



POINTS TO PONDER

Healthy Celebrations

For teachers: These interactive discussion questions are designed to stimulate discussion with students in the classroom.

1. Discuss with students what would help them make healthier lifestyle choices during celebrations (e.g., focus on physical activity, special treats in small portions, balance less nutritious foods with more nutritious foods, etc.).

2. Ask students if they can think of ways to improve eating habits in school (classroom).

Have someone go to the chalkboard and record suggestions:

- Use alternatives to cookies, cupcakes and other treats for classroom parties
- Have nutrition classes taught in school
- Have healthy choices available in the lunchroom
- Bring healthy foods from home

3. Rewarding children with less nutritious foods undermines efforts to teach them about good nutrition. Discuss with students the consequences of using food as reward:



- Contributes to poor eating habits
- Encourages overconsumption of less healthy foods
- Increases preference for sweets
- Teaches students to reward themselves with food

Fun ways to celebrate at school

Have the class vote for the best idea for healthy birthday celebrations.

- Special birthday book filled with compliments from classmates and teacher
- Game time hour with his or her choice of game
- Wall of fame to highlight the birthday child's accomplishments

Have a contest for best idea for a spring or fall party celebration that promotes healthy eating and activities. Best idea could win:

- A "fast" pass to be used one time during the day for an activity
- A non-food prize like jump rope or Frisbee
- An extra recess

4. Ask students to think of alternatives to food as a reward or for classroom parties. Have someone list suggestions on the board:

- Special fun activity in the classroom
- Going first for the day
- No homework pass
- Give school supplies

5. If food is given as a reward, have students think of healthy food choices in the classroom to help meet their daily nutrient requirements.

- Fresh, frozen or dried fruit or 100 percent juice
- Whole-grain crackers and peanut butter or cheese
- Pretzels, popcorn, whole-grain cereal, graham crackers

