



Healthy School Celebrations

Let's have a party! From birthday parties to holiday celebrations, there are many celebrations in 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 filled with candy.

Thirty-seven percent (37%) of all Arizona children are overweight or obese. As a result, we are ranked 4th in the nation, not an award anyone wants to win. Offering so many treats so often can contribute to unhealthy eating habits. Here at NPHX Weekday Preschool and Kindergarten, we ask parents, teachers, and school administrators to shift the focus of school parties from unhealthy food to healthy fun.

Your child has a birthday once a year and we want to help celebrate at school. We want your child to feel extra special on his/her day. Keep in mind that each child's birthday can mean multiple celebrations: one at home with family, a party with friends, and then another at school. Food need not be a part of *school* parties. Instead you and your child's teacher can work together on ways to recognize your child, celebrate him/her and make your child feel special.

Ways to celebrate a birthday and recognize your child on his/her special day while at school:

- Make a sign, sash, crown, button, or badge for your child.
- Bring in fun plates, napkins, and/or cups that the morning or afternoon snack can be served on.
- Talk to your child's teacher about bringing a special snack (check for allergies), some recommendations include:
 - Fruit smoothies with yogurt and fresh fruit
 - Fruit kabobs made with a variety of fruits
 - Low-fat pudding
 - Applesauce or other fruit cups
 - Raw veggies with a low-fat dip like salad dressing or hummus
 - Berries with low-fat whipped topping (Cool Whip)
 - Graham crackers with jam or apple butter
 - Fresh apple slices with yogurt dip
 - Whole grain tortilla chips with beans or guacamole
 - Whole grain crackers like Triscuits with reduced-fat cheese
 - Fruit salad



Sources:

Data Resource Center for Child & Adolescent Health, National Survey of Children's Health

www.cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy

www.americashealthrankings.org