

All About Water

Drinking water is both rewarding and beneficial for young children. Water hydrates the body, cushioning muscles and joints and should be consumed on a regular basis. Water also transports nutrients to and carries waste away from cells and assists in regulating the body's temperature. But that's not all; there are several other benefits to drinking water.

Drinking water

- is the main solvent for food, minerals, and vitamins;
- assists the kidneys;
- assists in maintaining normal bowel functions;
- assists in the normality of body functions; and
- does not add fat or calories to the diet.



The human body is made of about 75% water. As children move throughout the day, they lose water through urination, perspiration, and even exhaling. While the recommendations for water vary based on weight, age, and other stipulations, young children should drink water on a regular basis.

Remember to encourage more water intake when children participate in physical activity, are ill with a fever, experience diarrhea or vomiting, or are in high altitude or hot climates.

Dehydration is a major consequence of young children not consuming enough fluids. Because the body does not store water as it stores nutrients, dehydration takes place when a person exports more water than consumed. Symptoms include lethargy; no/limited tears during crying; decreased frequency of urination, irritability, and sunken eyes. Remember to offer and make water available for children throughout the day.



Food Sources for Water

Fruits	Vegetables	Other
Watermelon	Carrots	Milk
Cantaloupe	Cucumbers	Juice (100% & Unsweetened)
Strawberries	Lettuce	Meat
Cherries	Tomatoes	Poultry
Apples	Squash	Fish
Grapes	Celery	Broth Based Soup
Papaya	Spinach	Yogurt
Citrus Fruits	Cauliflower	Oatmeal (Whole Grain)

There are multiple food sources for water, but the best source is always plain water. When choosing other food or beverage water sources, avoid sugar sweetened juices, sodas, and sweetened sports drinks. These types of drinks have water content, but have high levels of sugar causing increased risks of weight gain and/or obesity.

CACFP New Standard - Availability of Water

The *Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010* includes a water provision for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Effective October 1, 2011, the provision requires child care centers, family child care homes, at-risk afterschool programs, and shelters participating in CACFP to make drinking water available upon request to children.

Tips for Serving and Increasing the Availability of Water

- Display child size water pitchers with cups for easy access.
- Place cups beside the water fountain or the appropriate sink for easy accessibility.
- When children request water, distribute straws. Children often have fun when using straws.
- Send home literature to parents pertaining to water and availability.
- Teach children how to use pitchers to serve themselves.
- Offer mini sliced lemons, limes, or oranges to add flavor to water.
- Serve water chilled.
- Set an example for children by drinking water when thirsty.
- Remember to avoid serving children too much water before and during mealtimes. Too much water can lead to a feeling of fullness and reduce the amount of food and milk consumed.



Water Activities

- Talk about water in morning circle time. Let the children know that drinking water is available. Be prepared; children will request water more frequently when first introduced.
- Purchase books about water and place in the library or dramatic play section of the classroom. For example: *Water* by Frank Asch and *The Water's Journey* by Eleonore Schmid.
- Teach children about the water cycle.
- Plant a garden and allow children to water the plants.
- Water Painting.
 - ♦ Purchase food coloring and mix with water. Allow children to paint with the food coloring and water.
- Talk to children about the different forms of water. Ice is frozen water. Water that we drink is liquid. Steam is also a form of water. Children may see steam when they take a hot bath. Ask children where they have seen each form of water.



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Community Events and Field Trips

- Visit a local beach.
- Invite a local water safety inspector to talk about drinking water and how it is made safe.
- Host a water day celebration.
 - ♦ Take pictures of children drinking water and post in the classroom.
 - ♦ Rent or purchase water sports equipment for children to play outside.
 - ♦ Face Paintings – Paint glasses of water or water drops on children's faces.
- Host a water bottle recycling drive.
- Invite the local librarian to read books about water.



Sources

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- Long, C. (2011). *Child Nutrition Reauthorization 2010: Water availability in the child and adult care food program*. Retrieved from Food and Nutrition Services and United States Department of Agriculture website <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/regs-policy/policymemo/2011/CACFP-20-2011.pdf>
- National Food Service Management Institute. (2011). *Fact sheet: Nutritional benefits of water*. Retrieved from the National Food Service Management Institute website <http://www.nfsmi.org/documentlibraryfiles/PDF/20120103123914.pdf>
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Nutrition Highlights

National Message – USDA 2010 Dietary Guidelines Communications Message Calendar
January through April's theme is "Balancing Calories" and the selected key message is "Enjoy your food, but eat less". To obtain more information, follow the link at <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/MyPlate/CommunicationsMessageCalendar.pdf>.

National Nutrition Month

National Nutrition Month is a nutrition and education campaign, sponsored by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The campaign seeks to promote making healthy food choices, implementing physical activity, and implementing lifestyle changes. The theme is "Get Your Plate in Shape". On the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' website, there are a variety of informative materials including promotional ideas, literature, games, fact sheets, and many more great resources. For more information follow the link at <http://www.eatright.org/nmm/>.

NFSMI Training

NFSMI has a variety of online child care courses available. All online courses are free of charge and can be accessed at any time. Check out our online courses by following the link: <http://www.nfsmi.org/Templates/TemplateDefault.aspx?qs=cELEPTIzNg>.

CACFP Week – March 18-24, 2012

CACFP Week is a celebration of providing nutritious meals to children. The theme for CACFP Week 2012 is, "The Food Program is a WIN-WIN-WIN for parents, children, and providers." The objectives of the week-long celebration includes: educating parents and the community about the benefits of CACFP, promoting healthy and quality meals, and implementing long-term healthy eating habits. There are multiple ways to celebrate CACFP Week. Check out The Sponsor's Association at www.cacfp.org for countless tips and ideas.



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