



Example Policy Language: Beverages & Snacks

Examples and tips for writing policies to promote healthy beverages and snacks in afterschool programs.

OSNAP Goal #3: Do not serve sugary drinks at the program.

Policy Writing Hints: It is important to give examples of the sugary drinks you do not allow and the allowable healthy drinks in your policy statement.

Example 1: Sugary drinks (also known as sugar-sweetened beverages), including sodas, fruit drinks, lemonades, sweetened iced teas, and energy drinks, are not allowed to be served during program hours. We serve only unsweetened, unflavored water and milk.

Practice Implications: This policy requires the program to refrain from serving sugary drinks and specifies that the program will only serve water and milk. While juice is not prohibited in this policy, it is not listed as a beverage provided by the program, either. This policy also does not specify whether the milk has to be low-fat or skim milk, although it does ensure that only plain milk can be served. Before listing these restrictions, make sure that it is possible to follow through with this policy by checking with your food service provider. If you have little control over what is served because of your food service provider, you may want to modify the language. Refer to the USDA Smart Snacks standards : <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/smartsnacks.pdf> or more details and information on healthy beverages, including guidance for milk and juice for elementary, middle and high school students. View the Smart Snacks Standards: <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/smartsnacks.pdf>

Example 2: Only water, milk, and 100% juice are allowed at the program.

Practice Implications: This policy also requires the program to refrain from serving sugary drinks, but does so by specifying only what drinks are allowed. The policy again does not specify whether milk has to be low-fat or skim, and also does not indicate that milk has to be plain. This policy is also lenient in terms of portion sizes. Again, check with your food service provider to make sure it is possible to follow through on this policy statement. Refer to the USDA Smart Snacks standards : <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/smartsnacks.pdf> for more details and information on healthy beverages, including guidance for milk and

juice for elementary, middle and high school students. View the Smart Snacks Standards: : <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/smartsnacks.pdf>

Example 3: Beverages provided at the program will consist only of:

- Low-fat (1%) or fat-free unflavored milk (8 oz serving size)
- 100 percent juice (limit of ½ cup or 4 fluid ounces per day)
- Water without added ingredients, g., flavors, sugars, sweeteners (natural, artificial and nonnutritive), and caffeine.

Practice Implications: This policy also bans program-provided sugary beverages by specifying what beverages are served through the program. This policy is more specific with regard to the types of beverages allowed, specifying the fat content of milk and that milk must be unflavored and specifying a portion size limit for juice. Refer to the [USDA Smart Snacks standards \(https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/smartsnacks.pdf\)](https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/smartsnacks.pdf) for more details and information on healthy beverages, including guidance for milk and juice for elementary, middle and high school students. View the Smart Snacks Standards: <https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/smartsnacks.pdf> (<https://fns-prod.azureedge.us/sites/default/files/resource-files/smartsnacks.pdf>).

OSNAP Goal #4: Do not allow sugary drinks to be brought in during program time.

Example 1: Only beverages provided by the snack program are allowed at the program.

Practice Implications: This policy requires the program to ban all beverages from outside the snack program, including beverages sent in by parents and beverages purchased by children at school stores or vending machines. It also requires that partner programs (such as Girl Scouts or special tutoring programs run by a local college) cannot bring beverages into the program either. It will require staff members to monitor whether children have brought beverages into the snack program and, if children do have outside beverages, to confiscate them until the program is over. This policy is easy to implement because it applies to all beverages and does not require staff, parents or children to try to distinguish between different beverage types.

Example 2: Although children are allowed to bring in bottles of plain, unsweetened water to the program, no child is allowed to bring in sugar-sweetened beverages (sodas, fruit drinks, lemonades, sweetened iced teas, or energy drinks).

Practice Implications: This policy is less stringent and requires children to refrain from bringing in sugar-sweetened beverages only; water is allowed. This policy also does not require anything of partner programs who may bring beverages into the after-school site. It will require staff members to monitor what beverages children have brought in and to confiscate any beverages meeting the criteria of sugar-sweetened beverages. This policy is more complicated to implement because it requires time and extra training for staff to determine what counts as a sugar-sweetened beverages and which beverages should be confiscated.

Example 3: Students should not bring food or drinks to the program (with the exception

Practice Implications: This policy requires the program to prevent students from bringing in all beverages *and* foods, with an exception for students with special dietary restrictions. This policy may also be easier to implement as it does not require program staff to devote time to figuring out whether a food or beverage is OK to have at the program.

OSNAP Goal #5: Serve water every day.

Example 1: We offer water as the primary drink at every meal and snack.

Practice Implications: This policy requires the program to serve water at every meal and snack as the preferred beverage with snack. Allowing children to use a drinking fountain or water cooler would not fulfill this policy. This policy would require the program to serve water prominently at meal and snack time using cups that are the same size as other beverages (e.g., milk or another beverage offering). It would also require staff members who serve meals/snack to specify to children that water should be taken as part of snack.

Example 2: Although we sometimes offer milk or 100% juice as a beverage option at meals and snack, water is always offered either alone or in combination with other beverages.

Practice Implications: This policy also requires the program to serve water each day at meals and snack, though it does not specify that water must be the primary beverage, so it could be served alongside juice or milk rather than promoted as the main drink. This policy would also require the program to serve water in cups at snack and meal times; simply allowing children access to a drinking fountain or water cooler would not suffice.

TIP: Train staff members on how to wash water coolers and pitchers, and how often they should do it. Encourage staff members to make positive statements about drinking water when they serve it to the kids, such as "I'm pretty thirsty, water will make me feel great!" to help kids get more excited about drinking water (especially if they are wanting a sugary drink instead). Staff members can also flavor water with slices of lemon or other fruits to add a fun twist.

OSNAP Goal #6: Offer a fruit and/or vegetable option at every meal and snack.

Example 1: Each meal and snack always contain at least one serving of fruit or vegetables, such as peaches or carrot sticks.

Practice Implications: This policy requires the program to provide at least $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of cut-up fruits or vegetables or 1 medium-sized piece of whole fruit each day (using the serving size definitions of the National School Lunch Program). Check with your food service provider to make sure it is possible to follow through on this policy statement. If not, you can modify it to the number of times per week you are able to serve fruits and vegetables.

Example 2: We offer children a fruit or vegetable option every day afterschool and three-a-day in all-day holiday and vacation programs.

Practice Implications: This policy also requires the program to provide at least $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of cut-up fruits or vegetables, 1 cup of leafy vegetables, or 1 medium-sized piece of whole fruit each day at snack, and also specifies that two servings must also be provided at lunch for full-day programs. Check with your food service provider to make sure it is possible to follow through on this policy statement.

OSNAP Goal #7: When serving grains (like bread, cereals and crackers), serve whole grains.

Example 1: Whole grain products, with ingredients like whole wheat and whole oats, are healthier and more nutritious than refined grain products made with white flour. When we serve grain products at meals and snack, like bread, cereals, and crackers, we only serve products where a whole grain is the first ingredient on the ingredient list.

Practice Implications: This policy requires the program to serve whole grains whenever grain products are served at meals and snack, and also helps define for families and staff what a whole grain product is. Meeting this policy may require working with your food service provider to find whole grain options.

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