Rethink Your Drink: Getting Safe Drinking Water Into Schools and Community Places

ACTION IDEAS

Summary based on the June 16, 2015 webinar featuring Dr. Anisha Patel, UCSF School of Medicine and Laurel Firestone, Community Water Center

Impact state policy
- Advocate for passage of SB 334 (Leyva) and AB 496 (Rendon) to provide funding for clean drinking water projects and require the State Department of Public Health to reduce the risk of exposure to lead in public school drinking water. More information and sample support letters are available at: http://www.communitywatercenter.org/safe_schools.

Coordinate funding for ‘drinking water in schools’ projects locally
- Help local partners learn about and apply for available funding resources.
- Contact and partner with local water districts as possible on tap water promotion.
- LHDs may apply for funds to provide drinking water in schools and community places with water quality or supply challenges. Funds for projects can then be sub-granted to schools or community organizations or administered directly.
- Local Control and Accountability Plans (LCAPs): provide information to local partners and people developing school wellness policies. Make sure inventorying need in schools. Ensure facilities in good repair in context of LCAPs. Are fountains working? Is there ability to access water at lunch and recess? In high traffic areas? Make this a priority.

State Funding Opportunities:
- Prop 1 financial assistance funding—grants and loans: http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/proposition1.shtml
- Prop 1 and SB 445 groundwater quality funds for preventing or cleaning up contamination of groundwater that serves or has served as a source of drinking water. http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/gw_funding/
- Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, providing financial assistance for the planning/design and construction of drinking water infrastructure projects that are needed to achieve or maintain compliance with federal and state drinking water statutes and regulations. http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/drinking_water/services/funding/SRF.shtml
• Clean-up and Abatement funds to meet interim emergency drinking water needs for those communities with a contaminated water supply or that suffer drought related water outages or threatened emergencies. [http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/cca/dw_droughtfund/](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/grants_loans/cca/dw_droughtfund/)

• See also Community Water Center handouts: “Cleanup and Abatement Interim Emergency Drinking Water Program” and “State Drinking Water Resources”

Other Funding Opportunities:
• **Integrated Regional Watershed Management Planning Processes.** If drinking water is a priority in the region, health and nutrition departments and advocates may be able to partner with their local IRWM group to fund water in schools and other places. For example, in Riverside County, the health department partnered with the Coachella IRWM to install point of use filters in mobile homes and small communities.

• **Local Control and Accountability Plans.** The LCAP can include provision of funds for drinking water. For more information on the Local Control Funding Formula visit [http://publicadvocates.org/californias-new-school-finance-law-local-control-funding-formula-lcff](http://publicadvocates.org/californias-new-school-finance-law-local-control-funding-formula-lcff)

• Reach out to local industry partners and the local water district.

**Promote access to safe drinking water in schools**
• Partner with groups like First 5 to support water promotion or access efforts. See also educational resources such as Potter the Otter ([http://www.pottertheotter.com](http://www.pottertheotter.com))

• Learn from efforts such as Agua4All and Dr. Anisha Patel and colleagues’ research (refer to slide presentation for data and further resources)

**Incorporate school drinking water into nutrition and wellness planning**
• Encourage strong language in school wellness policies, which typically do not meaningfully address water consumption. See for example California Project Lean.

• Leverage planning cross-overs with Rethink Your Drink campaigns, Community Nutrition Action Plans and Nutrition Education Obesity Prevention work plans.