



HEALTHY SCHOOL CELEBRATIONS

Let's Party! From birthday parties to holiday celebrations, there are many celebrations in elementary schools. Along with the fun, usually comes food. Just one school party can include pizza, sugary juice drinks, chips, cake, and ice cream, *plus* a goodie bag with candy.

Offering so many treats so often can contribute to unhealthy eating habits. However, with a few easy changes, parents, teachers, and school administrators can shift the focus of school parties from unhealthy food to healthy fun.

IDEAS FOR HEALTHIER CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS

- ◆ Have a scavenger hunt for items or information in the classroom or around the school. Have children search for items related to the party theme.
- ◆ Provide "free choice" activity time at the end of the day.
- ◆ Provide extra recess time.
- ◆ Celebrate creatively by setting up craft stations and playing music in the background. Ask parents to provide the supplies such as clay, craft paper, pencils, markers, paints, and stickers.

For holiday craft ideas see:

<http://www.dltk-kids.com/crafts/holidays.html>

- ◆ Plan special party games.
- ◆ Have a dance party.
- ◆ Read a children's book related to the party theme.
- ◆ Allow children a trip to the treasure box (parents can supply it with small toys, books, note pads, paints, etc.).
- ◆ Allow students to pick a book of their choice and ask the principal or a parent to come in a read it.

For a list of children's holiday books visit:

<http://childrensbooks.about.com/od/holidays/Holidays.htm>



SCHOOL WELLNESS POLICIES

Federal law requires every school district to have a local wellness policy. These policies must address nutrition education, physical activity, school meals, and all other foods and beverages available at school.

Check your school's local wellness policy to see if it addresses school celebrations. If it doesn't, join the school wellness committee and work to include healthy celebrations as a part of your school's local wellness policy.

Provide parents with healthy ideas for birthdays and other celebrations. List only healthy items on the class party sign-up sheet.

Experts recommend limiting celebrations that involve food to no more than one party per class per month, and that each party include no more than one junk food item (see schoolwellnesspolicies.org for a model policy).

For more information visit

http://www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/policy_options_healthycelebrations.html