

# Residents urged to 'ReThink Your Drink'

During the Summer, more Yolo County children and adults will be encouraged to quench their thirst with a cold glass of water instead of a sugar-sweetened beverage like soda or sports drinks.

As part of a countywide nutrition education campaign being launched today, the University of California Nutrition Education Program in Yolo County challenges everyone to ReThink Your Drink.

Added sugar from soda and other sugar-sweetened beverages is a contributor to the serious childhood obesity epidemic in our county, with 33 percent of youth ages 0-17, being overweight. According to the 2009 research brief *Bubbling Over: Soda Consumption and Its Link to Obesity in California*, nearly 40 percent of children aged 2 to 11 and 63 percent of children aged 12 to 17 drink one or more sodas per day.

Sugar-sweetened beverages contribute 10-15 percent of calories a day to the American diet. "That's why we are encouraging children and parents to reduce the amount of sugar-sweetened beverages they drink and replace them with healthy alternatives

## Tips on how to ReThink Your Drink

Choose healthy drink options

■ Water (drink plenty - water has zero calories)

■ For added flavor add a slice of cucumber, strawberries, or lemon slices

■ Non-fat or low-fat milk

■ 100 percent fruit and/or vegetable juice in limited amounts (less than 6 ounces per day)

■ Unsweetened iced tea

instead," says Christie Hedrick, nutrition educator for the UC Nutrition Education Program.

As part of the Campaign, the UC Nutrition Education Program in Yolo County will be providing experiential lessons to students and parents using nutrition education materials with key Rethink Your Drink messages. We are currently showcasing Rethink Your Drink messages throughout Yolo County by displaying poster boards revealing amounts of sugar in popularly

consumed beverages. The Campaign's goal is to reach all residents and organizations in the Yolo County region to encourage consumption of healthier beverages.

The UC Nutrition Education Program in Yolo County showcased a ReThink Your Drink poster board displaying healthy beverage options, versus less healthy options such as soda, sports and energy drinks at a recent health fair in Woodland.

The UC Nutrition Education Program participated in Farm Connection Day and Dia de los Ninos on April 29 with a Rethink Your Drink display and included a taste-testing of Agua Fresca, a strawberry twist to water.

In addition, students signed pledge cards demonstrating their commitment to choose water, 100 percent fruit juice, or milk when reaching for a beverage this summer. During the month of May and throughout the summer, the UC Nutrition Education Program will be participating in health fairs and local festivals to showcase the Rethink Your Drink Campaign.