

Philadelphia Board of Health Resolution, June 2017

Beverages and Screen Time in Early Childhood Education: Information for parents and caregivers

All children deserve a healthy start.

Alarmingly, one in three kids born in 2000 will likely have diabetes by 2050.

For African American and Latino kids, that figure is one out of two. To improve our children's health, Philadelphia's Board of Health now recommends childcare providers limit screen time and cut out sweet drinks - including 100% juice. You can expect to see new practices and guidelines from programs your child attends.



You can also begin following the Board's recommendations at home:

- No sweetened beverages in early childhood settings
- No fruit juice (including 100% juice) in early childhood settings
- Water available and easily accessible to children throughout the day, and offered with meals and snacks
- Screen time for children aged 2 years and older limited to 30 minutes per week
- No screen time for children under age 2 in early childhood settings

For more information, contact:
Shannon Dryden, Healthy Early Childhood Coordinator
Philadelphia Department of Public Health
shannon.dryden@phila.gov, 215-685-5233
foodfitphilly.org

What can you do?

- For children over 2 years old, provide water, unsweetened low-fat (1%), or unsweetened non-fat milk in lunches or snacks instead of sweetened beverages or juice. For infants 0 through 5 months, provide only breast milk or infant formula.
- Have water available and offered throughout the day. Add lemon slices, watermelon chunks, or berries for color and flavor.
- Instead of screen time, read a book, play a game, bring out arts and crafts, sing a song, have a dance party, or go on a scavenger hunt!
- Make it a team effort. Collaborate with the program your child attends to explore solutions to hurdles you may have.



Why this matters:

- Taste preferences form at a very young age. We can protect our children's future by making sure they develop healthy food preferences and stay active.
- Sweetened drinks like soda, fruit punch, sweetened teas and sports drinks are the biggest source of added sugars in our diets.
- Juice is also very sweet and contributes to cavities and, over time, diabetes. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends no juice for children under age 1, and no more than 4 ounces a day for older children.
- Philadelphia has high quality tap water, and it is free. Teaching children to enjoy water when they are thirsty will help keep them healthy as they grow.
- Sitting in front of a screen puts children at risk for not getting enough movement, which can lead to diabetes and other health problems.