Healthy Children, Healthy State:

SUGAR SWEETENED BEVERAGES

Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living

Sugary drinks threaten the health of children:

The American Heart Association recommends children younger than 18 consume less than 6 teaspoons (25 grams) of added sugars daily. A 12-ounce soda contains 10 teaspoons of sugar on average.7*

Sugar Consumption Crisis:

Kids who drink one sugar-sweetened beverage per day can gain up to 14.5 pounds of unnecessary weight (depending on age and size) in one year.5

Every day 25.0% of 2nd graders drink 1 or more regular sodas.2

Every day 41.8% of 11th graders drink 1 or more regular sodas.2

Every day 60% of 11th graders drink one or more sugar-sweetened beverages*, differing by race/ethnicity:
- 76.7% of African Americans
- 61.8% of Hispanics
- 50.7% of White/Other.2

Current and Lifetime Risks:

Sugar sweetened beverages have negative health associations.
- Tooth Decay
- Overweight and Obesity
- Type 2 Diabetes
- Heart Disease

Number of Times Sugar-Sweetened Beverages* Were Consumed Yesterday:

- 29.9% drank 0 SSBs
- 14.8% drank 1 SSB
- 10.7% drank 2 SSBs
- 8.7% drank 3 SSBs

Kids who drink one sugar-sweetened beverage per day can gain up to 14.5 pounds of unnecessary weight (depending on age and size) in one year.8

We can improve what Texas children drink by:5

- Providing clean drinking water in schools and child care centers and promoting water as the healthiest drink
- Prohibiting sale of sugar-sweetened beverages in schools and other youth-oriented settings
- Encouraging food marketing companies to reduce unhealthy food and drink marketing to children
- Establishing healthy checkout areas without sugar-sweetened beverages* at grocery, retail, and corner stores

*Sugar-sweetened beverage is defined as a regular (not diet) soda, punch, or sports drink on the Texas SPAN Survey2
**Current Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Guidelines**

**Infants younger than 12 months**¹ should not drink juice, milk, flavored milks, ‘transition’ or ‘weaning’ formulas, plant-based/non-dairy milks, drinks with caffeine, low-calorie sweetened drinks, or sugar-sweetened drinks.

**Children between 1 - 3 years old**¹ should limit fruit juice consumption to 4 ounces (1/2 cup) per day. They should not drink flavored milks, ‘transition’ or ‘weaning’ formulas, plant-based/non-dairy milks, drinks with caffeine, low-calorie sweetened drinks, or sugar-sweetened drinks.

**Children between 4 - 5 years old**¹ should limit fruit juice consumption to 4 - 6 ounces (1/2 - 3/4 cup) per day. They should not drink flavored milks, ‘transition’ or ‘weaning’ formulas, plant-based/non-dairy milks, drinks with caffeine, low-calorie sweetened drinks, or sugar-sweetened drinks.

**Adolescents between 2 - 18 years old**⁶ should consume less than 6 teaspoons (25 grams) of added sugars daily.

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**References**


2. School Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) Project. Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living. SPAN project details available online at go.uth.edu/SPAN.
   
   The School Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) Project is a surveillance system monitoring the prevalence of overweight/obesity in school-aged children in Texas conducted by researchers at the Michael & Susan Dell Center for Healthy Living. SPAN has been funded by the Texas Department of State Health Services since 2000 to conduct height and weight measurements across different grade levels.


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**About the Texas Child Health Status Report**

These reports utilize state-level data from the School Physical Activity and Nutrition (SPAN) Project to provide an accurate representation of Texas child health. This project is funded by the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation.

Learn more at go.uth.edu/TexasChildHealth