



# Mister FunWater Challenge

**ACCOMPANYING GUIDE**

  
**coalitionpoids**  
québécoise sur la problématique du

Une initiative parrainée par l'Association pour la santé publique du Québec



# MISTER FUNWATER CHALLENGE ACCOMPANYING GUIDE

## Purpose of the guide

- Support the creation of favourable conditions for a successful Mister FunWater Challenge.
- Share the keys to effective promotion of healthy hydration to children.



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All tools for the *Mister FunWater Challenge* are available free of charge at [thirstyforhealth.ca/daycare](http://thirstyforhealth.ca/daycare).

# 5 WINNING CONDITIONS FOR A MEMORABLE AND MEANINGFUL CHALLENGE

*The success of the Mister FunWater Challenge relies on fun and your interactions!*

## 1. Focus on the positive messages

You have a key role in the success of the *Challenge*. Your encouragement contributes to children's motivation and pride. Moreover, when **your interactions are positive and focus on the benefits of the desired behaviour**, they will be more effective<sup>1,2</sup>. Therefore, emphasizing how good we feel when we drink water is a winning strategy to develop the reflex of drinking water most of the time.

### Positive messages

- Drinking water helps you feel good.
- Water is the body's preferred drink.
- We need to drink several glasses of water per day.
- Water quenches thirst.
- When it's hot outside, drinking water is refreshing.
- Water tastes good.
- Etc.

### Negative messages to avoid

- Not drinking water makes you sick.
- Juice is bad. It's full of sugar!
- No juice!
- Etc.

## 2. Be a model of healthy hydration

The children like you and watch you. Take pleasure in drinking water and try, during the *Mister FunWater Challenge*, to choose it over other beverages. Participate in the *Challenge* yourself as well! For other tips, consult the *Be a proud role model!* tool.





### 3. Have fun!

Fun is a key factor in acquiring healthy lifestyle habits.

Give a toast with the children while drinking water. Add your own twist or a bit of silliness. For example, before toasting, sing one of Mister FunWater's songs with the children (see Appendix 1). You can even create your own nursery rhyme or a slogan.

### 4. Trust your body

Staying hydrated throughout the day is important. To do this, you don't need to calculate what you drink. If you're not drinking enough, the body sends various signs<sup>3,4</sup>. As an educator, you can recognize a dehydrated child using these signs and symptoms:

- feeling thirsty
- dry mouth
- dark or small quantity of urine
- headaches
- difficulty concentrating
- feeling weak/tired.

If the opportunity arises, help children learn to recognize these signs and to listen to their body. To prevent dehydration, offer water to the children regularly. However, do not force them to drink.

#### **IMPORTANT**

Competitions or contests based on the amount of water to be drank (counting the number of glasses consumed, rewards for drinking the most water, games in which you have to drink water often and in close succession, etc.) are to be avoided. Unwittingly, having the children drink under pressure may cause them to feel discomfort from drinking too much water. In extreme cases, drinking too much water in a short amount of time, can even be risky<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, we want to prevent very competitive children from overdoing it.

## 5. Create a wave of water promotion

To make the most of the *Mister FunWater Challenge*, you need to prepare for it. Consult Appendix 2 to make your planning easier.

### ENGAGE YOUR FACILITY



- Carry out the activities from the Mister FunWater Activity Kit to help children discover the basics of healthy hydration.
- Display the *Challenge's* promotional poster in various locations in your daycare.
- Draw inspiration from the infographic to create a daycare setting that fosters water consumption.
- As applicable, decorate the fountains or taps to increase their attraction (see the *Mister FunWater's Gift* activity from the Mister FunWater Activity Kit).



### GET PARENTS INVOLVED



- Hand or send out the letter to parents and the *A few ideas to drink more water* sheet.
- Invite them to discover the [thirstyforhealth.ca/home](http://thirstyforhealth.ca/home) site for tips on promoting water at home.
- Have parents discover the flavoured waters. The [liquidsugar.ca](http://liquidsugar.ca) site is a good resource to suggest to parents, so they participate at home.



## Maintaining the benefits after the *Challenge*

To encourage good drinking water habits, it is suggested to continue promoting water.

You can dedicate a place in the room to Mister FunWater where the colouring pages, materials created by the children and promotional posters from the *Challenge* are displayed, to help them think about drinking water regularly, and continue to propose toasts from time to time.

In June you can rekindle water promotion by celebrating Water Month. With the heat of the summer approaching, it is a good time to review the importance of drinking water by redoing the *Mister FunWater Challenge* or by doing Mister FunWater activities and water-based activities!

### In June you can rekindle water promotion by celebrating Water Month?

Their bodies are less capable of coping with temperature fluctuations. For this reason, in summer, in periods of extreme heat and humidity, children must be encouraged to drink water every 20 minutes<sup>7</sup>. For more information, visit [www.quebec.ca/en/health/advice-and-prevention/health-and-environment/preventing-the-effects-of-oppressive-and-extreme-heat/](http://www.quebec.ca/en/health/advice-and-prevention/health-and-environment/preventing-the-effects-of-oppressive-and-extreme-heat/).



## Good to know

### Water: the star of the *Challenge*

**Water is the best drink to hydrate yourself.** For that reason, it is important to offer water to children often throughout the day. To provide a main area, the lunchtime *Mister FunWater Challenge* is always done with a bottle or glass full of water.

### Room for other drinks

**From a positive reinforcement perspective, the *Mister FunWater Challenge* is an opportunity to promote the presence of water without necessarily eliminating other drinks.** However, to promote healthy hydration, choose water and white milk as the drinks to offer children regularly (Gazelle et Potiron reference framework). Refer to our infographic on promoting water.



## TIPS FOR FLAVOURING WATER

### Recipes

For each cup of fruit (fresh or frozen) or vegetables, use four cups of water.

Some ideas for popular flavours\*

- Melon
- Strawberry
- Raspberry
- Peach
- Berries
- Mango
- Pineapple
- Cucumber
- Peppers
- Cantaloupe
- And many others to be discovered!

Several ingredients can be combined or a few sprigs of herbs (e.g., cilantro, mint, basil, rosemary) can be added.

For regular consumption, it is better to avoid flavouring the water with citrus (lemon, lime, orange, grapefruit) or commercial flavourings, because they make the water more acidic, to a level that is harmful to tooth enamel.



### Tips

- The use of frozen fruits accelerates preparation.
- For more flavour:
  - ◇ cut fruits and vegetables into small pieces;
  - ◇ crumble herbs by rolling them between your hands;
  - ◇ let the water infuse for at least 15 minutes in a cool place or with ice cubes. If the water is prepared with frozen fruit, let it rest at room temperature during the infusion. For optimal freshness, consume the flavoured water within 24 to 48 hours.
- The fruits (except for strawberries and bananas when they infuse for a long time) and vegetables can be eaten afterwards, because they remain flavourful. Zero-waste!

#### WARNING

Make sure that the children are not allergic to the foods selected. To prevent the risk of choking, serve the glasses of water to the children without any garnishing.

## APPENDIX 1

### Mister FunWater songs

#### To the tune of “Bother John”

I drink water (repeat 2x)  
at lunchtime (repeat 2x)  
Also during the day (repeat 2x)  
It’s so healthy, for my belly (repeat 2x)

#### To the tune of “If you’re happy and you know it”

When I drink a glass of water, I love it! When I drink a glass of water, I love it! When I drink a glass of water, with all my favourite friends  
When I drink a glass of water, I love it!  
---  
Water is healthy for my belly, I love it! Water is good for my tummy, I love it!  
With all my favourite friends and with (name of daycare educator) too  
With my whole daycare<sup>1</sup>, I say a toast to you!

#### To the tune of “Itsy Bitsy Spider”

I have a glass of water  
to wake up my brain  
When I drink a mouthful  
I have a good day





<sup>1</sup> As applicable, replace with “daycare” with “preschool, nursery school, etc.”



## APPENDIX 2

### Getting ready for the *Challenge*

<b>Before the third week of March</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Register your early childhood education centre.</li><li>• Download the tools, print them as needed and plan the schedule for the Challenge and the <i>Mister FunWater</i> activities, which will take place during the third week of March</li></ul>	
<b>The Thursday or Friday before the <i>Challenge</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Send or hand out the parent letter and invite them to discover the many resources for promoting water consumption <a href="http://thirstyforhealth.ca/home">thirstyforhealth.ca/ home</a>.</li></ul>	

<b>Third week of March (week of the <i>Mister FunWater Challenge</i>)</b> <b>March 22</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Propose toasts with the children, do activities, have fun and be a model of promoting healthy hydration.</li><li>• Highlight <i>World Water Day</i> with a special activity.</li><li>• Hand out the certificates to the children and post the certificate that highlights the participation of your daycare centre.</li></ul>	
<b>All year round</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Seize opportunities to recall the importance of drinking water (e.g., add Mister FunWater breaks where you say a toast together with water).</li></ul>	
<b>June</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Highlight <i>Water Month</i> with a <i>Mister FunWater</i> activity or redo the <i>Mister FunWater Challenge</i>.</li></ul>	

**Want to do the Mister FunWater Challenge before or after the third week of March?** You can! The *Challenge* is flexible, and the promotional and educational tools are available anytime. However, the participation prize draw is only offered in March as part of the registration to highlight *Canada Water Week*.





Une initiative parrainée par l'Association pour la santé publique du Québec

## COALITION QUÉBÉCOISE SUR LA PROBLÉMATIQUE DU POIDS (WEIGHT COALITION)

Created in 2006 and sponsored by the Association pour la santé publique du Québec since 2008, the Weight Coalition brings together many partners, which advocate for the adoption of public policies to foster the implementation of environments that facilitate healthy choices and the prevention of weight problems. For more information, visit, [cqpp.qc.ca/en](http://cqpp.qc.ca/en)

**If you have any questions,  
contact the Weight Coalition  
at 514-598-8058  
or [soifdesante@gmail.com](mailto:soifdesante@gmail.com)**

## About the Mister FunWater Challenge

In the third week of March, during Canada Water Week, children are invited to take up the *Mister FunWater Challenge*, which takes place in early childhood education centres. This festive *Challenge* proposes having the lunchtime meal with water and sharing in a toast together.

It includes free tools:

- promotional poster;
- *Mister FunWater* activity kit;
- colouring pages;
- sample information letter to parents;
- personalized participation certificates for children and the participating facility.

The *Mister FunWater Challenge* is an initiative of the Weight Coalition. It is inspired by the *Tchin-tchin Challenge* that takes place in elementary schools, a joint initiative of the Association québécoise de la garde scolaire (AQGS) and the Weight Coalition.

The *Mister FunWater Challenge* is a component of the *I'm Thirsty for Health!* campaign, developed by the Weight Coalition. It aims to promote healthy hydration by encouraging, normalizing and valuing water consumption. Decision makers and adults supporting children are encouraged to set an example by acting as role models of healthy hydration and making water available and attractive. Additional tools for the *Mister FunWater Challenge* are available free of charge at [thirstyforhealth.ca/daycare](http://thirstyforhealth.ca/daycare).



## References

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- 3 Government of Canada (2019). Fact Sheet: Staying Healthy in the Heat. Found November 26, 2019 at <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/publications/healthy-living/fact-sheet-staying-healthy-heat.html>
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- 5 Institute of Medicine (2005). *Dietary Reference Intakes for Water, Potassium, Sodium, Chloride, and Sulfate*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press.
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- 7 Ministère la Famille (2017). *Gazelle and Potiron Framework*. Found December 12, 2018 at [https://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/documents/gazelle\\_potiron.pdf](https://www.mfa.gouv.qc.ca/fr/publication/documents/gazelle_potiron.pdf)