



# School Water Access Facts



Water plays an important role in maintaining a child's overall health. Drinking water supports children's muscles, joints, and tissues; improves their digestive system; and keeps their growing bodies hydrated.



Adequate water intake can positively impact children's cognitive performance, particularly short-term memory. Drinking water can also improve children's visual attention and fine motor skills.



Substituting sugary drinks with low or no calorie beverages, such as water, can prevent excess weight gain.



Studies show that replacing caloric beverages with non-caloric ones, such as water, results in average weight losses of 2 percent to 2.5 percent, and could cut up to 235 calories per day from the average American's diet.



In 2009–2012, a national survey of children ages 6–19 found that more than half (54.5 percent) of U.S. children and adolescents were inadequately hydrated. Inadequate hydration was more prevalent among boys, non-Hispanic black and younger children, compared to girls, non-Hispanic white and older children.



In 2009–2012, the odds of inadequate hydration was 1.76 times higher among U.S. boys than girls and 1.34 times higher among non-Hispanic black children than non-Hispanic white children.



In 2005–2010, approximately one in six (17 percent) U.S. children and adolescents aged 1–19 did not drink tap water. Children who are from under-served backgrounds (racial/ethnic minorities and less education among the head of household) were least likely to drink tap water.