



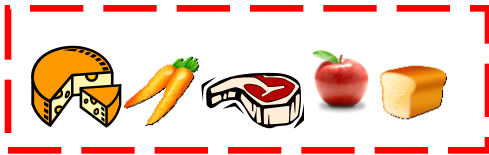
BMRSD Wellness Committee - Healthy Celebrations



But It's Just a Cupcake...Or Is It?



Foods for school celebrations often include unhealthy choices such as cupcakes, candy, cookies and soda. While there is nothing wrong with an occasional treat, unhealthy foods are often the norm rather than the exception. Parties, food rewards, vending machines, snacks and school stores often include foods that are low in nutrients and high in fat, added sugars and sodium. Children ages 2 to 18 consume almost 40 percent of their calories from solid fats and added sugars.¹ Their diets do not include enough fruits, vegetables (particularly dark green and orange vegetables and legumes), whole grains or calcium-rich foods, and are too high in sodium, saturated fat and added sugars.² Currently, 17 percent of children and adolescents ages 2 to 19 are overweight and 1 in 3 children are overweight or obese.³ Between 1980 and 2004, obesity tripled among children and adolescents.⁴ Constant exposure to low-nutrient foods compromises children's health and learning. By providing students with nutritious foods, schools can create an environment that positively influences children's health and learning, and teaches healthy lifestyle choices that will continue into adulthood.



Change Up the Typical Classroom Celebration and Try:

- Instead of food, ask parents to purchase a book for the classroom or school library in the birthday child's name. Read it to the class or invite the child's parents to come in and read it to the class.
- Create a "Celebrate Me" book. Have classmates write stories or poems and draw pictures to describe what is special about the birthday child.
- Create a special birthday event. The birthday child wears a sash and crown, sits in a special chair and visits the principal's office for a special birthday surprise, such as a pencil, sticker or birthday card.
- The birthday child is the teacher's assistant for the day, and gets to do special tasks like make deliveries to office, lead the line, start an activity or choose a game or story.

Benefits of Healthy Celebrations:

Healthy Kids Learn Better:

Research clearly demonstrates that good nutrition is linked to better behavior and academic performance. To provide the best possible learning environment for children, schools must also provide an environment that supports healthy behaviors.

Provides Consistent Messages:

Providing healthy classroom celebrations demonstrates a school commitment to promoting healthy behaviors. It supports the classroom lessons students are learning about health, instead of contradicting them. Healthy celebrations promote positive lifestyle choices to reduce student health risks and improve learning.

Promotes a Healthy School Environment:

To improve eating behaviors, students need to receive consistent, reliable health information and ample opportunity to use it. Healthy celebrations are an important part of providing a healthy school environment.

Creates Excitement About Nutrition:

Children are excited about new and different things, including fun party activities and healthy snacks. School staff and parents need not worry that children will be disappointed if typical party foods aren't served in the classroom. Holiday treats and traditional birthday parties with cake can still be available at home.

Protects Children with Food Allergies:

When parents send in food, it is difficult to ensure the safety of children with food allergies. Schools can protect food-allergic children by providing non-food celebrations or, if food is served, obtaining it from known sources such as the school food service program.

Below is a Sampling of Accepted Snack Suggestions for Classroom Celebrations:

Baked! Doritos Nacho Cheese Flavored Tortilla
Baked! Lay's BBQ Potato Crisps
Baked! Lay's Original Potato Crisps
Kellogg's Special K Cracker Chips (Cheddar)
popchips (original or cheddar)
100 Calorie Cheddar Goldfish Crackers
made with Whole Grain
Giant Goldfish Grahams (Cinnamon)
Goldfish PhysEdibles Baked Animal Crackers
Cliff Bar - Z Bar (Chocolate Brownie)
Cliff Bar – Z Bar (Chocolate Chip)
Apple Cinnamon Cheerios Cereal Bar
Betty Crocker Oatmeal Bar (Chocolate Chip)
Golden Grahams Cereal Bar
Nature Valley Crunchy Granola Bar (Oat & Honey)
Nature Valley Chewy Granola Bar (Oatmeal Raisin)
Kashi TLC Crunchy Granola Bars
(Honey Toasted 7 Grain)
Kashi TLC Chewy Granola Bar
(Dark Cherry Chocolate)
Keebler Animal Crackers
Keebler Bug Bites Cinnamon Graham Crackers
Keebler Scooby-Doo! Bones
Baked Cinnamon Graham Cracker Sticks
NutriGrain Cereal Bar (Strawberry)
Wheat Thins Original Snacks
Musselman's Totally Fruit Applesauce (Apple)
Kellogg's Pop-Tarts Made With Whole Grain
(Frosted Strawberry)
Luigi's 100% Juice Sorbet (Grape)
TruMoo Fat Free Milk (Chocolate)
Kraft Mozzarella & Cheddar Twist
Chobani Greek Yogurt (various flavors)



A complete list of acceptable snacks, in line with the new MA Nutrition Law, can be found at:

www.johnstalkerinstitute.org/alist/alist.pdf

Any comments or suggestions, please contact Food Service Director/Wellness Committee Representative Jeanne Sheridan at schoolnutrition@bmrtd.net

Together we are unstoppable!

Recipe to try at home:



Purple Fruit Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:

2 frozen bananas, skins removed and cut in chunks	1 cup orange juice 1 tablespoon honey (optional)
1/2 cup frozen blueberries	1 teaspoon vanilla extract (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Place bananas, blueberries and juice in a blender, puree. Use honey and/or vanilla to taste. Use more or less liquid depending on the thickness you want for your smoothie.

References

- 1 Reedy, J., & Krebs-Smith, S.M. (2010). Dietary Sources of Energy, Solid Fats, and Added Sugars among Children and Adolescents in the United States. *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, 110(10):1477-1484
- 2 U.S. Department of Agriculture Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion. (2009). The quality of children's diets in 2003-04 as measured by the Healthy Eating Index – 2005. *Nutrition Insight*, 43. Retrieved on October 6, 2011 from <http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/NutritionInsights/Insight43.pdf>.
- 3 Ogden, C.L., Carroll, M.D., Curtin, L.R., Lamb, M.M., & Flegal, K.M. (2010). Prevalence of high body mass index in US children and adolescents, 2007-2008, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 303(3):242-249.
- 4 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. (2006). *Prevalence of Overweight Among Children and Adolescents: United States, 2003-2004*. Retrieved on October 6, 2011 from http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/hestat/overweight/overweight_child_03.htm.