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## p in Campaign to Remove Soda From Schools

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## Beverage Giants Team Up in Campaign to Remove Soda From Schools

Ad Collaboration Between Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Dr Pepper Hopes to Show Industry in Positive Light

By [Natalie Zmuda](#)  
Published: [March 09, 2010](#)



NEW YORK (AdAge.com) -- As the beverage industry comes under assault with proposed sugar taxes in several parts of the country, Coca-Cola, PepsiCo and Dr Pepper Snapple Group have begun running print and TV ads touting their joint initiative to remove full-calorie soft drinks from schools across the country. The normally fierce rivals are collaborating on a three-year commitment that has led to an 88% decrease in calories from beverages shipped to schools since 2004.



Competitors Coca-Cola, PepsiCo and Dr Pepper Snapple Group have come together for the American Beverage Association's campaign.

While the school initiative was in place well before the industry was put on the defensive against the proposed taxes, the promotion of the program is certainly well-timed. New York Gov. David Paterson has called for a one-cent-per-ounce tax on sugar-sweetened beverages, while Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter last week proposed a two-cent-per-ounce tax on sugary beverages.

Kevin Keane, senior VP-public affairs at the American Beverage Association, said the industry is hopeful the campaign will earn beverage companies some goodwill, though he said he doesn't expect critics pushing for new taxes to let up anytime soon. "We have a vocal group of critics, focused on raising some money," he said. "But initiatives like school beverages guidelines and the 'clear on calories' initiative will have far more impact in addressing childhood obesity than a tax ever will."

The Clear on Calories initiative involves the placement of calories on the front of packages, vending machines and fountain machines. The industry has painted the voluntary commitment as an answer to First Lady Michelle Obama's call to eradicate childhood obesity. Beverage companies will coordinate with the Food and Drug Administration on the effort, which is expected to be complete in 2012.

"What the beverage industry is doing is leading and recognizing that they need to be part of the solution, especially when it comes to a complex issue like obesity," Mr. Keane said. "You're always in a far better position to be on offense than on defense all the time, and our companies recognize that and are doing bold things in the public policy arena that others will follow."

Mr. Keane believes this is the first time competitors have come together in an advertising campaign, in the way that Coca-Cola, PepsiCo and Dr Pepper Snapple Group have. In the campaign's TV spot, actors playing drivers for each of the three companies walk through a school side-by-side in uniforms emblazoned with the companies' logos, loading vending machines. In the print ad, the drivers pose outside of a school.

"These are the fiercest rivals you're going to get," he said. "But our companies felt [the campaign] was the strongest way to convey what they'd done and that they'd done it together."



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By [Rodney33](#) | FRISCO, TX [March 9, 2010 11:44:29 pm](#):

What if lower calorie brands used social media to educate students and their parental figures about the impact lower calorie drink options can make in improving their overall wellness now and down the road?

It could move advocates to action, create a movement and make for a valued "give-back" to society, so many consumers, (especially moms with kids in the home and Gen Y), and brands long for.

We cover the importance of giving back to appeal to both moms and Gen Y in special reports covering both important audiences, available free on our site under Insights.

[Rodney Mason, CMO](#)  
[www.moosylvania.com](#)  
[www.twitter.com/rodmoose](#)



By [shellytn](#) | Nashville, TN [March 10, 2010 09:30:23 am](#):

How about the soft drink manufacturers took it upon themselves to modify their products? We've all heard the stories of what happens to nails left in Coke, and we all know the value of reducing sugar, right? Stevia is still new, but becoming more accepted and doesn't have the health risks of other sweeteners. Frankly, I'm angered at all the mainstream products sweetened with Sucralose -(just read your labels - you might be surprised). So if you're about to be banned, maybe that's a message!



By [fileunderk](#) | New York, NY [March 10, 2010 10:26:46 am](#):

@shellytn: agreed.

But how about good old fashioned sugar? How about government stop subsidizing corn? High fructose corn syrup is a DRUG that inhibits your sense of fullness. Sodas are basically drugs that are condoned in school.

And now the soda giants get to boast that they're doing the right thing to greenwash their image. How about removing HFCS drinks in their entirety?/

Thank you. And good day.



By [tutumies1](#) | MINNETONKA, MN [March 10, 2010 11:36:56 am](#):

one has to be aware that they are only trying to save their profits. It is now recognized that aspartame in cola's are unhealthy and can lead to Pancreatic cancer... How can these beverage companies possibly spend that in a positive light because there is less sugar in a beverage. In reality, those drinks are not healthy for people and we all need to wise up... Switching from sugar filled coke to diet coke is not a healthier move. Please review the science.



By [RK](#) | beavercreek, OH [March 10, 2010 12:37:17 pm](#):

Whenever did it become a good idea to get kids to listen by feeding them sugar? BTW, here's your sign!



By [Wilhaus](#) | Sydney [March 10, 2010 08:39:38 pm](#):

@fileunderk right on!



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