



THE INITIATIVE: Research confirms the clear connection between health, learning, and attendance. In support of this, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson has initiated **Team California for Healthy Kids (TCHK)** to promote healthy eating and physical activity throughout the day, every day, in schools, before and after school programs, early childhood programs, and communities. The campaign will focus on making *healthy choices* the *easy choices*.

A major campaign goal is to increase access to drinking water.

WHY WATER?



Water is a great drink when you are thirsty. It is Superintendent Torlakson's favorite! Plus, for many people, water is a healthier option than sweetened beverages, because it does not have the unnecessary extra calories that can lead to excessive weight gain.

MAKE IT HAPPEN!

Everyone, whether children, parents, school administrators, or local advocates, can play a role in making water more available in schools, after school programs, and childcare. Be a role model – drink water!

Get the Community Involved!

- In schools, partner with the Child Nutrition Director, parent teacher association, and Associated Student Body. In early childhood programs, partner with food service and parent groups
- Develop an implementation plan to make water accessible in your school, after school, and early childhood program.
- Survey staff, parents, and students for innovative ways to encourage children to drink more water.

Provide Access to Water in the Places Where Children/Students Eat and Play.

- Install water stations or dispensers that can easily fill cups or reusable bottles. Children and youths need more than a "sip."
- Provide access to free, fresh drinking water. It is required under state and federal law.
- Include access/availability of water in school wellness policies.

Water

Start up a Campaign for Drinking Water.

- Address the importance of drinking water in science, health, nutrition, and physical education classes.
- Partner with others at the state, local, and regional levels for resources and funding opportunities.
- Identify strategies on how to make water available in schools, after school, and child care programs.
- Educate staff, families, and the community about the importance of making fresh drinking water available.
- Put up signs and posters in schools, after school programs, early childhood programs and the community to promote the health benefits of water consumption.
- Look at how other schools and agencies have increased access to water.

Maintain Drinking Water in Schools:

- Work with district facility staff on plans for new schools to be sure that adequate water sources are located throughout the school. This is especially important in areas where food is served and where students participate in physical education and activity.
- If your district is modernizing existing schools, work with your district facility staff early in the planning process to identify innovative ways to provide drinking water, such as water stations.

This fact sheet was adapted from information from the "Water in Schools" Tool Kit and the Institute of Medicine website.



Resources

- "Water in Schools" Toolkit
- California Department of Education
- Guidance for changing your wellness policy
- Ideas for healthy fundraising
- Child Care Toolkit
- State funds for the construction and modernization of school facilities for qualifying school districts