

Building Blocks

Newsletter Promoting Children's Health from the Anne Arundel County Department of Health

Be Sweet Without Added Sugar

The sugars or sweeteners added to food and drinks add to total calories, but provide no vitamins or minerals on their own. Allowing children to consume food and drinks with too many added sugars can fill them up without supplying the nutrients their growing bodies need.



Consumption of too much added sugar has been linked to an increased risk of type 2 diabetes, heart disease, obesity and tooth decay. Use the following information for tips to reduce added sugars in your child care facility and support healthy habits.

Where Is the Added Sugar Coming From?

According to the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 47 percent of added sugars consumed by Americans 2 years of age and older come from sugar-sweetened beverages like sodas, fruit drinks, sweetened coffee and tea, energy drinks and flavored waters. Snacks and sweets make up 31 percent of added sugars. Visit www.BetterBeverageFinder.org to compare and find drinks with no added sugars.

The 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends limiting consumption of added sugars to less than 10% of daily calories. The average intake of added sugars for 1- to 3-year-olds is 11% of daily calories and then jumps to 15% for 4- to 8-year-olds.

Did You Know?

Water makes up about 60 percent of our body weight and is one of the body's most essential nutrients. According to the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, a national organization, children should drink 6 to 8 cups of water per day. Make sure children in your care have access to drinking water all day. Fruit and vegetables have a higher water content than other solid foods. Eating the recommended 5 to 9 servings of fruit and vegetables every day can help children meet their hydration needs.



Copy the enclosed insert and provide it to the parents of the children in your care.



Pay attention to how much water the kids in your care are drinking during physical activity, even more so when children are exercising in hot weather. Keep children hydrated by having them drink before, during and after any physical activity. Encourage children to drink a half cup to two cups of water every 15 to 20 minutes while exercising.



A Note About 100% Fruit Juice

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no more than 4 to 6 ounces of 100 percent fruit juice per day for 1- to 6-year-olds, and no more than 8 to 12 ounces per day for 7- to 18-year-olds. Although 100 percent fruit juice contains beneficial nutrients, consumption should be limited because it lacks the tummy-filling fiber found in whole fruit. Even though the sugar in 100 percent fruit juice is natural sugar, it is easy to consume too much, increasing calorie consumption and leading to weight gain. Don't confuse 100 percent fruit juice with fruit drinks which have added sugars and limited or no vitamins and minerals. Make sure the juices you are serving to kids say "100% juice" on the label.

Take Advantage of Nature's Sweetness

Water can be flavored with almost any fruit, vegetable or herb. Flavor water with fresh fruit and vegetables that are in season or choose frozen when they are out of season. You can also use carbonated water to create fun, fizzy drinks. Try this yummy combination with kids:

Sparkling Strawberry Cucumber Cooler

Makes about eight, 8-ounce servings

Ingredients:

- 1 cucumber
- 1 bunch of fresh mint leaves
- 1 pint of strawberries
- Sparkling water
- 2 limes
- Ice

Directions:

1. Clean all preparation surfaces and have everyone wash their hands.
2. Thoroughly wash fruit, vegetables and herbs under cold running water.
3. Slice off the ends of the limes and cucumbers and discard. Cut thin slices across the width of the cucumbers and limes.
4. Slice off the tops of the strawberries to remove the stems and leaves and discard. Cut the strawberries in half lengthwise.
5. Have children prepare the mint by tearing the leaves off of the stems and discarding the stems. Children can then tear the mint leaves to release more flavor.
6. Have children add the prepared cucumber, strawberries, limes and mint to a 2-quart pitcher and fill with ice and sparkling water.
7. Let chill for 10 minutes and enjoy.



Try some of these other tasty combinations:

- Blackberry and ginger
- Cucumber and lemon
- Cherry and lime
- Pineapple and mint
- Strawberry and basil
- Watermelon and rosemary

Tips:

- The longer your infusion sits and the more fruit, vegetables and herbs you add, the more flavorful it will be.
- Have children create their own flavored water infusions and have fun taste-testing their creations.

Be a Sugar Sleuth

Added sugars and sweeteners sneak into our food disguised with many different names. Check the ingredient list for these commonly found names for sugar: fruit juice concentrate, evaporated cane juice, malt syrup, sucrose, dextrose, fructose, high fructose corn syrup and corn sweetener.

Healthy Consumer Tips:

- When buying canned fruit, look at the ingredients and choose varieties that have been canned in water or their own juice, instead of syrup.
- Yogurt is made up of natural lactose sugars but also tends to be sweetened with added sugars to improve taste. Look for yogurt with no added sugars and sweeten it naturally with fruit.
- Dried cereals, especially cereals directly marketed to kids, tend to boast of their content of whole grains, but are often loaded with added sugars. Choose whole grain cereals with little or no added sugar.



Is Sugar to Blame for Type 2 Diabetes?

You may have heard that eating and drinking too much sugar causes diabetes. The answer to this is complicated. Research has shown that the consumption of sugary drinks is linked to type 2 diabetes. Consuming too many calories from any source contributes to weight gain, and being overweight increases your risk for developing type 2 diabetes. Consuming too many calories from sugar, especially in beverages, is easy because they taste good and do not make us feel full. It's okay to enjoy food and drinks that contain sugar, as long as you are being mindful of the amount that you are consuming. Remember, less than 10 percent of your daily calories should come from added sugars. For the average 2,000 calorie diet, this means limiting calories from added sugars to 200 calories per day.



Children and Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes, a disease that makes it difficult for the body to turn food into energy, is the seventh leading cause of death in Anne Arundel County. While the onset of type 2 diabetes has mostly been associated with adults in the past, the condition has increased in youth in recent years.

Children more at risk for developing type 2 diabetes:

- Are overweight and not physically active.
- Have a close relative that has type 2 diabetes.
- Are African American, Hispanic/Latino, American Indian or Asian/Pacific Islander.

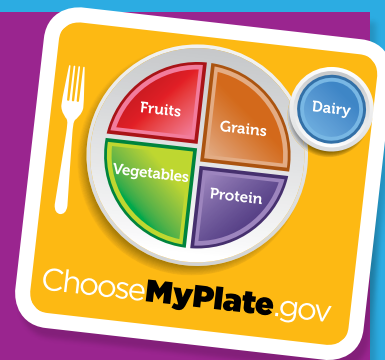
Children and adults can reduce their risk of developing type 2 diabetes by eating healthy, being physically active and maintaining a healthy weight. It is important that children learn healthy habits today to empower them to make healthy choices in the future.

For more information about diabetes, visit www.Diabetes.org and www.niddk.nih.gov.

MyPlate and Physical Activity

Encouraging kids to get moving and providing healthy food and drinks is key to the prevention of obesity and chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes. As a child care provider, ensure that the kids in your care get the recommended amount of physical activity each day. Toddlers should get at least an hour of active play every day, and preschoolers should get two or more hours. Children and adolescents ages 6 to 17 should participate in an hour or more of moderate- and vigorous-intensity physical activity each day. Visit www.HealthyKidsHealthyFuture.org for activity ideas for all different age groups.

MyPlate, which was created by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), can be used as a visual guide for preparing healthy meals and snacks for children. Visit www.ChooseMyPlate.gov for more information.



Need More Help?

If you need more information about children's health and safety, here are some local resources.

Anne Arundel County Department of Health

410-222-7095 ■ www.aahealth.org
www.facebook.com/aahealth ■ www.twitter.com/aahealth

Behavioral Health

410-222-6785

Communicable Diseases

410-222-7256

Emergency Preparedness and Response

410-222-4495

Healthy Babies

410-222-7223 or
www.aahealthybabies.org

Healthy Start and Home Visiting

410-222-7177

Immunizations

410-222-4896

Injury Prevention

410-222-4223

Lead Poisoning

410-222-7003

Learn To Live

410-222-7979 or
www.LearnToLiveHealthy.org

Maryland Children's Health Program (MCHP)

410-222-4792

Smoking Cessation

410-222-7979 or
www.MyQuitKit.org

Smoking Stinks Website for Kids

www.SmokingStinks.org

Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Program

410-222-6797

Anne Arundel County Fire Department Office of Fire Safety and Injury Prevention

410-222-8303

Anne Arundel County Police Community Relations

Northern District: 410-222-6135
Eastern District: 410-222-6140
Southern District: 410-222-1967
Western District: 410-222-6155

Annapolis City Police Community Safety

410-268-9000

Maryland Poison Center

1-800-222-1222 or

www.mdpoison.com

U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

www.cdc.gov



Building Blocks is published by the **Learn To Live** program at the Anne Arundel County Department of Health, 1 Harry S. Truman Parkway, Annapolis, MD 21401, 410-222-7979, www.LearnToLiveHealthy.org. The services and facilities of the Anne Arundel County Department of Health are available to all without regard to race, color, religion, political affiliation or opinion, national origin, age, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability.

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Learn To Live

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