summit, in partnership with Cancer Council Victoria, which called on Councils across Victoria to consider removing sugary drinks from their services. Twenty pledges were made on the day by councils and community organisations committing to take action on sugary drinks in their local communities.

The Soft Drink Free Summer campaign also attracted media attention with mentions in an article in The Age (Sugar: Poison or Paranoia? Good Weekend Magazine 20/10/16) and a piece on the 7:30 Report on ABC television (Coca Cola funds scientific research.....10/3/16)

Building the evidence base

YMCA Victoria has been working closely in partnership with Deakin University to evaluate the impact of the policy by collating and analysing data to contribute to the evidence-base around the effectiveness of settings in promoting healthy eating.

The campaign saw a 98% compliance rate over its four months, with only two out of 60 centres not completely removing soft drinks from sale.

Deakin University evaluated the campaign by using a sample of 10 centres.

The impact was evident, with the proportion of available drinks that were 'green' increasing from 32% to 66% and the proportion 'red' decreasing from 60% to 25% (comparing the period from June 2014 to February 2016) within the same 10 centres.

The campaign appeared to have its intended effect, with the volume of refrigerated, packaged 'red' drinks decreasing by 50% after the campaign was introduced.

There was no change in total dollar sales for all drinks combined, or for refrigerated, packaged drinks, after the campaign was

	<p>introduced.</p> <p>Key findings of the evaluation at the sample centres found there was:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A substantial change to the beverage product offerings is achievable to increase the healthiness of drinks available. 2. A large reduction in the unhealthiest drink choices was seen – one less can of soft drink for every twenty-third customer per month, per centre. 3. The overall sales value of all drinks did not change due to the removal of soft-drink availability. 4. There were no negative responses from customers to the changes.
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Criteria 3 – work with Schweppes

<p>Exemplify innovation and leadership in taking action to improve and promote health and reduce chronic disease and/or addressing emerging health issues</p> <p>Maximum 800 words</p>	<p>YMCA Victoria is the first large community-based organisation in Victoria that has committed to removing sugary drinks from its entire operation. A number of other organisations in Victoria have taken similar action to reduce and remove sugary drinks. Bold steps such as these demonstrate the kind of leadership our community needs to address the epidemic of overweight and obesity, particularly in our children.</p> <p>Prior to implementing our policy and the YMCA Soft Drink Free Summer campaign, YMCA Victoria would sell approximately 347,000 units of soft drinks each year which equates to close to 14 tonnes of sugar. Add sports drinks to that and it adds up to 28 tonnes, a huge amount of sugar being injected into the Victorian community.</p> <p>Throughout the implementation process YMCA Victoria has been working closely with its suppliers to identify and source healthier options for centres to sell in place of the junk that dominates the food services in the sport and recreation sector.</p> <p>Schweppes is the national beverage supplier to YMCA Australia and</p>
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	<p>YMCA Victoria is the largest stakeholder in the agreement, due to operational size and turnover, and therefore integral in meeting the contractual sales targets.</p> <p>Despite initial reservations regarding the policy and the YMCA's ability to meet its contractual obligations, Schweppes has played an important role in the success of the YMCA Soft Drink Free Summer campaign. YMCA Victoria has worked collaboratively with Schweppes to develop an approved healthy product range; redesigning multiple fridge layouts/planograms to represent the campaign goal of reducing red drinks to 10% of fridge space only and using their sales network and communication systems to disseminate planograms and information on the campaign to their sales team for the implementation into YMCA centres.</p> <p>The planograms and communication resources developed by YMCA Victoria, have been made available and shared through various forums and online portals such as Live Lighter and Rethink Sugary Drinks for other organisations to use.</p> <p>We are continuing to work with Schweppes on updating all our drink fridge decals (light boxes, fridge branding, shelf cards, etc.) to remove any promotion of 'red drinks.' The next phase is the development of a YMCA Victoria specific online ordering portal, this will help to ensure the sustainability of the policy by restricting centre staff so they can only order from the approved product range only.</p> <p>One of the most pleasing and surprising developments of the relationship with Schweppes has been the shift in their focus away from sugary drinks to water – with 'super' and sugar free flavoured waters now identified as a major growth area for their business. Schweppes has observed a change in consumer preferences more generally, having seen improved sales performance in retail locations where healthier fridge layouts are adopted, sugary drink displays are reduced and large sections of the fridge space are dedicated to water products. The development of new low/no sugar drinks options and reformulation of current products (including their sport drink, Gatorade) has become an operational priority for one of the most well-known 'big soda' companies.</p>
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	<p>YMCA Victoria intentionally adopted a coordinated approach to rattle the supply and distribution chain of sugary drinks by targeting both ends. Firstly at the consumer end of the chain by building awareness of the health risks associated with sugary drinks and encouraging the consumption of healthier choices using 'nudge techniques' (e.g. fridge layouts), through to challenging industry to respond to changing demands from its customers (the YMCA) and to consumer needs and preferences through innovation and adaptation.</p>
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Criteria 4

<p>Demonstrate value for money relative to the health outcomes achieved Maximum 800 words</p>	<p>The YMCA Soft Drink Free Summer Campaign was relatively low cost considering the potential health impact in the community from the reduction in sale and consumption of sugary drinks.</p> <p>We employed a number of strategies to get the best value for money possible during the campaign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The largest cost associated with the campaign was for two Project Officers (both part time) working on the development and dissemination the Toolkit and other resources, liaising with our suppliers to develop approved product lists and planograms, working with centres to achieve the change and measuring compliance. • Where possible we used existing resources and marketing collateral, sourcing information from the Healthy Eating Advisory Service and the Rethink Sugary drink alliance. • We worked with our drinks supplier to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Use their marketing department to develop product and drinks fridge specific resources. ○ Activate their sales staff out in the field to implement the changes to fridges. • We used a portion of a grant (awarded for the promotion of, and education about healthy eating) to print the Sugary Drink Posters and purchase marketing collateral.
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- We employed a social media strategy internally to get staff motivated about the campaign that involved centres posting photos of their 'soft drink free' fridges on an internal YMCA Victoria Facebook page, sharing their achievements, and recognising the hard work of staff involved.
- A Health Promotion student on a placement worked with the team to develop resources and assist with the campaign roll out.

While it is difficult to assess the direct health benefits achieved by the campaign, findings from Deakin's evaluation support the concept that creating a supportive environment that promotes healthy eating can have a positive impact on community wellbeing, by reducing the sale and consumption of red items while increasing 'amber' and 'green' items.

Key findings from the Deakin evaluation include:

- *In June 2016 (compared to June 2014), across the ten YMCA Victoria centres examined, the proportion of available food and beverages that were best choices ('green') had increased from 14%, to 28%, with the proportion 'red' decreasing from 70% to 46%.*
- *The impact of the YMCA Soft Drink Free Summer was evident, with the proportion of available drinks that were 'green' increasing from 32% to 66% and the proportion 'red' decreasing from 60% to 25% (comparing June 2014 to February 2016) within the same 10 centres.*
- *The YMCA's Soft Drink Free Summer appeared to have its intended effect, with the volume of refrigerated, packaged 'red' drinks decreasing by 50% after the campaign was introduced.*
- *The customer surveys found no evidence that customers have responded to the healthier food provision by bringing their own 'red' food and drink from home to compensate for not being able to purchase them at the centre.*
- *We found no change in total dollar sales for all drinks combined, or for refrigerated, packaged drinks, after the campaign was introduced.*

Through the implementation and evaluation of the YMCA Soft Drink

	<p>Free Summer campaign and the broader Healthy Food and Beverage Policy, YMCA Victoria is contributing to the growing evidence base around the impact of a settings based approach to improving the diets of Victorians.</p> <p>Baseline data gathered prior to the policy implementation (through menu assessments using the Healthy Choices guidelines) found that our organisational average for 'red' items was 72% - well above the policy goal of 10% or less. One year into implementation, menu assessments have been revisited and the results show a 20% decrease in the availability of 'red' items from 72% to 52%, while 'green' items have increased from 15% to 28%. This positive shift towards healthier options can be attributed to our YMCA Soft Drink Free Summer campaign and the significant reduction of 'red' drinks and an increase in the availability and promotion of 'amber' and 'green' drinks. It is hoped that this work will inform other organisations in the adoption of other similar policies.</p> <p>We believe our ultimate goal of removing all sugary drinks from our centres will positively impact the health of the Victorian community by y reducing its sugar intake by 28 tonnes per annum that would previously had been available through the YMCA and changing the purchasing and consumption habits of our customers, staff and volunteers. If more organisations commit to removing sugary drinks and provide healthier drinks options eventually it will become the new normal, and one that is demanded by communities across the state.</p>
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Supporting Documents

1. Sample sugary drink poster/infographic
2. Media Coverage of Soft Drink Free Summer The Age and 7:30 Report
3. Soft Drink Free Summer Campaign Toolkit
4. Snap shot of data and findings from Deakin evaluation