



February 1, 2011

The Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Health
Brooke Claxton Building, Tunney's Pasture
Postal Locator: 0906C
Ottawa, ON K1A 0K9

Re: Government of Canada *Kid's Health & Safety Campaign*

Dear Honourable Minister Aglukkaq,

On behalf of the Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada (CDPAC), I would like to express our appreciation and support for the Government of Canada's recently launched *Kid's Health & Safety Campaign*. In particular, we applaud the campaign's highlighting of the link between the consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) and childhood obesity.

Evidence of the link between the consumption of SSBs and the development of childhood obesityⁱⁱⁱ is well documented in both Canadian and international literature. It has been shown, for example, that children between the ages of 2.5 and 4.5 years who consume SSBs between meals are twice as likely to be overweight compared to children who do not consume SSBsⁱⁱⁱ. It has also been documented that school-aged children who consume just one additional serving of SSB per day are at a 60% greater risk of being obese^{iv}.

Childhood obesity has been proven to track into adulthood, thereby increasing the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases earlier in adulthood than seen in previous trend data^v. Therefore, childhood represents a logical and opportune time to intervene on SSB consumption habits.

While stemming Canada's obesity epidemic will require a multi-level and multi-sectoral system of interventions, CDPAC believes the government of Canada is playing a vital role by identifying SSB consumption as a key risk factor for obesity and chronic disease.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ida Thomas".

Ida Thomas,
Chair

ⁱ Ludwig DS, Peterson KE, Gortmaker SL. Relation between consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks and childhood obesity: a prospective observational analysis. *Lancet*. 2001 Feb 17;357:505-8

ⁱⁱ Is Intake of sugar-sweetened beverages associated with adiposity in children? Nutrition Evidence Library, 2010. United States Department of Agriculture

ⁱⁱⁱ Dubois L, Farmer A, Girard M, Peterson K. Regular sugar-sweetened beverage consumption between meals increases risk of overweight among preschool-aged children. *J Am Diet Assoc*. 2007 Jun;107(6):924-34

^{iv} Ludwig DS, Peterson KE, Gortmaker SL. Relation between consumption of sugar-sweetened drinks and childhood obesity: a prospective observational analysis. *Lancet*. 2001 Feb 17;357:505-8

^v Herman, K. M., Craig, C. L., Gauvin, L., & Katzmarzyk, P. T. (2008). Tracking of obesity and physical activity from childhood to adulthood: The Physical Activity Longitudinal Study. *International Journal of Pediatric Obesity*.

Members of the Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance of Canada Membres d'Alliance pour la prévention des maladies Chroniques au Canada

