

More Water, Please!

Overview

It's no secret that tempting and tasty beverages are everywhere. It's easy to forget the importance of water for overall health and a well-balanced diet. Staying hydrated helps kids stay alert and focused, can keep their bodies at a safe and healthy temperature, and may improve cognitive functioning. School-aged kids should be drinking at least six to eight glasses of water each day.

One of the easiest ways of ensuring kids, school staff and families drink more water is to make water more accessible and fun throughout the day.



Take Action

At school:

- Ensure clean, maintained water fountains are available throughout the school.
- Sell water bottles branded with your school logo. It supports [healthy fundraising](#) and access to water!
- Encourage teachers to allow water bottles in the classroom, or allow students to go to the water fountain as needed during class.
- Educate staff: Consuming water supports their students' immune systems and may lessen headaches, sleepiness and stomach aches which ultimately helps students be present and ready to learn.

- Work with your food service department to swap out sodas and other sugar-sweetened beverages available in vending machines or in the cafeteria and replace them with regular water, flavored waters and sparkling water ([learn what is allowable in schools](#)).
- Start a [Rethink Your Drink campaign](#) to educate students on the importance of water and amount of sugar in sweetened beverages.
- [Host a taste test](#) of infused waters - see below for some of our favorite flavor combinations! For an extra challenge, make it a blind taste test to see if they can pick out what is in the water. Some of our favorite ideas:
 - Mix plain seltzer water with a little 100% fruit juice for a refreshing and bubbly treat
 - Infuse a pitcher of plain water with these combinations (or let students get creative!):
 - Blueberry & Lemon
 - Strawberry & Basil
 - Watermelon & Mint
 - Pineapple & Jalapeno
 - Peach & Berries
 - Apple & Cinnamon Sticks
 - Orange & Cucumber
- Teach the importance of water in health education class. Adjust your explanation based on the age of the student. Here's some basic information:
 - Water is an essential nutrient for life—we can't live without it!
 - Water represents about two-thirds of our body weight.
 - Water is part of every living cell, and it's a medium for all metabolic changes (digestion, absorption and excretion), as it helps transport nutrients.
- Invite parents at your school to take a community pledge to swap out 1-for-1 by replacing one sugar sweetened drink with water each day.

At home:

- Ensure kids are eating fresh fruits and vegetables regularly, as these items have high water content that help contribute to your child's daily water needs.

- Talk to your child about the connection between water intake and growing big and strong, and how choosing water over soda or fruit juices may make them feel more energized, alert and ready to play and explore.
- Model the behavior you want to see from your kids. If you start drinking more water and choose water over other less nutritious options, they will, too.
- Decorate personal water bottles with stickers, markers and other materials to make drinking water even more fun.
- Team up with your child to replace one sugar-sweetened beverage a day with water – bonus, this can cut down the weekly grocery bill, too!

Tips



Ask volunteers to check with local sports and fitness equipment stores about donating water bottles and water containers to your class or sports team.



Have any artists in your community? They may be willing to lead a water bottle decorating event, donate art supplies, or even design posters and artwork that can be hung up throughout the school encouraging kids to choose water.

Additional Resources

[Water Access \(CDC\)](#)

[Rethink Your Drink \(ENGLISH\) \(CDC\)](#)

[Rethink Your Drink \(SPANISH\) \(CDC\)](#)

[For Kids: Why Drinking Water is the Way to Go \(KidsHealth from Nemours\)](#)

[Getting Healthy Together: Easy Tips for Families to Swap Out Sugary Drinks](#)

[Healthy Beverage Campaign \(Massachusetts Health Council\)](#)

[\(English and Spanish\)](#), [\(Action for Healthy Kids\)](#)

Related Activities

Food and Beverage Marketing at School

While it can be a significant funding source for schools (particularly for athletic programs), advertising less healthy foods and beverages can send conflicting messages to students that have been learning about good nutrition in the classroom.

Healthy Fundraising

Healthy fundraising is a public demonstration of your school's commitment to promoting healthy, consistent behaviors among students, families, and communities at large while helping your school meet financial needs.

Offer Healthy Snacks

In addition to nourishing bodies, snacks provide an opportunity to practice healthy eating habits.

Rethink Your Drink

A Rethink Your Drink campaign is a great way to teach kids about the amount of sugar that can be found in commonly consumed beverages.

