

New, healthier menu items available

*Eat Smart
in Parks*

Dear Coach,

Thank you for serving the youth of our community. We greatly appreciate your dedication to the guidance and support of our young athletes. Children's athletic team experiences can be vital to the development of healthy habits that last a lifetime.

We, too are concerned about the health of our youth. Not only is the physical activity important to their health, but also what they eat and drink. To make eating healthy easier, we have added new, healthier items to our menu. Eating well and staying hydrated improves the health of our youth and helps your team play their best.

As a coach and role model you can encourage young athletes to make healthy food and beverage choices by:

- Handing out copies of the enclosed letter to parents at the beginning of the season. The letter is about healthy snacks and beverages parents can bring to practices, games, and other sports activities and about the new healthier menu items.
- Reassuring parents that youth don't always need a high calorie snack after the game or event – especially if it's close to mealtime.
- Consistently encouraging and reminding parents to choose healthy options if they bring snacks and beverages to sporting events.
- Explaining to the athletes what is healthy to eat or drink. Reminding the athletes that healthy meals and snacks give them the energy they need to play hard. But also remind them that they should eat only if they are hungry.
- Encouraging proper hydration. Water is often the best choice for most youth sports unless the weather is very hot and/or humid.
- Avoiding using food as a reward. Rewarding behaviors with food encourages children to eat when they are not hungry.
- Making sure healthy options are included if a team event or celebration includes food.
- Being a role model. Demonstrate proper hydration and healthy eating habits around your athletes.

Thank you again for all you do to support our youth.

If you have any questions, please contact :

