Wonders of Water
This month your children have learned about the importance of drinking water. Without water, the body would stop working properly. Water makes up more than half a person’s body weight and a person cannot survive more than a few days without it. Each day the body loses 8-10 cups of water through sweat, urine, exhaled air, and bowel movements. If your children exercise, they lose more water and thus need more. Adults need 1 ½ quarts of water for every 1,000 calories expended. This amounts to about 8 cups of water for a 2,000 calorie-a-day diet. Young children need about 1-1/2 ounces of water per pound of their body weight each day.

Water’s Many Jobs
Water helps the body to do many important jobs. Some of these include:

- Helping the blood to carry oxygen to cells in the body
- Being involved in the functions of the immune system
- Helping the body to fight off disease
- Helping the body to digest food and get rid of waste

Food Sources of Water
The body does not get water from drinking it alone, but also gets water from any fluid or food that contains water. Most juice, soups, vegetables and milk have high water content that is around 80%. Some alternate sources of water include lettuce, broccoli, baked potato, milk, orange juice, apples, grapefruit, watermelon, yogurt and chicken. These are just a few of the many foods that contain water. You should encourage your children to eat more fruits, vegetables and whole grains because they tend to contain the most water. You should also be careful because water fills the body without providing any calories, so it can decrease the appetite of a growing child if given in large quantities too often.

When to Drink
Your children should drink water at meals and when they are thirsty. It is important that they drink water when they are not thirsty to prevent dehydration. Dehydration happens when the body does not have enough water. It can prevent your children from being alert and can even make them sick. Your children should be drinking extra water when the weather is warm and when they are playing sports or exercising. Make sure that your children are drinking water before, during, and after being physically active. The following are a few tips to make sure your children are drinking enough water:

- Have your children drink a glass of water with meals
• Encourage your children to take a sip of water when they pass a water fountain
• Encourage you children to consume 4 to 8 ounces of water every 15-20 minutes when they are active
• Give your children a water bottle to take with them during the day
• Try to keep water cold because most children do not like to drink room-temperature water
• Consider purchasing special cups for your children that are designated for drinking water

The Body’s Role in Hydration
The body helps to ensure hydration by regulating the amount of water it holds. It holds on to water when it does not have enough and gets rid of it when it has too much. The color of urine actually says what the body is trying to do with its water. If the urine is very light yellow, the body might be trying to get rid of excess water. If the urine is very dark yellow, the body might be trying to conserve water and it is probably time to hydrate.

Source: (www.kidshealth.org; www.more4kids.info)