



Childhood Obesity Prevention

e-Bulletin

Summer 2017

Dear Colleagues:

Obesity prevention begins early in life when children are still forming healthy behaviors. Implementing policies that support a healthy child care environment is a crucial step in ensuring the health of Connecticut’s youngest residents. The Department of Public Health, in collaboration with a variety of stakeholders, has developed this e-Bulletin in an effort to provide information to assist early care and education programs in creating healthier environments to support development and learning.



Providing Healthy Beverages: Water First!



A scientific statement released by the American Heart Association (AHA), [Added Sugars and Cardiovascular Disease Risk in Children](#), confirms that consumption of added sugar contributes to weight gain. A major source of added sugar in the American diet comes from sugar-sweetened beverages such as soda, fruit drinks (not 100% juice), sports drinks, energy drinks, sweetened water drinks, and sweetened coffee and tea beverages. The calories provided by these beverages are “empty” meaning they have little to no nutritional value.

With more than 20% of U.S. children ages 2 – 5 years already overweight or obese, ensuring access to healthier beverages such as low-fat milk and water in child care programs is essential. This e-Bulletin highlights resources that support offering healthier beverage choices in early care and education, as well as resources that address the link between added sugar consumption with both obesity and poor oral health outcomes.

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What's New?

The Early Care and Education Physical Activity and Nutrition Policy & Templates



The below links lead to customizable policy templates that childcare providers can use in their entirety or can adapt/adopt portions of the templates as desired.

- [Physical Activity Template](#)
- [Nutrition Template](#)

Resources for Teachers and Providers

Increasing Access to Drinking Water and Other Healthier Beverages in Early Care and Education Settings

The purpose of this toolkit is to explain why early care and education centers and family childcare homes should serve water to children in their care and provides information on how to serve more water. In addition, the toolkit includes information on how programs participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) can remain in compliance with CACFP regulations in their efforts to serve more water.

Water First: A Toolkit for Promoting Water Intake in Community Settings

This toolkit, developed by the W. K. Kellogg Foundation, is designed to help communities prevent obesity and dental caries by promoting drinking water rather than sugar-sweetened beverages. Content includes strategies for defining and spreading the message in child care facilities, clinics, parks, schools, and other community-based settings.

Open Wide: Oral Health Training for Health Professionals

The National Maternal and Child Oral Health Resource Center hosts a series of four modules designed to help health and early childhood professionals working in community settings (i.e., Head Start, home visiting programs, and WIC) promote oral health while promoting general health for infants, children, and their families.

Childhood Obesity Prevention: LMCC – Offer Healthy Beverages

Better Kid Care offers free online training modules based on *Let's Move! Child Care* (LMCC). Sign up now to learn about the benefits of providing healthy beverages, learn about the resources and tips available on the LMCC website, and get strategies and ideas for providing healthier beverages in the classroom.

Resources for Families

Head Start: Healthy Habits for Happy Smiles

This series of handouts for parents of infants and young children provides simple tips on oral health issues. Share these handouts with families to promote good oral health and nutrition practices. Handouts are available in both English and Spanish.

Potter the Otter- A Tale about Water

Potter the Otter is a storybook for young children that shows them how to make healthy drink choices. This eBook can be accessed online. Great for use in the classroom or at home!



Healthy & Active Preschoolers

This colorful tip sheet, provided by the California Department of Education, Nutrition Services Division, explains the differences between sugary drinks and healthy beverages. It is also available in [Spanish](#).

Water & 100% Juice

This tip sheet about healthy drinks for children should be shared with parents and teachers alike! It provides suggestions to encourage water consumption in children. Suggestions can be implemented both at home and in the classroom.

Policy Guidance & Research

Does 100% Fruit Juice Pose a Health Risk to Kids Akin to Added-Sugar Drinks?

This is a summary of the findings of a Healthy Food America (HFA)-commissioned survey of research into the health effects of 100% fruit juice. [Read the full research article here.](#) Results of the systematic review support current recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics' and Robert Wood Johnson's Healthy Eating Research program that children ages 1-6 limit 100% fruit juice to 4-6 ounces per day and children ages 7-18 limit juice to 8-12 ounces a day.



Improving Self-regulation for Obesity Prevention in Head Start: A Randomized Controlled Trial

This study examines the effect of an intervention to improve emotional and behavioral self-regulation with an obesity-prevention program on the prevalence of obesity and obesity-related behaviors in preschoolers. An intervention for parents and children to improve preschoolers' emotional and behavioral self-regulation in combination with an obesity-prevention curriculum did not reduce obesity prevalence or most obesity-related behaviors.



Stay Tuned!

I am Moving, I am Learning! Partnership

The Department of Public Health, Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention program, in partnership with New England Head Start Training & Technical Assistance, will be recruiting 20 early care and education programs and mentors to participate in the 2017-2018 I am Moving, I am Learning Partnership. Notice of application will be sent out this summer. If you are interested in receiving an application, please feel free to contact one of the DPH staff listed below.

Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child-Care Partnership (NAP SACC)

The Department of Public Health, Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity Prevention program, in partnership with the Office of Early Childhood and United Way 2-1-1, will be recruiting up to 50 early care and education programs to participate in the 2017-2018 NAP SACC Partnership. The NAP SACC program targets early care and education program practices that can help set preschool children on a lifelong path to healthy eating and activity. The centerpiece of the NAP SACC program is an organizational self-assessment that allows programs to evaluate 14 areas around nutrition and physical activity practices and identify the strengths and limitations of their program. Following the self-assessment, a consultant works with the child care facility staff to set goals for change and develop action plans for improving practices. As programs begin to implement their action plans, the consultant provides staff training and targeted technical assistance to support organizational change. Notice of application will be sent out this summer. If you are interested in receiving an application, please feel free to contact one of the DPH staff listed below.

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