

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.⁶ 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 year⁸.



Every day **25.0%** of 2nd graders drink 1 or more regular sodas².



Every day **41.8%** of 11th graders drink 1 or more regular sodas².



Every day **60%** of 11th graders drink one or more sugar-sweetened beverages*, differing by race/ ethnicity:

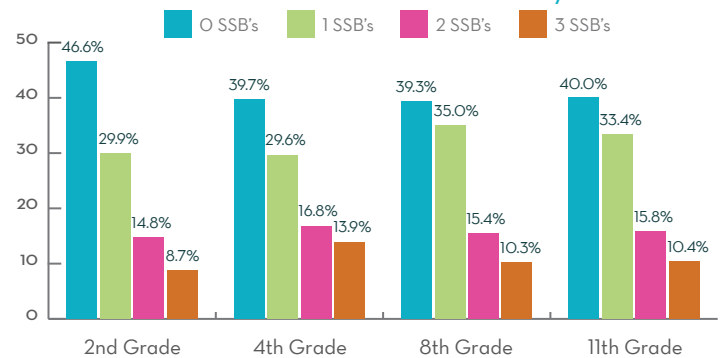
- **76.7%** of African Americans;
- **61.8%** of Hispanics;
- **50.7%** of White/Other².

Current and Lifetime Risks:

Sugar sweetened beverages have negative health associations.

- Tooth Decay
- Overweight and Obesity⁴
- Type 2 Diabetes³
- Heart Disease⁹

Number of Times Sugar-Sweetened Beverages* Were Consumed Yesterday²:



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 months¹ 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 old¹ 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 old¹ 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 old⁶ should consume less than 6 teaspoons (25 grams) of added sugars daily.

References

1. Lott M, et al. Consensus Statement. Healthy Beverage Consumption in Early Childhood: Recommendations from Key National Health and Nutrition Organizations. 2019 (<https://healthyeatingresearch.org/research/consensus-statement-healthy-beverage-consumption-in-early-childhood-recommendations-from-key-national-health-and-nutrition-organizations/>)
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.
3. Choo, V L, et al. Food sources of fructose-containing sugars and glycaemic control: systematic review and meta-analysis of controlled intervention studies. 2018 (<https://www.bmj.com/content/363/bmj.k4644>)
4. Woodward-Lopez G, et al. To what extent have sweetened beverages contributed to the obesity epidemic? 2011 (www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/20860886)
5. Muth N D, et al. Public Policies to Reduce Sugary Drink Consumption in Children and Adolescents 2019 (pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/143/4/e20190282)
6. Vos M B, et al. Added Sugars and Cardiovascular Disease Risk in Children: A Scientific Statement From the American Heart Association. 2016 (ahajournals.org/doi/full/10.1161/CIR.0000000000000439)
7. Sip Smarter Infographic. American Heart Association. 2018. (www.heart.org/en/healthy-living/healthy-eating/eat-smart/sugar/sip-smarter-infographic)
8. Hall KD, et al. From calories to weight change in children and adults: the state of the science. Healthy Eating Research. (2016). (https://healthyeatingresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/her_weight_change-FINAL-2.pdf)
9. Pacheco, LS, et al. Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Intake and Cardiovascular Disease Risk in the California Teachers Study. (2020). (<https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/full/10.1161/JAHA.119.014883>)

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