

# Healthy Celebrations

*A Healthier Way of Celebrating Birthdays and Holidays*

Only 15% of school students consume the recommend 5 fruits and veggies per day!

**Schools and parents can work together to shift the focus of birthdays and holidays from the food to the birthday child or event being recognized.**

**Healthy celebrations promote positive lifestyle choices and supports what our children are learning about health in their classes.**

**Let's work together to provide our children with the best environment we can!**

Typically, food for school celebrations includes sweets like cupcakes and cookies. An occasional treat is fine, but unhealthy choices have become the norm rather than the exception. Our children are constantly being exposed to high-fat, high sugar options. When food is served, make it count with healthy choices!

*Good nutrition is linked to better behavior and academic performance!*

Almost 1/3 of MA children are classified as overweight or obese!

The percentage of overweight young children in MA has more than doubled in the last 20 years!

The percentage of overweight teenagers in MA has tripled in the last 20 years!

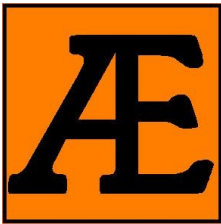
## Instead of:

Cookies  
Cake  
Cupcakes  
Candy  
Chips  
Ice Cream  
Brownies  
Candy Bars  
Lollipops

## Try:

Fruit or Cheese Kabobs  
Yogurt Parfait or Squeezable Yogurt  
Whole Grain Crackers with Hummus  
Applesauce  
Air Popped Popcorn  
Vegetable or Fruit Tray  
Low Fat Granola Bars  
Turkey and Cheese Mini-Wraps  
Low Fat Pudding

This information is brought to you by Activate Easton



## HEALTHY CLASSROOM CELEBRATIONS (*instead of food*)

- Allow the class to have an extra "choice" time in honor of the birthday child
- Have classmates draw pictures or write something positive in a book for the birthday child
- Let all the children sign or decorate a T-shirt or a plain pillow case for the birthday child
- The birthday child is the teacher's assistant for the day
- Let the birthday child choose and lead an active game for the class
- Donate a book to the classroom in honor of your child
- Plan a creative experiences such as art or music
- Play indoor games or ask for extra recess for the class
- Create cards or pictures for those in a nursing home or hospital
- Take a fun walk around the school exploring
- Have a treasure hunt around the classroom with items related to holiday/event theme
- Organize a special community service project (e.g. children can put together school supplies for School on Wheels; create care packages for the MSPCA). Involve parents in planning and providing materials.
- Organize "stations" with theme related activities through which the children rotate

Resources: CT State Department of Education, Boston Parents Paper, West Virginia Department of Education