



Written by [Raven Clabough](#) on July 27, 2011

## McDonald's Caters to Nanny-state Demands

And though the changes have not been well-received by customers, McDonald's plans to continue enforcing the policy.

Under the new policy, McDonald's will be offering apple slices, half-portions of French fries, and healthier beverages such as one-percent milk and fat-free chocolate milk.

The *Blaze* contends McDonald's is kowtowing to political pressures:



So after all the years of satisfied customers "lovin' it," it is political pressure, including First Lady Michelle Obama's war on childhood obesity, that reportedly forced McDonald's hands. [CNN](#) reports that Kelly Brownell, director of the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity at Yale University, said McDonald's had to change its menu because of political and community "pressures":

"I see this as a positive development," he said. "The companies have recognized the pressures from the public, the community and parents to offer healthier choices for children. They've begun to respond. There have been criticisms of what they serve children for many years. In the past years, the pressure has intensified, the White House concern about childhood obesity is one source of that pressure."

As expected, First Lady Michelle Obama has praised the policy, asserting that McDonald's is making "progress today by providing more fruit and reducing the calories in its Happy Meals. I've always said that everyone has a role to play in making America healthier, and these are positive steps toward the goal of solving the problem of childhood obesity."

As noted by the *Blaze*, however, the healthier choices are not faring well:

Ironically, since introduced, the apple slices are apparently not even popular in the Happy Meals with only 11 percent of customers — be them children or adults — opting for the fruit. Regardless, McDonald's is making the fruit a default item in the Happy Meal.

To boot, McDonald's has issued a statement indicating that this is only the beginning: "McDonald's has been engaging suppliers, government and non-government organizations to determine ways it could play a role in helping society address today's obesity concerns," the company's press release said.

Over the course of the next 10 years, McDonald's intends to introduce even more healthy options, including more fruit and vegetable alternatives. [CNN](#) reports:

The fast food giant also pledged to reduce sodium 15% across the board in its menu by 2015. It



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recently reduced sodium by 10% in most of its chicken offerings, including the Chicken McNuggets.

McDonald's also vowed to reduce added sugars, saturated fat and calories through varied portion sizes, reformulations and innovations by 2020.

Sensing some trepidation from its consumers, however, McDonald's ensures its customers that the staple Happy Meal choices of burger or McNuggets will remain in place.

Still, *the Blaze* bemoans the changes, calling McDonald's "another causality in the Nanny State's war on personal choice."

Last year, legislators in San Francisco [approved](#) a Happy Meal toy ban, asserting that the toys were a way for McDonald's to lure children into consuming unhealthy food. The ban limits toy giveaways in children's fast-food meals that are considered excessive in calories, sodium, and fat. The same ordinance requires fruits and vegetables to be served with each meal as well.

Other cities and counties have articulated an interest in following suit.

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