

Selecting Low Added-Sugar Foods

School breakfasts served through the School Breakfast Program align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans—they are rich in whole grains, high quality protein, and a variety of vitamins and minerals children need to grow and be healthy. School breakfast participation is associated with healthier body weight^{1,2,3,4} and higher standardized test scores⁵. To further enhance the nutritional benefits of school breakfast, offer foods that are lower in added sugars.

What is added sugar?

Added sugars are sugars and sweeteners added to foods or beverages when they are processed or prepared. This does not include naturally occurring sugars such as those in milk and fruits.”

How much added sugar is too much?

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends “Healthy Eating patterns limit added sugars to **less than 10% of calories per day.**” Currently, children aged 9-18 get almost 18% of their daily calories from added sugar.

This added sugar primarily comes from sweetened beverages. Beverages account for almost half (47%) of all added sugars consumed by the U.S. population. The other major sources of added sugars are snacks and sweets.

Best Practices:

- Limit offerings of grain-based desserts (sweet rolls, pastries, breakfast cookies/bars, etc.) at breakfast to once per week.
- Serve breakfast cereals that contain 6 grams or less sugar per dry ounce.
- Serve yogurts that contain 15 grams or less sugar per 4 oz (113g).

Convenient, low-sugar foods:

Healthy and easy to serve alternatives to high added sugar breakfast foods.

- Fresh Fruit and Vegetables
- Low sugar Cereal
- Low sugar Yogurts
- Protein-rich breakfast sandwiches
- Whole Grain-Rich Bagels



Foods to Limit:

While quick to prepare and easy to serve, these food often have high amounts of added sugars.

- Pastries and donuts
- Cookies and Cakes
- Syrups
- Granola/breakfast bars

Tip

Fresh and local foods often contain less added sugar than their processed counterparts. Some schools bake their own muffins or breads! This is a great way to serve delicious foods while keeping added sugars to a minimum.

School Breakfast Program Best Practices

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Sample 1 Week Menu

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Egg & Cheese Breakfast Sandwich	Strawberry Banana Yogurt w/ Graham Crackers	Whole Grain Bagel w/ Cream Cheese	Assorted Cereal Bowls	Made from Scratch Banana Bread
Tangerine Grapes	Banana Apple Sauce	Fresh Blueberries Local Apple Slices	Fresh Strawberries Grapes	Banana Apple Sauce
1% Lowfat Milk or Fat-Free Milk	1% Lowfat Milk or Fat-Free Milk	1% Lowfat Milk or Fat-Free Milk	1% Lowfat Milk or Fat-Free Milk	1% Lowfat Milk or Fat-Free Milk



Additional Resources:

- USDA CACFP Yogurt Low Sugar Guide: <https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/menu-plans/breakfast-in-the-classroom/>
- MyPlate Information on Added Sugar: <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/added-sugars>
- The Alliance for a Healthier Generation: Sample menu's for Breakfast In the Classroom and other breakfast models - <https://foodplanner.healthiergeneration.org/menu-plans/breakfast-in-the-classroom/>

References:

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