

Extension

October 2016 Newsletter

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Healthier Celebrations at Home & School

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Fall brings many celebrations at home, school and in our communities. These special occasions are an important part of a child's social development. Celebrating special occasions helps kids have a strong sense of identity and close ties to family members. Meaningful family traditions give children a strong sense of themselves. Birthdays, new classmates, graduations and holidays are times to celebrate. Use these events to share and learn about customs and celebrations in other communities and cultures.

Make food and drinks a part of celebrations, not the center of attention. With a few easy changes, the focus at parties can change from unhealthy food to healthy fun. Offer tasty healthy foods from all the food groups in an active setting. Enjoy treats on occasion, but make unhealthy foods the exception rather than the normal way of doing things. Everything can fit into a healthy diet when eaten in moderation.



Make Healthy Eating & Movement the Fun Part of Parties & Events.

- Put the focus on the holiday, person or event rather than the food. Refreshments should complement the fun, not be the main event.
- Make healthy habits part of your celebrations. Include games to get people moving and enjoy being together. Children need to be physically active at least 60 minutes most days, while adults need at least 30 minutes most days.
- Plan several different activities: lively and quiet, indoor and out, individual and group. Look for activities everyone can do.
- Make foods look festive. Include colorful fruits and vegetables, or decorate with nuts or seeds.
- Remember to serve foods safely. Keep hot foods hot, and cold foods cold. Don't leave perishable foods at room temperature for more than two hours.
- Try out some healthier recipes. Find ways to cut back on added sugars, salt and saturated fat as you prepare your favorite recipes.
- Go for the fruits and veggies. MyPlate recommends we fill half our plate with fruits and veggies. Choose raw or steamed fruits or vegetables. These are great sources of fiber, vitamins and minerals. Limit fruit desserts with lots of added sugars.
- Choose whole grains, like whole-wheat breads, brown rice, barley and oats. These foods are high in fiber which all of us need.
- Limit creamy toppings, dressings and sauces. Most Americans need to get less sodium and saturated fats, and these are often higher in both.
- Serve foods in small serving sizes. Include your favorite party foods in appropriate serving sizes.
- Offer non-sugared thirst quenchers that please. Add slices of fruit or ice cubes made of 100% juice to water.
- Above all, focus on enjoying friends and family. People are the most important part of the event.

Let's Talk

Involve children in the party planning. Talk to them about the reasons for the healthy makeover. Celebrate a child's cultural history with traditional crafts, games, and stories. Replace the "cupcake tradition" with something new. Try drawing a large birthday painting, creating a birthday hat, or other special activity. By your actions, show your family how to have fun and live a healthy life. Most often, children follow the example of the adults around them. Make it easy for your child to make healthy choices.

Make Moving a Part of Every Celebration:

Join the fun and act like a kid!

- Take a walk after dinner
- Toss a football
- Have a scavenger hunt
- Hold a dance contest
- Try horseshoes or badminton
- Fly kites
- Visit a local playground
- Create sidewalk art with chalk
- Play animal charades, acting out animal behaviors
- Create an obstacle course
- Build a snowman



Recipe for Health: Pumpkin Pudding: A real "cool" dessert!

6 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 can (15-ounce) pumpkin
- $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups low fat milk
- 1 package (3.5-ounce) instant vanilla pudding

Directions:

1. In a large mixing bowl, mix pumpkin and pumpkin pie spice together with a wooden spoon.
2. Slowly stir in milk and mix well.
3. Add instant pudding mix and stir slowly for about one minute until it thickens.
4. Refrigerate until serving time.

Recipe: K-State Research and Extension, <http://www.kid-sacookin.org/easy/index.html>

