**Celebrating without Sugary Drinks** It can be tempting to use sugary drinks as rewards for good behavior, hard work at school, completing chores at home, etc., and to tell kids that soda is only for special occasions. But saving soda for celebrations can actually work against you: it can make sugary drinks more appealing, and your kids may come to expect it as a treat. Rather than making soda a reward or part of a celebration, use these ideas to spice up an occasion without adding sugary drinks to the mix.

* + **Choose seltzer over still water**. The carbonation of soda is likely a big part of the appeal, so bring some bubbles to the table with seltzer or tonic water. You’ll get all the tingle without any of the added sugar! Use our [Better Beverage Finder](http://www.betterbeveragefinder.org/) to find great options right here in Howard County.
  + **Drop a few pieces of fruit in the drink.** Adding slices of orange, lemon, lime, strawberries or your favorite fruits to a glass of water or low-sugar juice gives a drink both a new flavor and festive colors. Try letting the fruit sit in a pitcher of water overnight for even stronger flavors.
  + **Break out the china**. Something as simple as using a special glass or fancy dishes can make an ordinary meal a special one. Let your older children drink out of your special occasion glassware or buy plastic versions for younger children. Take the chance to say a special toast at the same time.
  + **Let your child sit at the head of the table**. Give your child the seat of honor as a reward. You could even decorate the chair with a special pillow or balloons to mark the occasion.