

# PRESENTATION GUIDE: “BE SUGAR SAVVY”

## INGREDIENTS FOR A DYNAMITE DEMONSTRATION

### Supplies

- 1 baggie filled with 17 sugar cubes
- 1 empty 20-ounce soda bottle

### Handouts

- Be Sugar Savvy: Presentation guide
- Calculating Sugar in a Container
- Show Me the Sugar!
- Sugar Shockers!
- Frequently Asked Questions About Sugar

## STEP 1— WE ARE EATING TOO MUCH SUGAR

*[Ask the audience]* How much sugar do you think the average American eats in a year?

*[Answer]* Almost 60 pounds a year...

The average person eats about 17 teaspoons (or 17 cubes) of sugar a day or 5 pounds a month. This is what 17 teaspoons of sugar looks like. And this is 5 pounds of sugar.

*[Hold up 17 sugar cubes in a baggie. Reveal 5 pounds of sugar.]*

The good news is that this has gone down. When this curriculum was developed in 2007, the average American was consuming about 26 teaspoons of sugar a day, which was about 100 pounds a year. Extra calories from all this sugar can contribute to serious health problems such as diabetes, certain cancers and heart disease.

## STEP 2— RE-THINK YOUR DRINK

You're probably wondering “is it really possible that people eat this much sugar?” And “where is all this sugar coming from?”

We're talking about the extra sugar that manufacturers add to food and drinks. Most of the added sugar in our diets comes from sodas and other sweetened beverages. So, let's begin to *think about what we drink*. For example, look at how much sugar is in a 20-ounce soda, since this is a common size. We'll start by reading the label.

### Use the Label

The label tells us there are over 16 teaspoons of sugar in this bottle. How do we know that by reading the label?

*[Pass out label with calculation]*

If we look at the label for the whole package, there are 65 *grams* of sugar in this bottle. Since grams are a measure that most people don't use, let's change the grams into teaspoons... How many *teaspoons* of sugar are in this bottle?



**4 grams of sugar equals one teaspoon.  
If you divide 65 grams by 4, you get about 16.25 teaspoons.**

### **How Much Sugar is in That Bottle?**

Let's see what 16 teaspoons of sugar looks like.

*[Ask for a volunteer to count out 16 sugar cubes from the baggie]*

Please count out 16 teaspoons/cubes of sugar and put them in this 20-ounce bottle. I'll help you count. [Count: 1-2-3-4-5...keep going! ... you're halfway there...] O.K. Take a look at this bottle. This is the amount of sugar in this one 20 oz. soda.

Let me ask you a question...would you put this much sugar in your coffee?

**So...now... don't you want to *re-think your drink*?**

### **STEP 3— SHOW ME THE SUGAR!**

I know some of you are thinking: "I'm safe. I don't drink soda every day."

That's great! But soda is not the only place we find an abundance of sugar in our diets. Eating and drinking large amounts of sugar has become way too easy. Most processed or packaged foods and beverages contain some added sugar, and many contain a shocking amount.

*[Pass out **Sugar Shockers** list (Popular Food Items Ranked by Amount of Sugar)]*

### **Sugar Shockers**

Remember how we said the average person eats *about 17 teaspoons of sugar a day*? Well look how easy it is to get to that amount:

Let's start at the beginning of the day with a bowl of cereal, like the popular Kellogg's Special K, and a cup of coffee. If you look at the **Sugar Shockers** list, you'll see that Special K contains one teaspoon of sugar, and you added one teaspoon of sugar to your coffee.

*[Count out 2 sugar cubes from baggie and place on your demo table]*

At lunch, let's have a Subway Salad with sliced turkey and Fat Free Italian Dressing. As you can see from your **Sugar Shockers** list, the salad with dressing totals 9 grams of sugar, which is about 2 teaspoons. We're doing OK so far!

However, when we add in our 20-ounce soda (which, as you remember, contains about 16 teaspoons of sugar), we've had a total of 18 teaspoons of sugar for lunch!

*[Count out 18 more sugar cubes for lunch]*

So, we've had 2 teaspoons of sugar for breakfast and 18 for lunch, which totals 20 teaspoons. It's only mid-day and we've already surpassed the daily average of 17 teaspoons of sugar!

*[Hold up empty baggie]*

Now it's the afternoon and we're ready for a little break. Looking at your Sugar Shockers list, see if you can pick out one or two items that you or your family might eat in a typical day.

*[Ask the audience]* Which snacks did you pick?

### Here's what I've chosen:

I feel like having some chocolate and so I've chosen a Snickers bar. When I check the Sugar Shockers list, I see that this snack contains 8 teaspoons of sugar! So, let's see where we are now in our total teaspoons of sugar for the day...

*[20 tsp from breakfast and lunch + 8 tsp for a snack = 28 tsp of added sugar!]*

With this snack, I've eaten 28 tsp of sugar—far more sugar than the daily average of 17 tps!

Food/Beverage	Container Size	Grams of Sugar	Teaspoons of Sugar
Special K Cereal	1 cup	4g	1 tsp
Coffee with 1 tsp sugar	8 oz cup, 1 tsp sugar	4g	1 tsp
Subway salad with fat free dressing	1 salad, 2 oz. dressing	9g	2 tsp
Regular Cola	20 oz.	65g	16 tsp
Snickers bar	2 oz.	30 g	8 tsp
<b>TOTAL TEASPOONS</b>			<b>28 tsp</b>

If you thought it was hard to imagine eating 17 teaspoons of sugar a day—well, we're there already. See how quickly the sugar adds up, and we haven't even had dinner or dessert!

If we had chosen to drink water for lunch instead of soda, and had an apple for an afternoon snack, we would be at only 4 teaspoons through breakfast, lunch and a snack—which is way below the daily average of 17 teaspoons of added sugars!

### STEP 4— BE SUGAR SAVVY

What else can we do, besides switching to water, to have a healthy diet? First, we need to know how to find the added sugar in foods and beverages, so we can limit it.

*[Pass out **Show Me the Sugar** handout]*

#### Show Me the Sugar

Let's look at the product shown on this handout — it's a box of cereal bars. The box tells you that they are heart healthy, they lower both blood pressure and cholesterol, and the product is named "Smart Start." But the Nutrition Facts label tells us that one small bar has 13 grams of sugar, which is more than 3 teaspoons.

It's important to know where to find the hidden sugars in any product. Take a look at your handout for a list of common names for sugar-in-disguise. *Can someone in the audience read the list of common names for sugar?*

Now that we've heard all these different names, let's look at the Smart Start Healthy Heart Bars Ingredients List to find all the sugar. The words highlighted in red are all names for sugar in this one product. *Let's say them aloud together...*

*[Ask the audience]*      How many different forms of sugar are in this one product?

*[Answer]*                      12

### **A Low-Sugar Lifestyle**

How can we lead a healthier, low-sugar lifestyle?

*[Invite audience to answer]*

Here are some tips:

1. Limit added sugar as much as possible. It is best to eat fresh, whole foods, especially fresh fruits and vegetables, and limit processed and packaged foods.
2. Drink water instead of sugary drinks. Water is best and has absolutely no sugar. Try replacing at least one sugary drink with water every day. You can add a slice of orange, lemon, or cucumber for almost no calories and lots of flavor. Other healthy drink options are non-fat milk, unsweetened iced tea and 100% fruit juice in limited amounts—not more than half a cup a day). *Once is a while* diet soda is OK; it doesn't contain the added sugar but is still *not* a healthy drink alternative.
3. Remember: one small change will make a big difference. Added sugar is everywhere. So... **Be Sugar Savvy! Know how to find it; know how to limit it; and know how to replace it** with healthy options.