

Healthy celebration ideas

Early childhood

Reinforce healthy eating messages when celebrating birthdays and special events.

Try these ideas to help make birthday parties and other celebrations enjoyable for children, while reinforcing healthy eating messages.



Party tips

- Focus on activities, rather than food.
- Provide healthy 'party ideas' to families through newsletters, notices and websites.
- Involve children in electing healthy party options they will enjoy.



Healthy celebration ideas

Food ideas

Savoury

These can be offered as a healthier alternative to sausage rolls, frankfurts, pies and commercial pizzas. Try these ideas:

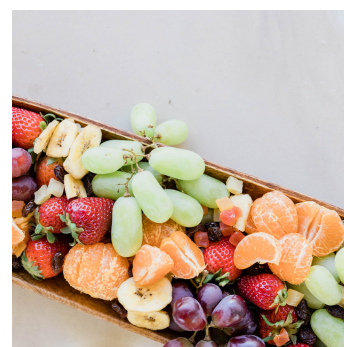
- a 'nibble platter' with:
 - reduced fat cheese
 - hummus, tzatziki, or salsa
 - wholegrain or wholemeal crackers
 - cherry tomatoes, snow peas, carrot, cucumber, capsicum sticks and green beans
- popcorn (minimal fat, salt and/or sugar added)
- platter of salad-based sandwich triangles or wraps
- mini pizzas made on English muffin bases (no bacon or salami added)
- toasted sandwich triangles
- bean quesadillas or burritos made with wholemeal tortilla bread
- oven baked wholemeal pita pieces with salsa and reduced fat Greek yoghurt
- roast potatoes with toppings (e.g. coleslaw, plain yoghurt, baked beans and reduced fat cheese)
- corn on the cob, and
- vegetable or meat BBQ kebabs.



Sweet

These options can be offered as a healthier alternative to birthday cakes and lolly bags:

- sliced fruit platter (serve alone or with reduced fat yoghurt)
- fruit kebabs (fresh or frozen), fruit salad, fruit platters, canned fruit (in natural juice)
- watermelon slices
- dried fruit without added sugars or coatings
- yoghurt parfaits (recyclable disposable plastic cups with layers of reduced fat yoghurt and fruit and/or whole grain cereal as a topping)
- snack mixes (muesli, dried fruits, nuts or popcorn). Check your school's allergy/anaphylaxis policy regarding the provision of nuts and products containing nuts, and
- English muffins, pancakes or raisin bread (with a thin spread of margarine, honey or 100% fruit jam).



Non-food ideas

Here are some fun ideas to celebrate without focusing solely on foods and drinks.

Combine

- Celebrate combined birthdays once per month.
- Parents provide small trinkets for a treasure chest that is shared with the class each month.

Focus birthday celebrations towards marking a special national event such as:

- Multicultural Day
- Harmony Day
- Book Week
- Easter
- Chinese New Year
- Christmas.



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Create

- Create a healthy party ideas book (e.g. healthy recipes, activities, games and crafts).
- Ask parents to provide a large card for the class to write birthday wishes.
- Create a 'Celebrate Me' book with stories, poems and pictures to celebrate the birthday child.
- Get children involved in preparing for celebrations (e.g. making decorations).

Play

- Plan special party games.
- Give children extra play time instead of a class party.
- Let the birthday child choose and lead an active game for everyone.
- Arrange a treasure hunt around the classroom or playground.
- Birthday child takes home a class toy, or special item for the night.

Shine

- Birthday child leads a special 'show and tell' activity.
- Celebrate a child's cultural heritage with traditional crafts, games, fancy dress and stories.
- Allow the birthday child to help with special tasks for the day
- Have a birthday celebration photo board on the wall.

Share

- Parents bring small items to share with class members (e.g. pencils, stickers or erasers).
- Parents donate a book to the classroom or library in the child's name.
- Parents contribute items to a 'class Christmas hamper' which is given to a charity of choice.

Dress up

- Birthday child wears a special sash, crown, cape, or carries a special item for the day.
- Invite all students to celebrate the special day by wearing a selected colour or special item (e.g. badge, funny hat, a red coloured piece of clothing, etc.).

Dance

- Have a classroom dance party or 'dance-off' competition. Let the birthday child choose their favourite song to play from a list of classroom favourites (approved by teacher first).

Watch

- Birthday child chooses favourite online video clip for class to watch (teacher to approve first).

