



# Fuel Their Minds

Ideas for Better Eating and Active Play with Young Children



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## Rethink Your Drink this Summer

### ReTHINK your drink

It's that time of year again, when the warm weather approaches and those ice-cold beverages look so enticing. Summer shouldn't be a time of year where we let children drink whatever sugar-sweetened beverages they want, we should

be supplying them with healthy beverages instead.

During the summer, Yolo County children and adults are encouraged to quench their thirst with a cold glass of water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages like sodas or sports drinks. As part of a county-wide nutrition education campaign, we challenge everyone this summer to *Rethink Your Drink*.

Added sugar from soda and other sugar-sweetened beverages is a contributor to the serious childhood obesity epidemic in our county, with 33% of youth ages 0-17 being overweight. According to the 2009 research brief *Bubbling Over: Soda Consumption and Its Link to Obesity in California*, nearly 40% of children aged 2 to 11 and 63% of children aged 12 to 17 drink one or more sodas per day.

Sugar-sweetened beverages contribute 10-15% of calories a day to the American diet. Because of the increase in sugary beverage consumption, we are encouraging child care providers, parents, and youth to reduce the amount of sugar-sweetened beverages they drink and replace them with healthy alternatives instead.

As part of the campaign, we will be providing experiential lessons for school sites who are interested in hosting a sugar lesson for parents. Participants will be using assorted beverage containers, sugar cubes, and other nutrition education materials to assist in delivering key *Rethink Your Drink* messages. They will learn to read a beverage label, convert grams of sugar to teaspoons, and recognize alternative names for sugar when reading a nutrition facts label. If you are interested in hosting a sugar lesson, contact Angela Asch, Nutrition Educator, at (530) 666-8731.

Summer is a time to relax and enjoy the warm weather but we still want to supply children with healthy food and beverage options. Use the tips below to assist in deciding what beverages to serve this summer at your school site.



### Tips on how to Rethink Your Drink:

Choose healthy drink options:

- Water (drink plenty – water has zero calories!)
  - For added flavor add a slice of cucumber, strawberries, or lemon
- Non-fat or low-fat milk (1%)
- 100% fruit and/or vegetable juice in limited amounts (less than 6 ounces per day for each child)
- Unsweetened decaffeinated iced tea

Article written in collaboration with the Health Education Council

## Strawberry Agua Fresca

Try making this strawberry flavored drink for a sweet and tasty summer treat for your students. It's a great beverage alternative for the summer months while strawberries are in season.

### Ingredients

2 lb box strawberries *or* any seasonal fruit  
3 cups water  
1 teaspoon vanilla extract  
1 tablespoon lemon juice

### Directions

Wash and cut strawberries. Place strawberries, water, vanilla, and lemon juice into a blender. Blend for 1 minute or until smooth. Add blended liquid contents into a pitcher. Allow to chill in the refrigerator for 1-2 hours. Serve over ice. Recipe makes 48 ounces.



Recipe created by Elvira Fernandez

## Summer Safety



Did you know that the best way to get kids to be physically active is to spend time outdoors? But, we can't forget to protect ourselves and our children from the sizzling sun. Being smart about summer safety is very important for the health of your child.

The sun has ultraviolet (UV) rays that can damage our skin and may increase the risk for skin cancer. On cloudy days when we think the sun isn't harming our skin, UV rays can still get through the clouds. According to the American Cancer Society, children receive up to 80% of their life's UV light by the age of 18, so take that extra step to ensure your child is protected from the sun.

Here are some practical ways to keep your child safe this Summer:

- **Limit sun exposure.** UV rays are strongest during the middle of the day, from 10am to 4pm. Have fun playing outside, but stay in shaded areas whenever possible.
- **Use sunscreen.** Make sure the sunscreen you are using for yourself and your child is **at least 15 SPF** (sun protection factor). This will help protect the skin from UV rays and aide in preventing sunburns. Even if you naturally have darker skin, you still need to apply sunscreen. A good rule is to apply sunscreen at least 20 minutes before heading out on an adventure. Reapply every two hours, and always after swimming. Additionally, don't forget to apply a lip balm that contains SPF on your child's lips.
- **Wear appropriate clothing.** Make sure that what your child wears is suitable for being in the sun. Small children may need to wear a shirt to prevent a sunburn if they are playing in direct sunlight. Have your child wear a wide brimmed hat to protect their face, neck, and ears from the sun. Choosing sunglasses that block at least 99% of UV rays will help protect your child's eyes and the skin around their eyes.
- **Stay hydrated.** Make sure your child stays hydrated by giving them plenty of water to drink. Make it a priority to take time out between activities to refuel.

*Article adapted from HealthNet News Spring 2011*

## Parent Class Series Available

We have a wonderful parenting series available in English and Spanish for those interested in learning more about basic nutrition, meal planning, budgeting, and grocery shopping. If you are interested in hosting a parenting series at your site, contact Angela Asch at 530-666-8731. Here is a list and explanation of the Lily Series that are available for parent classes.

**Fruits and Vegetables: Lily Bets on Five a Day.** Lily meets the challenge of providing her family with enough fruits and vegetables each day, by choosing the best produce offered by the season and preparing it in ways her family loves. She demonstrates many ideas for delicious, nourishing meals using vegetables and fruit.

**Breakfast: Lily Changes a Habit.** Lily explains the important nutritional benefits of eating breakfast and the quality family time that eating breakfast together provides. She presents examples of breakfast foods, tips on how to make time for breakfast, and how to make breakfast affordable to even those on the strictest of budgets.

**Eating for Less: Lily Gets Her Money's Worth.** Lily shops for staples, searches for the best values, and saves money by purchasing non-brand name products while the viewer follows along. At home, she prepares a week's worth of meals and offers excellent, helpful money-saving tips.

**Feeding a Toddler: Lily Gets Her Money's Worth.** Lily presents a variety of food options that maintain a high level of nutrition, for even those on a limited budget. Food preparation, grocery shopping, meal planning, preventing tooth decay, and getting toddlers to use eating utensils are just some of the topics she covers.

**Childhood Obesity: Lily Faces a Problem.** Lily concentrates on improving nutrition rather than counting calories and comes up with new ideas for satisfying meals and snacks. She also stresses the importance of daily physical activity.

## Handling a Picky Eater



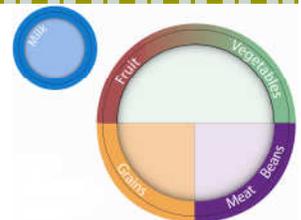
Does your child not eat anything you put on their plate, especially if there is anything green on it? Perhaps your child is only interested in bananas or applesauce? Or, your child may not even be interested in eating when the breakfast or lunch plate is placed in front of them. Handling a picky eater is no easy task, but choosing the right techniques to help your child overcome their picky eating can help. Preschool-age children are growing and developing their tastes at a slow rate, so you may have to reintroduce new food items 12-14 times before that food is accepted. As your child continues to grow, you will see an increase in food consumption and acceptability. Use these tips to help overcome picky eating and don't forget to be patient.

- Do not be overly concerned if your child is not eating during one meal, but look at what is being consumed over several days. Often, your child will be consuming a good variety over a 2 to 3 day period.
- Trust your child. Do not force your child to eat when they are not hungry. This will cause your child to overeat and it may leave a bad impression on your child to where they associate a negative feeling with that food.
- Stick to a consistent mealtime, and a reasonable time limit for how long the food will sit on the table in front of your child. The time limit will vary depending on your child. Once the time limit is up, quietly remove the plate from the table and dismiss your child from the meal.
- Have a positive attitude and avoid criticizing your child. Children listen to every word you say.
- Offer the same food for the whole family. Include a food that everyone likes and will eat, such as whole wheat bread, or apple slices. Do not make "special" meals just for one child.
- Teach your child how to graciously decline to eat a food; simply leave it on your plate, without verbally criticizing it, and enjoy the rest of your meal.
- If your child doesn't like a certain vegetable that you often serve, offer a similar vegetable such as sweet potatoes for regular potatoes. Or try serving it a different way, raw instead of cooked, flavored with honey and salt instead of plain.
- Provide two or three food choices on your child's plate, then let them decide which foods they would like to eat. Don't forget to verbally encourage and praise your child for trying the new food. Even if they decided they did not like the food, a willingness to try new foods is the main goal for preschoolers.
- Pay attention to your child's positive eating behavior. Do not be overly consumed by what they didn't eat but focus on what they did eat.
- Do not reward your child for eating all their food with toys or sweets. This action may cause your child to associate the foods they ate as "bad" and the reward food, usually sweets, as "good." Give your child a positive *verbal* reward for trying new foods.

*Article adapted from Nibbles for Health 13 Nutrition Newsletter*

## Interactive Meal Creation

Looking for a way to get your children involved in the meal selection process? Are you not sure what foods each child likes or dislikes? Let them use this interactive, educational, web-based game called Pick Chow! Children can play with different dinner choices to try and create a balanced and nutritious meal. Once the children successfully choose a complete meal, you can save their dinner, then send the recipe off to their parents. It's a great way to introduce new foods and get the children involved in the meal process while teaching them the importance of eating healthy foods.



You can also use this tool to help select breakfast and lunch food items for your preschool site. You can see which vegetable or fruit is the most popular, and serve that food with their next meal. The interactive game can be found at [www.zisboombah.com/pickchow](http://www.zisboombah.com/pickchow).

*Resource from Parenting Magazine*

## Activity Kits Free From the University of California

The University of California has prepared activity kits to help you teach nutrition and physical activity concepts to your young children while integrating math, language arts, and science. **These lessons come “ready-made”** with all the materials you will need to teach a fun and interactive lesson with your preschoolers through third graders. The curriculum was developed by the University of California.

**We will bring the materials to your site, free of charge,** and we can provide your staff with trainings and additional resources to increase their confidence in these topics. We can also plan classroom, food-themed parties, special events, and other fun sessions.

If you are interested in signing up to receive these materials, please contact us.

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Fuel Their Mind Nutrition Newsletter Enclosed

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# Fuel Their Minds Parent Corner

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## Beware of Sugar-Sweetened Beverages

It is easy to fill up on soda, fruit cocktail drinks, punches, and energy drinks without realizing how much sugar and calories each of these beverages contain. Sugar-sweetened beverages provide extra calories with little to no nutritional value, which may contribute to weight gain and can negatively effect your health and your pocketbook. Children who fill up on sugar-sweetened beverages are less likely to be hungry at mealtime, and less likely to eat the healthy, nutritious foods being offered to them. By filling up on sugary drinks throughout the day, children are missing out on key nutrients that their growing bodies need to learn, play, and grow. Some research has shown that up to a fifth of a child's calories may be coming from added sugars, primarily from drinks!



Carefully read the food label and look at the sugar content of the beverages **before** you buy them.

Here is a quick list of beverages to maximize nutritional value and health for yourself and your family:

- 100% fruit juice (this will be on the front or back of the container, remember there is **no added** sugar in 100% fruit juice)
- Low fat or non fat milk or milk products (plain milk and yogurt contain natural sugars, there are **no added** sugars)
- Water (when you are thirsty, nothing quenches your thirst better than water)
- Unsweetened tea (offer the herbal kind so that children are not drinking caffeine)

Avoid drinks that list "sugar" or "corn syrup" in the ingredient list. They are sometimes in sneaky places, such as "cranberry juice cocktail", "enhanced water", or "fruit drink pouches".

Try gradually kicking the sweet drink habit. Over time, you and your family won't miss the sugary, high calorie beverages. Here are some ideas on how to break the habit and save money at the same time. By making beverages at home you can control the amount of sugar, if any, and save yourself some money too!



- Add fresh cucumber, lemon, or oranges slices to a pitcher of water and pour over ice.
- Brew sun tea at home (Add 4-5 herbal tea bags in a pitcher of water and let steep for a few hours, pour over ice.)
- Add sparkling, carbonated water to 100% fruit juice for a fizzy, fruity drink.
- Try an aqua fresca recipe, with some fresh, seasonal fruit and ice, blended into a quick and healthy drink.
- Whip up a small smoothie with nonfat milk, ice cubes, and fresh or frozen fruit.

Article adapted from the Health Education Council's Rethink Your Drink Campaign  
by the University of California Nutrition Education Program



# Fuel Their Minds-Boletín para Padres

Ideas para Comer Mejor y Estar Activos con Niños Jóvenes



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## Tener Cuidado con Bebidas Azucaradas

Es fácil de llenarse uno en soda, bebidas de cóctel de frutas, bebidas envueltas, y bebidas energéticas sin darse cuenta de la cantidad de azúcar y calorías que contienen. Bebidas endulzadas proporcionan calorías adicionales con poco o ningún valor nutricional, y pueden contribuir al aumento de peso y puede afectar negativamente su salud y su bolsillo. Los niños que toman bebidas endulzadas son menos probables de tener hambre durante las comidas y menos probable de comer los alimentos sanos y nutritivos que les ofrecen. Al llenarse en bebidas azucaradas durante todo el día, los niños están perdiendo los nutrientes vitales que sus cuerpos necesitan para aprender, jugar y crecer. Algunos estudios han demostrado que hasta una quinta parte de calorías de un niño pueden resultar de bebidas azúcares!

Leer cuidadosamente las etiquetas de los alimentos y ver el contenido de azúcar de las bebidas **antes** de comprarlos.

Aquí hay una lista rápida de bebidas para maximizar el valor nutricional y salud para usted y su familia:

- Jugo de fruta de 100% (esto será listado en el frente o atrás del contenedor, recuerde que **no hay azúcar agregada** en jugo de frutas de 100%)
- Productos lácteos bajo en grasa o sin grasa (leche y yogurt sin sabor adicional contienen azúcares naturales, no hay azúcares añadidos)
- Agua (cuando tienes sed, nada para tú sed mejor que la agua)
- Té sin azúcar (ofrece el tipo de té hierbas para los niños, para asegurarse que no contiene cafeína)

Evitar bebidas que listan "azúcar" o "jarabe de maíz" en la lista de ingredientes. Como en "jugo de arándano cóctel", "agua electrolito", o "refrescos envueltos de frutas".

Intente gradualmente parar el hábito de beber bebidas dulces. Con el tiempo, usted y su familia no pierden las bebidas azucaradas y altas calorías. Aquí hay algunas ideas sobre cómo acabar con el hábito y ahorrar dinero al mismo tiempo. Haciendo sus bebidas propias en su hogar, usted puede controlar la cantidad de azúcar, si contiene, y ahorrar dinero!



- Agregar rodajas de pepino, limón o naranjas frescas a una jarra de agua y servir sobre hielo.
- Preparar té del sol en su hogar (agregar 4-5 bolsitas de té herbales en una jarra de agua y poner el té en infusión por unas horas, servir sobre hielo).
- Agregar agua carbonatada a jugo de frutas 100% para una bebida refrescante.
- Intente una receta de agua fresca, con algunas frutas frescas temporal y hielo mezclado, como una bebida saludable y rápida.
- Hacer rápidamente un pequeño licuado con leche sin grasa, cubos de hielo y fruta fresca o congelada.

