



Parents and Caregivers

Choosing Healthy Beverages for Your Family

Serve healthy beverages to children.

- ◆ **Water.** It's free and you can encourage kids to drink as much as they want!
- ◆ **Milk.** It's a great source of calcium, protein, and Vitamin D for growing bodies. If kids don't like plain milk, flavor it lightly or add to food like tomato soup, oatmeal, or fruit smoothies.
 - ➔ For kids younger than 2, choose whole or 2% milk, plain.
 - ➔ For kids 2 years and older, choose low-fat (1%) or fat-free (skim) milk, plain.
- ◆ **100% juice.** A ½ cup of 100% juice can provide vitamins and minerals. But, don't let labels deceive you. Fruit "drinks" such as Sunny Delight are not fruit juice. Always look for drinks labeled 100% juice.
- ◆ **Skip sports and energy drinks.** Sports drinks are expensive and unnecessary. Water is the best drink for active kids – keep water on hand before, during, and after activities. Energy drinks contain excessive caffeine that is unsafe and unhealthy for children and youth.
- ◆ **Avoid artificial sweeteners.** Diet beverages, such as diet soda, and other drinks with artificial sweeteners are not recommended for children, especially those under 14 years old.

Adopt Healthy Practices with Children.

- ◆ **Surround kids with water.** Put a pitcher of water on the table during meals, and keep water close to the bottom of the fridge and encourage kids to help themselves. Give kids a reusable water bottle!
- ◆ **Make water fun and flavorful.** Use novelty ice trays, fun glasses, or silly straws. Let kids pick their favorite fruits and create their own infused water recipes.
- ◆ **Drink smaller portions.** If serving sugary drinks, use smaller cups or share the beverage. If serving 100% juice, dilute with water or seltzer for a tasty treat.