

Healthful Classroom Celebrations

Classroom parties are a special time for our children and treats are an important part of these celebrations. However, unhealthy snacks such as cupcakes and potato chips have become the norm rather than the exception at these events. Providing nutritious foods in the classroom can teach children about making wise food choices. Below are some suggestions for healthier treats. Hopefully these ideas will encourage and inspire parents and teachers to use classroom celebrations as a learning opportunity about healthy living – **Healthful eating can be delicious and fun!**

Fruit

- Whole, cut, fresh, frozen, canned or dried, fruit is naturally sweet and kids love it.

Apples	Grapes	Pineapple
Apricots	Honeydew	Plums
Bananas	Kiwi	Raisins
Blueberries	Mangoes	Raspberries
Cantaloupe	Nectarines	Strawberries
Cherries	Oranges	Tangerines
Cranberries	Peaches	Watermelon, etc.
Grapefruit	Pears	



- Fresh fruit – try mixing a variety of fruits for a fruit salad, fruit kebobs or a fruit tray with yogurt, caramel or low fat whipped topping for dipping.
- Unsweetened applesauce or fruit cups packed in juice or light syrup.
- Fruit popsicles – choose ones made with 100% juice with no added sugar.
- Fruit parfaits - layer fruit, yogurt and granola or crushed graham crackers.
- Fruit smoothies - blend fruit with yogurt or milk and ice.

Vegetables

- Kids love to dip so try a vegetable tray with low fat or light dips.

Broccoli	Cucumber	String Beans
Carrots	Peppers	Tomatoes
Cauliflower	Snap Peas	Yellow Squash
Celery	Snow Peas	Zucchini, etc.



- Dips – Low fat dressings, light ranch dip or other variety, hummus, bean dip, salsa or guacamole.
- Celery – fill with peanut butter* or light cream cheese, add raisins or other small pieces of dried fruit.
- Salad Shake – set out salad fixings and have kids fill a sealable sandwich bag, add low fat dressing and have kids shake, shake, shake.
- Edamame (Soy) – heat frozen edamame in microware for 2 - 3 minutes.

Healthy Grains

- Breakfast Cereal – choose whole grain cereals with 8 grams of sugar or less per serving.
- Whole grain snacks – look for whole grain varieties of crackers, rice cakes, tortillas, pitas, bagels, English muffins and soft pretzels.
- Popcorn – choose low fat microwave popcorn or air pop and spray with vegetable oil then sprinkle with cheese.
- Granola Bars – look for whole grain bars, low in fat and added sugar.
- Trail mix – make with whole grain cereals, granola, seeds or nuts*, and dried fruit.
- Some cookies are lower in added fat and sugars than others, such as graham crackers and animal crackers.

Low fat Dairy

- Yogurt – choose low fat yogurt with no more than 30 grams of sugar per 6 oz. cup.
- Cheeses – choose low fat cheeses and serve with fruit, vegetables or whole grain crackers.
- Low fat pudding and frozen yogurt – these products are high in added sugar, use only occasionally.

Healthy Beverages

- Water – satisfies thirst and has no sugar or calories
- Low fat (1%) and fat free (skim) milk, white or flavored, soy milk and rice drinks.
- Fruit juice – choose 100% fruit juice.
- Sparkling drink – make a healthy “soda” drink by mixing seltzer, sparkling water or club soda with 100% fruit juice.

Non-food Treats

- Consider non-food treats for parties and birthdays such as stickers, pencils, erasers, crayons, markers, stencils, books, puzzles, games, bubbles, cups, straws, magnets, frisbees, jump ropes, etc.

Healthful eating is a celebration of healthy living and these suggestions are just the beginning. Use your imagination, read food labels and ask your kids for ideas; the possibilities are endless.

* Always check for food allergies in your child’s classroom before serving nuts or other food items.