

WHAT IS A HEALTHY CLASSROOM?



- ✓ Birthdays and most holidays are celebrated without food.

- ✓ Healthy eating and exercise are encouraged through classroom activities, verbal messages, and role modeling.

- ✓ Only healthy, non-food rewards and incentives are offered.

- ✓ Children are provided with frequent and regular times to move their bodies.

WHY HEALTHY CLASSROOMS ARE IMPORTANT...

- Alarming rates of childhood obesity, type 2 diabetes and other metabolic issues in children—research shows refined sugar increases risk factors for heart disease and diabetes.
- Providing food based on performance or behavior connects food to mood and teaches children to reward themselves by eating even when they are not hungry.
- Healthy classrooms protect children with food allergies.
- Parents should decide what their own children eat...no one else.
- Unlike school lunch, classroom food can change overnight.
- Classrooms will be happier—good nutrition is linked to better behavior and academic performance.
- No messy clean up from birthday parties!
- Low-income parents are protected from financial burden of feeding the entire classroom birthday treats.

HOW DO I CREATE A HEALTHY CLASSROOM?

- Talk to Parents** Tell parents about no food at birthday parties or sent in for holidays (i.e. candy on Valentines) in advance—use Birthday Contract (provided).
- Celebrate Without Food** Limit celebrations involving food to three to five times a year.
- Get Kids Involved** Get children involved and excited by teaching them about nutrition.
- Provide a Snack List** When food will be consumed at a party, give parents a list of acceptable snacks.
- Create a Healthy Snack Sign-Up** List only healthy items on the class party sign-up sheet.
- Hang a Sign** Hang a sign on your classroom door to spread the word—use Healthy Classrooms Sign (provided).

Healthy Party Snacks

Classroom food should emphasize fresh fruits and vegetables; whole grains and low-fat dairy foods.

- Fruit kabobs made with a variety of fruit
- Popcorn
- Unsweetened applesauce cups
- Veggies and hummus
- Turkey and cheese roll ups
- Whole grain crackers or pretzels
- Toasted sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- Smoothies made with plain yogurt and fruit
- Whole grain tortilla chips and salsa and/or guacamole and/or bean dip
- Edamame pods
- Cheese sticks

Healthy Beverages:

Water should be the primary drink, as it satisfies thirst without adding calories or sugars (plus, it is low cost!)

- Water
- Seltzer or sparkling water
- Low-fat and fat-free plain milk

