



Understanding the Alliance School Beverage Guidelines

The American Heart Association and the William J. Clinton Foundation have joined together to form the Alliance for a Healthier Generation, to combat the spread of childhood obesity and the serious diseases associated with it such as heart disease and diabetes and to empower kids nationwide to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Childhood obesity has no one cause, and there is no one solution. That's why the Alliance is taking bold, innovative and far-reaching steps to help our children live longer and improve the health of our nation. Join us and do your part beginning by adopting these School Beverage Guidelines in your school.

Fifty-four million students attend nearly 123,000 elementary, middle, and high schools nationwide, making schools a primary environment for developing healthy habits that will benefit young Americans throughout their lives.

For these reasons, the Alliance has launched a multi-faceted initiative called the Healthy Schools Program to help kids build healthy habits – learning to balance the calories they consume with the calories they burn by eating healthy and participating in regular physical activity. As one part of this overall program, the Alliance has worked with the nation's largest beverage companies to develop a set of guidelines to help schools provide lower calorie and nutritious beverages to their students.

These school beverage guidelines are developmentally appropriate and balance children's nutritional and hydration needs with appropriate caloric consumption. The guidelines were developed using current nutrition science, including the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005* as well as the American Heart Association's *Dietary Guidelines for Healthy Children and 2006 Diet and Lifestyle Recommendations*.

Along with the Alliance's other school strategies – establishing systems to promote health in schools, improving snack foods and meals available to students, and increasing physical activity and physical education – these guidelines can empower children to learn and practice healthy and active lifestyles in school every day.

The Guidelines

Elementary School

- Bottled water
- Up to 8 ounce servings of milk and 100% juice
 - Fat-free or low fat regular and flavored milk with up to 150 calories / 8 ounces*
 - 100% juice with no added sweeteners, up to 120 calories / 8 ounces, and with at least 10% of the recommended daily value for three or more vitamins and minerals

Middle School

- Same as elementary school, except juice and milk may be sold in 10 ounce servings
- As a practical matter, if middle school and high school students have shared access to areas on a common campus or in common buildings, then the school community has the option to adopt the high school standard

High School

- Bottled Water
- No or low calorie beverages with up to 10 calories / 8 ounces
- Up to 12 ounce servings of milk, 100% juice, and certain other drinks
 - Fat-free or low fat regular and flavored milk with up to 150 calories / 8 ounces
 - 100% juice with no added sweeteners, up to 120 calories / 8 ounces, and with at least 10% of the recommended daily value for three or more vitamins and minerals
- Other drinks with no more than 66 calories / 8 ounces
- At least 50% of non-milk beverages must be water and no- or low-calorie options





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Time of Day

These Guidelines apply to all beverages (outside of the school meal) sold to students on school grounds during the regular and extended school day. The extended school day includes before and after school activities like clubs, yearbook, band, student government, drama and childcare/latchkey programs. These Guidelines do not apply to school-related events (such as interscholastic sporting events, school plays, and band concerts) where parents and other adults constitute a significant portion of the audience or are selling beverages as boosters.

** Milk includes nutritionally equivalent milk alternatives per USDA. In recognition of the currently limited availability of flavored milk with less than 150 calories / 8 oz and the importance of milk's natural nutrients in children's diets, flavored milk with up to 180 calories / 8 oz will be allowed under these guidelines until August 31, 2008 so long as schools attempt to buy the lowest calorie flavored milk available to them. Because of unique CA state milk regulations, the calorie limit for fat-free and low fat flavored milk in CA schools is 180 calories / 8 oz with a transition period until August 31, 2008 that allows 210 calories / 8 oz.*

Why are only water, milk, and 100% juice permitted for elementary and middle school students under these Guidelines?

Younger children's ability to choose among a broad spectrum of food and beverage options, balancing treats with healthier items across meal and snack occasions, is more limited than for older children and adults. Outside the school environment, parents and other adult caregivers can provide needed guidance. During the school day, children need and parents want added guidance so kids can make better decisions. Limiting choices in school for children of these ages achieves this. As such, younger children are only offered water, fat-free or low-fat milk and 100% juice. This meets the needs of young children for hydration and nutrition while managing their caloric consumption.

Why is bottled water available in all grade levels under these Guidelines?

Water is essential for good health. Bottled water allows children, particularly those in warmer climates, to stay hydrated during the regular and extended school day. Its portable and resealable packaging enables students to drink water whether they're in the lunchroom or on the athletic field. Schools must also have working drinking fountains accessible to students at no cost.

Why do all caloric beverages allowed under these Guidelines have calorie and serving size limits?

Schools provide an ideal setting to teach and reinforce the concepts of calorie and portion control. For this reason we have set age appropriate serving sizes that are consistent across all caloric beverages permitted at a given grade level. We have paired these serving sizes with consequent calorie limits to ensure we are achieving our goals of managing caloric consumption.

Why are serving sizes for 100% juice set at 8 oz, 10 oz, and 12 oz for elementary, middle, and high school, respectively, under these Guidelines?

School children ages 5-18 need 1-2½ cups of fruit each day, based on their age, gender, and physical activity level. An 8 oz. serving of 100% juice is counted as one cup of fruit towards this daily fruit requirement. The USDA Dietary Guidelines for Americans suggest that the majority of our recommended daily fruit intake be consumed as whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, dried) rather than fruit juice to ensure adequate fiber intake. Many children do not consume enough fruit. Juice makes consumption convenient and enables fruit servings to be available in schools in a form that is readily consumed by children. The serving sizes defined in these guidelines incorporate and balance these data and provide appropriate portions for children as they grow.

Aren't some of the beverages allowed under these Guidelines high in sodium?

A 12 oz diet soda is able to meet the FDA claims for low sodium, having generally fewer than 50 mg, and a 12 oz sports drink typically has around 150mg – less than the amount of sodium in low fat milk or a slice of bread.



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Why are juices required to have at least 10% Daily Value (DV) for a minimum of 3 vitamins and minerals under the Alliance School Beverage Guidelines?

These Guidelines balance children's fruit, nutrition, and caloric consumption requirements. Juices can add significant nutritional value to the diet but are concentrated sources of calories. Some juices are richer in vitamins and minerals than others. These more nutrient rich juices often contain vitamins and minerals that children need more of, such as calcium, potassium, and magnesium. The requirement for at least 10% DV for a minimum of 3 vitamins and minerals ensures that the juices offered in school provide adequate nutrition within the upper limit of 120 calories per 8 oz for all juices.

Why are drinks with no more than 66 calories per 8 ounces permitted in high schools under these Guidelines?

By the time students reach high school, they are making many of their own food and beverage choices. Sports drinks, light juices and other drinks with no more than 66 calories per 8 ounces provide variety in students' diets at relatively low caloric density. These beverages are available only in high schools and are limited to 12 oz portions with no more than 100 calories – an amount which can fit into an overall healthy diet for most high school students. Moreover, this serving size is consistent with all other caloric beverages permitted in high schools.

Why are flavored milks permitted under these Guidelines?

Milk is one of the major sources of calcium in the diet. There is evidence that flavoring increases milk consumption and that some added calories from flavored milks can be incorporated into a healthy diet. Additionally, some studies have shown that children do not prefer flavored milks with significantly more added sugars. For these reasons, the Alliance School Beverage Guidelines allow for flavored milk with reasonable amounts of added sugars. Flavored milk meeting these Guidelines can promote the consumption of important nutrients without adding too many calories from added sugar.

Why are whole and reduced fat (2%) milk not permitted under these Guidelines?

Fat free and 1% milk provide the same nutritional benefit without the unnecessary extra saturated fats and calories found in 2% and whole milk. Whole and reduced fat milk are not permissible because these dairy products are the single greatest contributor of saturated fat to children's diet. Both the American Heart Association and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend limiting whole milk after the age of two.

Why are beverages containing sugar substitutes excluded from elementary and middle schools but permitted in high schools under these Guidelines?

There have been well over 350 studies on the health impact of sugar substitutes concluding that sugar substitutes consumed in reasonable amounts are safe in all age groups, including children. Their use has been approved by regulatory agencies around the world and is endorsed by the American Dietetic Association as a helpful way to reduce caloric consumption. Despite these facts some parents are concerned about their children consuming sugar substitutes, especially during developmental years. However, by high school young people are making many of their own food and beverage choices, and diet drinks are considered a reasonable alternative to full calorie beverages.

What should I do if my school or school district is subject to different standards than those outlined in these School Beverage Guidelines because of state or local legislation or regulation?

At a minimum, your school and district must comply with all existing laws and regulations. These Guidelines are not intended to undermine them. If existing laws and regulations are stricter than the Alliance School Beverage Guidelines, then adherence to them is sufficient. However, if existing laws and regulations are less strict, following these science-based, age-appropriate Guidelines will provide lower calorie and nutritious beverages to your students and reinforce the important lessons of calorie and portion control. These Guidelines were designed using the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005* as well as the American Heart Association's *Dietary Guidelines for Healthy Children* and *2006 Diet and Lifestyle Recommendations* in order to balance children's nutritional needs with the requirement to manage caloric consumption.

