

# What Should YOUNG CHILDREN

# DRINK



## The best drinks for young children—and for kids of all ages—are water and milk.

- Water is essential for good health and is the best thirst quencher.
- Milk is loaded with important nutrients, especially calcium, which is vital to proper development of teeth and bones.
  - Children between 1 and 2 years old should be drinking whole milk and/or breast milk.
  - Preschoolers can consume 2-3 cups of milk (or other dairy, or dairy alternative products like fortified soy or almond milk) every day.
- Even 100% juice has a significant amount of sugar, so limit to no more than one serving (about 4-6 ounces) of 100% juice a day.
- Kids may be less likely to drink enough water and milk if soda and other sugar-sweetened beverages are available.

## What you can do

- Promote water and milk as the drinks of choice.
- Offer milk or milk alternatives at all meals, and water between meals.
- For flavored milk, limit the added sugar by flavoring it yourself versus buying premixed versions. Note: Flavored milk should only be an occasional treat, if served at all.
- Use the drink chart below to talk with your kids about how much sugar is in some common drinks.
- Bring water or milk instead of sugar-sweetened drinks to celebrations.
- Be a role model by drinking water or milk.

DRINK	SIZE	SUGAR
Water	8 oz.	0
Milk	8 oz.	11 grams
100% Orange Juice	8 oz.	22 grams
Juice Drink (10% fruit juice)	8 oz.	38 grams
Powdered Drink Mix (with added sugar)	8 oz.	24 grams
Soda	8 oz.	27 grams



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This resource is adapted from Let's Go! materials. [www.letsgo.org](http://www.letsgo.org).