

Healthy Food Guide

For School Activities and Other Special Occasions

Promoting healthy behaviors among students is an important role of every school administrator, teacher and parent. By promoting healthy behaviors, you can help:

- Increase students' ability to learn
- Reduce absences
- Improve behavior
- Teach children lifelong healthy eating habits

Behaviors are often established in childhood. As a role model, you can provide your students or child with the proper guidance and education to lead them to positive choices which can help them improve their chances for a healthy life.

Classroom Parties and Snacks

No potentially hazardous food or beverage stored or prepared in a private home may be offered for sale, sold, or given away to the public, which includes schools, (in accordance with California Retail Food Code article 114332.3a). Therefore, no potentially hazardous foods (unpackaged food items; food items that require refrigeration) that are either prepared on the site (unless by the Child Nutrition Service Department) or prepared in someone's home or a restaurant are allowed, unless by permission by the County Health Department by a permitting process.

Several guidelines to consider from the District Wellness Policy (BP 5030 and AR 5030):

Our board policies state that school staff shall encourage parents to support the district nutrition education program by considering nutritional quality when selecting any snacks which they may donate for occasional class parties and by limiting foods or beverages that do not meet nutritional standards to no more than one food or beverage per party. Classroom parties shall be held after the lunch period when possible.

Ordering your classroom party foods from Child Nutrition Services ensures that it is a healthy choice, and a safe choice. Please use the *Healthy Snacks Order Form* to order snacks for your classroom parties and celebrations that meet the nutritional standards that National School Meal programs are required to follow. These items can be purchased for your party/celebration from the Child Nutrition Services Department.

Fun Alternatives to Food Rewards

Food rewards can be an easy way to bring about an immediate behavior change in students. So why change a reward system that seems to work? Rewarding children with food can contribute to health problems such as obesity, diabetes, and hypertension. It also interferes with teaching children to eat in response to hunger and fullness cues. Giving donuts and soft drinks to students may seem like a harmless treat for a job well done. But rewarding children with unhealthy food can develop habits that stay with children throughout their school careers...and their lives.

Listed below are some fun alternatives to using food as a reward:

Elementary Schools

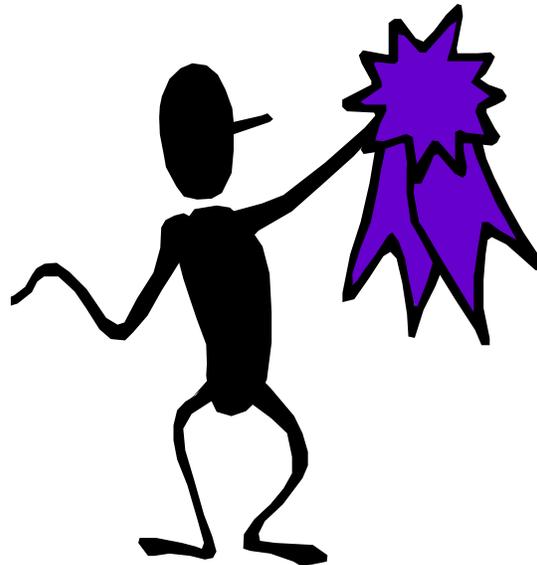
- Trips to a treasure box filled with nonfood items such as stickers, play tattoos, bubbles, jump ropes, puzzles, key chains, yo-yo's, spider rings, charms, trading cards, pencil toppers, coupons for extra credit, etc
- Bank system (earn play money to be used for privileges)
- Play favorite game
- Extra recess
- Make deliveries to office
- Sit by friends
- Help teach class
- Eat lunch with teacher
- School supplies
- Show-and-tell
- Paperback book

Middle Schools

- Sit by friends
- Listen to music while working at desk
- Reduced homework or give a homework pass
- Eat lunch outside or have class outside
- Field trips
- Assemblies
- Extra reading time
- Free time at end of class

High Schools

- Extra credit
- No homework pass
- Extra reading time
- Coupons to video stores, music stores, movies (donated)
- Drawings for donated prizes among students who meet certain grade standards
- A few minutes of "free choice" time at end of class period
- Free passes to school events and games



Food-Free Holiday Celebration Ideas

General activities to recognize children

- The key is to recognize their efforts.
- Celebrate with physical activity - allow them an extra recess or physical activity session.
- Celebrate with art and music

Happy Birthday

There are many ways of making the birthday child feel special:

- Single them out with a "V.I.P." button/badge or crown
- Have the birthday child be the first to do each classroom activity and/or be the line leader for the day.
- Sing a birthday song
- Have the class all write him/her a birthday card or have a birthday card that the whole class gets to sign their name.

Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is about giving thanks for what we have and for the people we have in our lives.

Have students share what they are thankful for by writing a poem, drawing a picture, or telling a story.



These holidays provides the opportunity to focus on community outreach. Instead of throwing a party, have each class pool its efforts in honor of a worthy cause. Examples include:

- decorating pillowcases to give to a homeless shelter
- making holiday cards for a nursing home

Happy Halloween

There's more to Halloween than just candy. Focus the students on wearing their costumes.

Make Halloween into a drama day where kids get to make their own costumes or masks and write and act out their own plays.

Happy St. Patrick's Day

Teach an Irish step dance.



Have students write down one positive comment about each classmate, e.g., "you're a good friend, you have a nice smile, or you're smart" and pass them out for valentines.

Have them write poems and read them aloud to the class. Vote on the best one and have a Valentine's Day assembly showcasing each classroom winner

Some Important Tips for Parents and Teachers



Classroom parties can be fun and healthy. Here are some tips to help plan a healthy and safe party.

1. Remember to follow these 4 steps for serving safe food:
 - Clean (wash hands and food-contact surfaces).
 - Chill (refrigerate promptly).
 - Do not bring cooked items from home or restaurants
 - Do not prepare foods on site

2. Although nearly any food is capable of causing an allergic reaction, only eight foods account for 90% of all food-allergic reactions in the United States. These foods are:
 - Peanuts
 - Tree Nuts
 - Milk
 - Egg
 - Wheat
 - Soy
 - Fish
 - Shellfish

The most common food allergens for children are eggs, milk, and peanuts.

3. If you are planning a party for young children, be aware of foods that are potential choking hazards for that age group, such as hard candies, corn nuts or other items that are small enough to lodge in a child's throat.