

Dear Parents and Guardians,

We invite you to get your child involved in making healthier beverage choices. Research shows that sugar-sweetened beverages such as juice, soda or energy drinks are a factor for children becoming overweight and having dental issues. The sugary drinks can also take away from appetite for other healthy foods.

Caffeine can leave children or teens feeling jittery, irritable or unable to concentrate. Caffeine can come in many forms these days. So many types of energy drinks, coffee beverages, and *even oral pouches!* Talk to your students about which caffeinated products they are consuming. Educate them on the risks of over-consumption and recommended amounts.

Work on water for thirst between meals, milk with meals and save juice or sweetened drinks for special occasions.

- Children ages 4 to 8 years need 2.5 cups (20 ounces) of milk per day for calcium, vitamin D and protein benefits.
- Children, teens and adults ages 9 and up should get 3.0 cups (24 ounces) of milk per day for calcium, vitamin D and protein benefits.
- It's a good rule to offer WATER for thirst throughout the day and milk at mealtime.
- There is no proven safe dose of caffeine for children.
- Caffeine is not recommended for children under the age of 12.
- For youth ages 12- 17, limiting caffeine to 100 mg per day is recommended.

Our schools hope that these lessons will support your efforts at home to help your child develop healthy habits. This is a great opportunity to talk with your child about healthy beverages.

Thank you,

McDonell Wellness Committee

Related links:

Caffeine:

https://www.aacap.org/AACAP/Families_and_Youth/Facts_for_Families/FFF-Guide/Caffeine_and_Children-131.aspx

Hydration: <https://www.montana.edu/extension/sanders/health-and-wellness/hydration%20poster.pdf>

Infused Water:

https://foodhero.org/sites/foodhero-prod/files/monthly-magazines/web_flavored_water_monthly_1_0.pdf