



## **Be a school supportive of healthy hydration**

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### **A tool to achieve it.**

**S**chool is an important environment for children. Considering its mission and the number of hours a child spends there everyday, the latter shares a responsibility with parents in acquiring a healthy lifestyle. The habits advantage to be consolidated from early childhood, as you age it becomes more difficult to change and tend to persist into adulthood.

Since 2007, through the healthy framework policy *Pour un virage santé à l'école*, the Ministry of Education highlighted this key role for

schools.<sup>1</sup> Several of them are taking exceptional actions to improve children's health and, ultimately, to improve their educational success. However, we must continue in these efforts.

### **Betting on water**

By putting in place encouraging conditions to help regular water consumption from aqueducts by children, your school participates by acquiring healthy hydration habits which contributes to it's success and promotes an environment-friendly lifestyle, where fewer single-use bottles are used.



### **Promoting water: A winning formula!**

Regular hydration helps prevent dehydration and maintains predisposing intellectual abilities for learning.<sup>2</sup> In addition, valuing and normalizing the place of water in accompanying meals and throughout the day, is likely to limit the overconsumption of sugary drinks and their consequences.

### **Avoid offering sugary drinks**

In a healthy lifestyle, water is the main drink and sugary drinks are to be avoided or are consumed exceptionally. Regular consumption of sugary drinks have negative consequences. It contributes to obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and tooth decay.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, avoid sugar added drinks (e.g. soft drinks, for sports or energy drinks, punch and fruit cocktails, iced teas and coffees, vitamin waters, slushies), offering 100 % pure fruit juice must also be reduced. Although they contain certain nutrients, they are sugar rich and not very satisfying. According to the Canadian Paediatric Society, consumption of juice should be limited to 120 ml (1/2 cup) per day.<sup>4</sup> Similarly, flavoured milk (e.g. chocolate, caramel, maple or berries), contains nutritional elements of plain milk, but there is still a large amount of added sugars. Therefore, it should not be part of a daily diet.





## Optimizing school environments to promote healthy hydration

As recommended in the *Virage santé à l'école 10 ans plus tard*<sup>5</sup>, Report, improvements in school environments would be able to meet the Food Policy framework requirements and students needs. Particularly if:

1. Schools revise their drink distribution offering and eliminate sugar added drinks along with those containing a sugar substitute (diets). If they are available, reducing the volume of pure fruit juices and the frequency with which they are offered. If necessary, flavoured milk is reserved for special activities.
2. Optimize water access throughout the day; help children develop a regular water drinking reflex. In 2008-2009, an observation study found water was not easily accessible inside or near lunch rooms in 36 % of primary schools and 23 % of secondary schools.<sup>6</sup> In addition to the mealtimes, some environments had restricted water access during school hours. There are several ways to make water visible and attractive to students while at school.

## Some water promotional measures:

- Water bottles are allowed in a predefined space in classrooms.
- The water fountains are clean, adequately maintained and in sufficient quantity. They are highlighted to help find their locations, using either wall murals or floor markings.
- Water is easily accessible in the lunchroom area (pitchers, nearby water fountains, etc.).
- Water awareness and education activities are regularly performed.

For more infographic examples, visit *For a school environment promoting water consumption*.





## Conclusion

In order to promote the endorsement of healthy lifestyles among children and to their educational success, the *Virage santé à l'école, 10 ans et plus tard*, Report recommends optimizing water access in schools. To help schools establish a conducive healthy hydration environment in their respective schools, a model resolution is available to achieve that. This model can be adapted to reflect the reality of each schools unique environment. ■

***Let's build environments  
where water is the most visible and  
attractive drink for children!***

## References

- 1 Ministère de l'Éducation, du Loisir et du Sport. (2007). *Pour un virage santé à l'école* (Publication no. 06-00893). Repéré le 2 février 2018 au [http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site\\_web/documents/dpse/adaptation\\_serv\\_compl/virageSanteEcole\\_PoLCadre.pdf](http://www.education.gouv.qc.ca/fileadmin/site_web/documents/dpse/adaptation_serv_compl/virageSanteEcole_PoLCadre.pdf)
- 2 Institute of Medicine (2005). *Dietary Reference Intakes for Water, Potassium, Sodium, Chloride, and Sulfate*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
- 3 Coalition Poids (2018). *Boissons sucrées - Portrait de la situation - Répercussions sur la santé*. Repéré le 17 avril 2018 au [www.cqpp.qc.ca/fr/nos-priorites/boissons-sucrees/portrait-de-situation/](http://www.cqpp.qc.ca/fr/nos-priorites/boissons-sucrees/portrait-de-situation/)
- 4 Société Canadienne de Pédiatrie (2017). *Une saine alimentation chez les enfants*. Repéré le 15 février 2018 au [https://www.soinsdenosenfants.cps.ca/handouts/healthy\\_eating\\_for\\_children](https://www.soinsdenosenfants.cps.ca/handouts/healthy_eating_for_children)
- 5 Coalition Poids (2017). *Virage santé à l'école, 10 ans plus tard*. Repéré le 2 février 2018 au <http://www.cqpp.qc.ca/app/uploads/2017/09/Virage-sante-10-ans-plus-tard.pdf>
- 6 Morin, P. & al. (2012). *Faculté d'éducation physique et sportive de l'Université de Sherbrooke. L'Enquête sur l'offre alimentaire et d'activité physique dans les écoles du Québec : Principaux constats à l'égard de la Politique-cadre « Pour un virage santé »*. Repéré le 15 mai 2017 au [http://www.cisssbsl.gouv.qc.ca/sites/default/files/fichier/enquete\\_offre\\_alimentaire\\_activite\\_physique.pdf](http://www.cisssbsl.gouv.qc.ca/sites/default/files/fichier/enquete_offre_alimentaire_activite_physique.pdf)

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## Model resolution

RÉSOLUTION No \_\_\_\_\_

### **FOR A HEALTHY HYDRATING SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT**

WHEREAS our school must apply the school board's food policy (name of the school board) stemming from the Policy framework from Pour un virage santé à l'école;

WHEREAS the Policy Framework states that the school must "ensure that the food supply (...) promotes the endorsement of healthy eating habits" and that, consequently, the beverages supply in school must promote healthy hydration;

WHEREAS the Guide d'application du volet alimentaire de la Politique-cadre produced by the Health and Social Services Department indicates that functional and safe water fountains must be "available in or near lunch rooms, to allow students to hydrate at mealtimes and throughout the day, "in sufficient quantities;

WHEREAS good hydration habits contribute to educational success;

WHEREAS sugary drinks are over consumed by children and have significant consequences on their physical and dental health;

WHEREAS water must be easily accessible and attractive in schools, all times, to support the development of healthy hydration habits in children.

Moved by \_\_\_\_\_, seconded by \_\_\_\_\_ and (unanimously resolved or resolved by majority) that: The school (name of the school) agrees to:

The school (name of the school) agrees to:

- 1- authorizes the presence of water bottles in the classrooms (use may be restricted to certain contexts, but not prohibited);
- 2- makes changes so that:
  - a) Drinks with added sugar, including flavoured milk, are not allowed during class hours, day-care (if applicable) and extracurricular.
  - b) If offered, 100% pure fruit juice without sugar added is limited to small quantities.
  - c) The cafeteria (if applicable) offers non-bottled water for free.
- 3- makes water easily accessible in lunch rooms (pitchers, water fountains, etc.);
- 4- ensures that water fountains are clean, adequately maintained and in sufficient quantity;
- 5- enhances water fountains locations using murals, posters, floor markings, etc. ;
- 6- participates in the *Tchin-tchin Challenge*\* during Canadian Water Week, which is every year, during the third week of March (elementary schools).

\* The *Tchin-tchin Challenge* aims to encourage students to drink water in a festive atmosphere. For more information, see [thirstyhealth.ca/school](http://thirstyhealth.ca/school)