



Healthy School Celebrations

The holiday season is here, and with that comes the annual series of classroom celebrations. Most adults grew up with school parties which included candy, cupcakes, cookies, and soda. However, in the United States today over one-third of our children are overweight or obese. We have become a culture that revolves around food and physical inactivity and our youth are paying the price. School is an ideal place to help turn that around and teach students the value of eating well, being active, and staying healthy.

Although treats are fine every now and then, providing them on a constant basis exposes students to high-fat, high-sugar, and low-nutrient foods. This year (whether you are a teacher, staff, or parent), when planning school events, stop and ask yourself if there is a way to use the classroom to promote healthy choices.

Benefits of Healthy School Celebrations:

- **Healthy Kids Learn Better**—Good nutrition is linked to better grades and behavior.
- **Provides Consistent Messages**—Students get consistent, reliable, health messages.
- **Promotes a Healthy School**—Healthy celebrations are part of an overall healthy school environment.
- **Creates Excitement About Nutrition**—Children are excited by new things and ideas – including healthy snacks when introduced in a fun way!

What Can Teachers Do?

- Encourage parents to send healthy snacks or non-food items to school.
- Put any “treats” on the side of the classroom so they are not the focus of the celebration.
- Turn on music and have plenty of games to keep the students entertained.
- Come up with healthy snack ideas as a classroom and send the list home to parents.
- Have a cooking demonstration that uses healthy options to get kids excited about healthy deserts.

Examples of Healthy Classroom Treats:

- Trail mix with a few chocolate chips – the students can each create their own
- Cut fresh fruit
- Vegetables with hummus or reduced-fat ranch dip
- Ice water or 100% fruit juice
- Popcorn – you could even pop it yourself in the classroom!
- Cheese and whole-grain crackers
- Pretzels, animal crackers, or graham crackers
- Create-your-own fruit and yogurt smoothies

For more information about healthy school celebrations, visit the Action for Healthy Kids web

site at <http://www.actionforhealthykids.org/assets/clubs/healthy-classroom-celebration.pdf>





News You Can Use

Welch's Harvest Grants

Welch's is a family owned company that is proud to grow and nurture grapes and values the importance of healthy eating. In their second year partnership with Scholastic and the National Gardening Association, Welch's is supporting school garden programs through Welch's Harvest Grants. Whether you're a child or an adult, planting and tending a garden helps build an understanding of our environment and fosters a respect for nature. Schools around the country can apply for a Welch's Harvest Grant to win a school garden.

Applications are due by February 11, 2011. For more information visit Scholastic at

<http://www2.scholastic.com/browse/article.jsp?id=3752777>

San Francisco Toy-Free Kids Meals

In order to help combat childhood obesity, the San Francisco Board of Supervisors gave preliminary approval to legislation that would ban toys in fast-food meals that do not meet certain health requirements. The ban would apply to meals that are high in calories, fat, sodium, or sugar. Restaurants would still be able to include toys in healthy meals. If the ban gets final approval, it would go into effect in December 2011.

For more information read the article in the San Francisco Chronicle

http://articles.sfgate.com/2010-11-03/news/24810367_1_toy-ban-breakfast-meal-happy-meal

Active Recess Activity

Each month, the Health and Nutrition Flash (HNF) offers teachers and recess monitors a different active recess activity that they can add to their activity boxes. For more information, refer to the [January 2010 edition of HNF](#).

Add this Stop Ball Activity to your Indoor Recess Toolbox.

Stop Ball

Grades: K-2, indoor activity

Equipment: One playground ball or beanbag.

Formation: Place 6-8 children in a circle. Start the game with one of the children holding a beanbag or ball.

Activity: The ball or beanbag is passed around the circle. One child turns his or her back to the game and is designated to call out "Stop!". The object of the game is to not get caught with the ball or beanbag when "Stop!" is called out. The child who ends up with the ball or beanbag becomes the next player who calls out "Stop!". The game can be made more challenging by adding a second ball or beanbag.

Source: The Zone Playground/Indoor Physical Activity Model. Created by Lois Carnes, M.Ed. Copyright 2008 by Lois Carnes. ECarnes@aol.com



Buckeye Best Tips

This edition of Buckeye Best Tips focuses on what schools can do to improve student consumption of fruits and vegetables using the Coordinated School Health Model.



It Takes a Coordinated Approach Addressing School Health Goals Using the Coordinated School Health Model

Physical Education:

Encourage students to refuel with fruits after physical activity and sporting events. Athletes benefit from the high potassium levels and natural sugars in many fruits and should have snacks on hand like bananas and strawberries. For more information: <http://www.livestrong.com/article/606-choose-good-fruits-athletes/>

School Health Services:

Highlight the disease fighting benefits of fruits and vegetables on posters and other health communication materials around the school. Encourage students to get ample fruits and vegetables during cold and flu season to help keep their immune system strong. For more information: <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.com>.

School Health Education:

Complete lessons with each grade on the benefits of fruits and vegetables. Give students homework to track their fruit and vegetable intake for a week and help them make goals to increase it in the future. Include parents by having them sign off on the homework and goals.

School Nutrition Services:

Highlight daily fruit choices and present fruits and vegetables in an appetizing way. Behavioral psychologists have shown that students take more fruit when it is displayed well, is located near the register, or if they are asked "do you want a piece of fruit?". To see current research visit: <http://smarterlunchrooms.org/>

A Healthy School Environment:

Allow students to eat healthy mid-morning snacks during class. Planting a school garden is also a great way to expose students to new fruits and vegetables throughout the year. Check out Franklin Park Conservatory's website for more information on school gardens. <http://www.fpconservatory.org/growing2green.htm>

Goal
To encourage the consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Family/Community Involvement:

Send home recipes in family newsletters that encourage increased fruit and vegetable intake at home. See recipes at <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/dnparecipe/recipesearch.aspx>
Involve the community by inviting a local chef to school to make a healthy, tasty, fruit desert in the lunchroom.

Counseling/Social Services:

There is ample evidence linking diet to mood. A diet rich in fruits and vegetables, whole-grains, nuts, seeds, and oily fish can benefit a student's mental health. Be sure to ask students what they are eating each day and to encourage healthy choices.

Health Promotion for Staff:

Create guidelines and policies for the types of snacks provided at staff meetings. Include fruits, vegetable trays, juice, and water, while limiting the high-fat, high-sugar, foods. See the CDC suggestions at http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpar/pdf/Healthy_Worksites_food.pdf



Staff Wellness

Healthy Resolutions

As the New Year approaches take some time to write down your healthy resolutions for 2011. Then, use the following guidelines below to increase your odds of reaching them!

1. **Take small steps.** Don't try to do it all at once or you may end up feeling overwhelmed.
2. **Make sure the goal is realistic.** Set goals you can reach in a reasonable time and that match your lifestyle. For example, if you are not a morning person, don't plan to workout in the morning.
3. **Anticipate roadblocks and setbacks.** Things can happen that get in the way of your goals. Instead of giving up, find a way around it and start new the next day.
4. **Build a support network.** Changing behavior is hard. Having friends and family there to encourage you can help keep you on track.

Here are a few ideas of resolutions that can keep you, your family, and your community healthy and well in 2011.

Healthy You.

- Switch to healthy snacks such as fruit, yogurt, or nuts between meals.
- Make an appointment for a physical or health screening.
- Quit smoking.
- Add one new thing to your exercise program every 3 months.
- Aim for 8 hours of sleep each night.
- Try one new stress reduction technique each month.]

Healthy Family and Home.

- Gather and share your family health history.
- Install smoke alarms on every floor in your home.
- Do one physically active thing as a family each week.
- Create and practice your family emergency plan.
- Add new healthy foods to the family menu.



Healthy Community

- Get you and your family immunized.
- Wash your hands often.
- Never drink and drive.
- Help clean up a park, river, or other community area.

For more information, visit the Center for Disease Control and Prevention website at <http://www.cdc.gov/Features/HealthyNewYear/> and the American Council on Exercise website at http://www.acefitness.org/fitfacts/fitfacts_display.aspx?itemid=2630

Creating Healthy Communities Network

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