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Healthy Beverage Choices for School Age Kids

Water is the best drink for thirsty kids and adults.

Healthy Hydration

- ✓ Encourage kids to drink and enjoy water.
- ✓ Encourage kids to eat fresh fruit and vegetables instead of drinking juice.

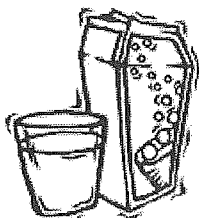
The Facts

- Kids who drink pop or more than 1 cup of juice a day may:
 - × Drink too much sugar (juice has as much sugar as pop).
 - × Not get enough calcium or vitamin D for proper bone growth.
 - × Have a higher risk of tooth decay.
 - × Consume too many calories and gain excessive weight.
 - × Eat less food making it harder to get the nutrients they need.
 - × Be at higher risk for iron deficiency.
- Drinking large amounts of caffeinated beverages may cause:
 - × Irritability and restlessness
 - × Difficulty concentrating
 - × Increased need to urinate
 - × Afternoon sleepiness
 - × Severe dehydration during exercise

What about Milk?

Milk has calcium and vitamin D for strong and healthy bone growth.

Kids need: 2 – 4 cups of skim or 1% milk or fortified soy milk per day.

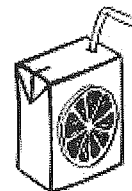


Go for Fruit First

Offer kids fruit instead of juice. Fruit provides fibre, fewer calories and much less sugar than juice.

If you do offer juice, choose 100% pure juice. Read the label. Look for “pure juice from concentrate”, “unsweetened” or “100% juice” or “100% pure fruit juice blend”.

Fruit drinks, fruit beverages and fruit punch are full of sugar. It's best not to bring these drinks home from the store. If they are not available, kids will choose water or milk instead.



What should Athletes Drink?

For active kids use these guidelines to choose the best beverage:

- ✓ For activities that last for one hour or less, water is the best choice
- ✓ For intense activities that last longer than one hour, choose a beverage that has 4-8% carbohydrate (4-8 grams/100 mL), such as a home-made or store bought sports drink

To make your own sports drink mix:
500 mL 100% juice, 500 mL water and 1/4 tsp salt.

The Concern about Caffeine

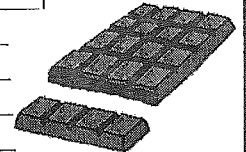
Kids get caffeine in colas, chocolate, coffee, tea, iced mocha drinks, and other drinks, such as energy drinks. The amount of caffeine is rarely listed on a product label, but the ingredient list will tell you if it has caffeine sources. Some of the natural sources of caffeine include: green or black tea leaves, guarana, yerba (also called yerba mate), and cocoa beans.

Health Canada recommends the following as maximum amounts for safety:

- Children 7-9 years: 62.5 mg/day
- Children 10-12 years: 85 mg/day
- Teens: no set guidelines, but some sources calculate the safe mark at 2 mg/kg of body weight



Common Sources of Caffeine	Serving Size	Caffeine (~ mg)
Colas (regular or diet)	355 mL (1 can)	36-46
Coffee, variety of brews	350 mL	177-268
Frozen mochas (fast food versions)	300 mL	35-70
Tea, black or green	240 mL	8-55
Energy drinks	Varies (~ 250 mL)	70-170 or more
Chocolate	30 g	7-58



Energy Drinks ... What's all the Hype

There are many 'energy drink' products currently sold in Canada. Brand names include: Red Bull, Dark Dog, SoBe, Hype, YJ Stinger & Red Rain.



Energy drinks usually contain:

- **Caffeine:** Caffeine is listed on 'energy drink' labels as guarana, yerba mate, or caffeine. Most contain about 80 mg or more per 250 mL can (double the amount found in cola drinks). This amount exceeds the recommendations for children.
- **Taurine:** an amino acid which some energy drinks claim makes you more alert but there is no research to show this
- **Carbohydrate:** in Energy drinks the carbohydrate is sugar. Most of these drinks contain twice as much sugar as sport drinks.

Excessive intake of 'energy drinks' can have serious health effects. For this reason, Health Canada cautions that **children should avoid energy drinks**. Because of potential health problems, Health Canada cautions that energy drinks should NOT be mixed with alcohol and that no more than 500 mL be consumed in one day.

Drop the Pop!

Pop is loaded with sugar, which provides "empty calories" that can displace healthier choices. Pop drinkers are more likely to have a low intake of calcium and other nutrients.



Adapted from: Health Canada: Caffeine and the Student Body Fact Sheet & It's Your Health - Safe Use of Energy Drinks; Palliser Health Region: Wake Up and Smell the Truth about Caffeine; Vancouver Coastal Health: Eating for Peak Performance.

If you have questions about your child's nutrition, please contact a Public Health Nurse at your local health unit, or call Dietitian Services at HealthLink BC (formerly Dial-A-Dietitian) at 8-1-1 and ask to speak to a Registered Dietitian.

Abbotsford 604-864-3400	Agassiz 604-793-7160	Burnaby 604-918-7605	Chilliwack 604-702-4900	Cloverdale, Surrey 604-575-5100	Guildford, Surrey 604-587-4750
Hope 604-860-7630	Langley 604-539-2900	Maple Ridge 604-476-7000	Mission 604-814-5500	New Westminster 604-777-6740	Newport, Port Moody 604-949-7200
Newton, Surrey 604-592-2000	North Delta 604-507-5400	North Surrey 604-587-7900	Port Coquitlam 604-777-8700	South Delta 604-952-3550	White Rock 604-542-4000

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