

# Healthy Ideas for Classroom Snacks and Parties

Snacks are important for providing children with nutrients to support growth and learning. Parties are a fun opportunity to celebrate. However, school snacks and parties are not required to be cupcakes, ice cream, potato chips, and soda pop. With a little imagination, snacks and parties can be fun and still provide healthy, nutrient-rich foods. Give healthy partying and snacking a try with the following foods:

- ☺ Low-fat milk (plain or flavored) – plain, chocolate, strawberry, vanilla
- ☺ 100% juice – orange, apple, grape, cranberry
- ☺ Water (flavored)
- ☺ Fresh fruit with yogurt dipping sauce
- ☺ Apples with caramel dip
- ☺ Fruit and cheese kabobs
- ☺ Fruit with whipped topping – strawberries with whip cream
- ☺ 100% fruit snacks
- ☺ Fruit crisps or bakes (made with little added sugar and whole grain toppings)
- ☺ Vegetable tray with low-fat dip
- ☺ Celery sticks with peanut butter
- ☺ String cheese
- ☺ Low-fat pretzels or popcorn
- ☺ Graham or animal crackers
- ☺ Pizza with low-fat toppings – veggies, lean ham
- ☺ Sandwiches – ham, turkey, cheese (low fat condiments)
- ☺ Low-fat pudding cups
- ☺ Low-fat yogurt – Dannon Light 'n Fit, Trix, Yoplait Yumsters
- ☺ Yogurt smoothies – low-fat
- ☺ Yogurt parfaits – layered fruit, yogurt, and granola
- ☺ Quesadillas with salsa
- ☺ Granola bars or breakfast bars
- ☺ Trail mix or cereal mixes
- ☺ Angel food cake with fruit toppings
- ☺ Nuts, seeds

## ***What about Cake?***

Once in awhile a piece of birthday cake can fit into a healthy diet. However, if each student brings in cake for their birthday, eating cake becomes a regular occurrence. Keep cake a “sometimes” food by having all students with birthdays in the same month celebrate on one day. Try to limit parties with cake and other sugary or high fat foods to less than once per month.

## Parent Guide to Healthy Snacks at School and Home

Snacks are important to provide nutrients for growing children. Use the following guidelines and the A to Z Snack List to plan snacks at home and school.

- ✓ Create a home environment that encourages healthful eating -- have healthful snacks at your child's eye level in the pantry and refrigerator.
- ✓ For snacks in packages, look at the "Nutrition Facts" label. Choose those that have less than 5 grams of fat in a serving. Show your child how to use the serving size on the label as a guide for how much to eat. For example, if the label says the serving size is 8 crackers or  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup fruit, show your child what these amounts look like.
- ✓ Try low-fat versions of milk, ice cream, crackers, and chips.
- ✓ Avoid using food as a reward or punishment.
- ✓ Be a good role model by eating healthful snacks with your children.
- ✓ Choose cut-up fruits and vegetables as snacks so your family can meet the goal of 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables (combined total) a day.
- ✓ Involve your children in planning and shopping for snacks.
- ✓ Keep snacking fun by keeping a list of new foods you have tried.
- ✓ If children did not like food the first time, continue to offer it - it takes time.

**A** - Apples, Apricots, Ants on a log\*

**B** - Banana\*, Bean Dip\*, Blueberry Bagels\*

**C** - Cantaloupe\*, Carrots\*, Celery, Cheese+, Cucumbers

**D** - Dried Cereal, Dried Fruit Chips

**E** - Eggs

**F** - Fig Cookies\*, Frozen Fruit Bar, Fruit Kabobs

**G** - Graham Crackers\*, Granola Bars, Grapes\*

**H** - Honeydew Melon, Hot Chocolate+

**I** - Iced fruit (frozen grapes or melon cubes)

**J** - Juices (100% juice)\*, Jell-O with fruit, Jicama

**K** - Kiwi Fruit, Krispy Rice Treats\*

**L** - Low-fat Pudding\*

**M** - Milk+, Muffins+, Mangoes\*

**N** - Nectarine, Nuts

**O** - Orange Wedges\*, Oatmeal

**P** - Pasta, Peaches, Pita Bread, Pretzels\*

**Q** - Quick Carrot Sticks\*

**R** - Raisins, Rice Cakes (any flavor)\*

**S** - Strawberries\*, Salsa Dip\*, Smoothie (with fruit)

**T** - Tortillas with filling, Trail Mix\*

**U** - Unbuttered Popcorn\*

**V** - Vanilla Wafers\*, Vegetables\*

**W** - Watermelon

**X** - eXciting Fruits and Vegetables\*

**Y** - Yogurt

**Z** - Zucchini Slices, Zesty Crackers\*

*\* Easy school party snacks*

*+ Use low fat versions*