

HSFB Vendors Training Sessions

The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Barbados (HSFB) has hosted two crucial training sessions for school vendors and canteen operators. The training comes as HSFB continues to advocate for a restriction on the sale and marketing of sugar sweetened beverages in Barbados.

The training sessions have culminated with approximately 40 school vendors and canteen operators being trained in producing healthy drinks and food alternatives for the nation's children. President of Barbados Association of Retailers, Vendors and Entrepreneurs (BARVEN) Mr. Alister Alexander said his organization is putting the children first, in response to the need to advocate for the restriction of the sale and marketing of sugar sweetened drinks in school environments.

The changes come as HSFB works with six key schools to implement a model school programme which will bring the restriction on the sale and marketing of sugar sweetened drinks come September and October 2019 within those school environments.

Both training sessions were hosted at The St. Michael's School and within the sessions some vendors themselves having been educated and informed during the sessions were even calling for a ban on sugar sweetened drinks.

With a rate of 31% of our children being obese or overweight, HSFB is seeking to ensure that September brings a healthier school environment. This will be done in partnership with school vendors and canteen operators; specifically, in restricting the sale and marketing of sugary drinks in the six schools that are part of the Model school Programme.

HSFB in its current campaign, is encouraging parents/guardians and policy makers to protect the nation's children by cutting out consumption of sugary drinks.

Children spend more than half of their time within school environments, and research shows that it is in the school environment that they are largely at risk to engage in unhealthy eating and drinking habits. Currently the Barbados government carries a \$64 million health bill in the treatment of cardio-vascular disease and diabetes alone.