

# What Should We Drink?

## One word: Water

Water is the best option for quenching thirst. We should encourage children to drink it.



## A few tips

- ▶ Dilute 100% pure juice with water.
- ▶ Dilute chocolate milk (and flavoured plant-based milks) with the plain version.
- ▶ Opt for reusable bottles.
- ▶ Encourage children to drink during meals (see the sheet “Hunger”).
- ▶ Remind parents that it is important to wash bottles with hot soapy water to keep bacteria or mold from growing.

## How much liquid do children need per day?

Needs can vary day to day, from one child to the next. We need to start by offering them water at meal and snack times, and then allow them to drink as needed throughout the day. Children drink an average of 7 to 10 glasses (125 ml) of liquid per day, depending on how thirsty they are. To make sure they stay hydrated:

- ▶ Ask them if they are thirsty several times throughout the day.
- ▶ Let them get a drink when they are thirsty.
- ▶ Draw their attention to the drinking fountain when passing by.
- ▶ Suggest they keep a water bottle in their school bag or lunch box.



## Water we drink

In addition to water, there are several other beverages children can drink to stay hydrated.

- ▶ Regular milk and enriched soy milk
- ▶ Other plant-based beverages (almond milk, rice milk, etc.)
- ▶ 100% pure juice or diluted chocolate milk (not more than a small 125 ml glass per day, ideally not every day)
- ▶ Broth (careful of the salt content)
- ▶ Chilled fruit teas

Suggestion: Make water more exciting by adding sliced fruit to water bottles (e.g., strawberries, oranges, melon).

You can also add cucumber slices and fresh herbs, like mint.

## Water we eat

Did you know that certain fruits and vegetables are 90% water? The following items each provide 125 ml of water (one small glass):

- ▶ 10 cm of English cucumber
- ▶ 250 ml (1 cup) of blueberries
- ▶ A large slice of watermelon

### Drink boxes



While drink boxes are practical and popular, they also have a downside:

- ▶ Portion: 200 ml is significantly more than a “small glass” (125 ml). Imagine how much is in a large bottle!
- ▶ Environment: single-use boxes just end up in the garbage or recycling.
- ▶ Price: they cost more than family sizes and much more than water.

## Drink during mealtimes

Reserve nutritious beverages, like milk or enriched soy milk, for meals and snacks, as they are more filling. Water is always allowed. Children are allowed to drink between bites while they are eating. It can help them chew, swallow and stay hydrated. If a child tends to drink so much during a meal that they hardly eat, and then they are hungry an hour after mealtime, suggest drinking a little less with meals so they have room for food.