WIN (Wellness IN) the Home
Adding It Up

We are learning about sugar in soft drinks and other sweetened beverages. Sugar and calories can add up very fast and drinks with added sugars have lots of calories with very few nutrients. Will you try an experiment with me? Over the next week, you and I will write down every time we have a beverage with added sugar such as soft drinks, teas, juice drinks, sports drinks, or flavored waters. Using the label, we can figure the grams of sugar in our drinks (be sure to look at serving size).

Name:______________________

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Total

My Partner’s Name:______________________

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Total

Total Grams Person One = _______  Total Grams Person Two = _______

Using these figures, determine and measure total sugar from these beverages.

4 grams = 1 teaspoon  
12 grams = 1 tablespoon
25 grams = 1/8 cup  
50 grams = 1/4 cup
100 grams sugar = 1/2 cup sugar  
200 grams sugar = 1 cup sugar

How many cups would we eat in a year? (Multiply by 52 weeks.)

Person One _____  Person Two _____

A pound of sugar is 2 1/4 cups. How many pounds would we eat in a year? (Divide total cups by 2.25.)

Person One _____  Person Two _____
Now What?

Do we want to improve our health by changing our beverage choices? If yes, here are some ideas. Check the items we want to try.

- Drink water to really quench your thirst, especially during times of activity.
- Set a goal for reducing sweetened beverages. The reward is better health!
  - Buy smaller containers, for example 12-ounce instead of 20-ounce bottles. Some places even have 8-ounce cans.
  - Look at the label to see how many servings are in the container. Drink just one serving at a time.
- Switch to healthful beverages - water, 1% or skim milk, 100% fruit juices.
- Use soft drinks as a treat to be enjoyed occasionally, not daily.
- Eliminate soft drinks as a beverage choice in our home.
- Other
- Other

Can we recruit other family members to try these ideas?

Note for parents:
This lesson is designed to help teach kids about making healthful choices and establishing these habits early. There may be a temptation to switch to “diet” beverages with artificial sweeteners to reduce sugar. These beverages do contain less sugar yet create or maintain a desire for sweetened beverages and foods. Consumption of artificially sweetened drinks may make a person feel full or satisfied so they will not drink enough milk or water. Help teach your kids to make healthful beverage choices such as low fat milk and water.