

# Parent Communications— Stay Cool

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## Hydrated Kids Are Healthy Kids

What to drink? Water! Offer water at every snack and meal time. It is a great drink choice for kids because it is calorie-free and low cost from your nearest tap! Kids should drink plenty of water when they are playing and being active. Here are some tips to keep your kids happy, healthy, and hydrated:

- ▶ **Drink water often.** Serve water at every snack and meal time. When your kids are physically active, make sure they have a bottle of water to drink from during their activity. Our bodies are the best judge of how much water we need. Teach your kids to drink whenever they are thirsty.
- ▶ **Do not serve drinks with sugar!** This includes sodas, sports drinks, sweetened iced teas, fruit drinks, and energy drinks. Drinking too many sugar-sweetened drinks increases the risk for overweight in kids and adults and can also cause dental cavities.
- ▶ **Ask questions.** When you can't monitor your children's play, make sure that after-school programs or day-camps serve water at all meals and snack times, and that they allow for water breaks throughout the day.

Staying hydrated is essential not only during the hot summer but also during the rest of the year—especially if children are playing in a gymnasium or indoor area where it gets hot. Drink lots of water yourself throughout the day! Setting an example now can help your kids learn how to stay healthy and hydrated as they get older.

Optional sidebar: If you like, you may include the following:

Do Choose:

- ▶ Water—as much as you want! For extra flavor and fun, add fruit or frozen 100% fruit juice ice cubes.
- ▶ Sodium free seltzer water
- ▶ Juice "spritzers"—Mix a splash of 100% juice with sodium-free seltzer water.

Avoid Drinks With Added Sugars:

- ▶ Soda
- ▶ Sweetened iced teas

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## STAY COOL *(continued)*

- ▶ Fruit punches and fruit-ades
- ▶ Sports drinks
- ▶ Energy drinks
- ▶ Fruit drinks

### Avoid Drinks With Sugar Substitutes:

- ▶ Diet sodas
- ▶ Diet iced teas
- ▶ Diet fruit drinks

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Optional e-mail message: Use this sample message to communicate with parents by e-mail (if available).

**Subject Line: Healthy Habits Power Tips—Stay Cool**

Dear (insert school name and grade) Parents,

This week your child will focus on the importance of drinking water in the (insert school name and grade) *Eat Well & Keep Moving* program. The key messages will be the following:

- ▶ Water is the best thirst quencher.
- ▶ Drink water often when you play.
- ▶ Drink water instead of juice or soda at every meal.
- ▶ Keep your children hydrated by following these Healthy Habits Power Tips:

**Drink water often.** Serve water at every snack and meal time. When your kids are physically active, make sure they have a bottle of water to drink from during their activity. Our bodies are the best judge of how much water we need. Teach your kids to drink whenever they are thirsty.

**Do not serve drinks with sugar!** This includes sodas, sports drinks, sweetened iced teas, fruit drinks, and energy drinks. Drinking too many sugar-sweetened drinks increases the risk for overweight in kids and adults and can also cause dental cavities.

**Make water even more FUN!** For extra flavor and fun, add sliced fruit or frozen 100% fruit juice ice cubes to water. Or, mix a splash of 100% juice to sodium-free seltzer water for a refreshing treat.

For more information on healthy drink options, check out [www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-drinks/index.html](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-drinks/index.html)

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