

Healthy Celebrations At Home

Overview

Whether you are celebrating a birthday, Halloween, Cinco de Mayo, or any other holiday, there are plenty of ways to incorporate healthy foods and activities into your party without losing the fun. Healthy celebrations are all about finding a balance between treats and healthy snacks as well as having fun with family and friends through positive social interaction. Parties offer

children more freedom to eat, play, and celebrate in their own ways in a less controlled environment and hosting healthy celebrations at home can foster healthy and stable relationships between friends, families, and the community!



Take Action

Celebrate with Healthy Foods

- Offer a variety of healthy snacks and treats such as popcorn, veggies and hummus, fruits and yogurt dip, etc. Think outside the box and find healthy swaps for sweet treats and sugary drinks. Fruit and yogurt parfaits are a great alternative to ice cream sundaes and fruit infused water can be a delicious DIY alternative to soda. If you do offer a sweet treat, keep it balanced with a few healthy options.
- Invite children to help cook and prepare the party food. Involving children in the cooking and preparation of food allows them to understand the various components of a dish and how hard work pays off to create something delicious!

- Get creative with your display and decorate your snack table and appetizers according to the theme of your party. Invite children to think of new ideas for how to play with their food and decorate with vibrant-colored fruits and veggies.

Celebrate with Movement and Play

- Create your own [backyard fitness course](#) for a summer/spring birthday party or other outdoors party. Create a family competition to see who can complete the fitness course the fastest.
- Add a physical activity component to your typical party game such as Freeze Dance or the Limbo. Create a playlist with your family's favorite upbeat songs.
- Plan ahead with sustainable crafts that children can do to celebrate various occasions. Arts and crafts are a great way for children to identify and express feelings through reflection and creativity. Integrating celebrations offers a chance for children to develop stronger social awareness and understand more about different celebrations across many cultures.
- Choose a few of these [easy-to-do water games](#) to get everyone outside and moving during the warmer months or look around and turn household items into a quick and easy activity.
- Host a game tournament by asking families to bring their favorite board or come with a few of their favorite minute to win it games. Make a bracket with various family members or friends as participants and create teams to foster communication and teamwork.

Celebrate with Your Community

- If you are hosting a birthday party or any holiday involving gifts, ask friends and family to bring one of their favorite books or toys to donate to a local toy drive.
- Ask family members who are planning on attending your next family get-together to bring an extra can of soup or vegetables to donate to the local food bank.
- Build a community of like-minded parents and caregivers by inviting both children and parents to your next party. Use this time with fellow parents and

caregivers to exchange ideas on how to stay healthy at home and to build genuine connections with like-minded individuals.

Tips



Don't be too hard on yourself and allow for flexibility. Teach your children that treats and other traditional party foods are great to eat in moderation and for special occasions. Treats are a normal part of many celebrations and that is part of what makes them so special!



Feeling the pressure to cook, clean, and decorate for a special event? Go potluck style and ask those attending the party to bring their favorite dish. For even more collaboration, create a shared sign up sheet using google docs or email to ensure that you have everything you need.



Choose party games and activities that require teamwork and collaboration to help children (and adults) foster healthy relationship skills.



Allow children to make their own decisions during parties such as what they eat or how they participate in games to help them to develop responsible decision-making skills.

For more activities and ideas like this one, be sure to [sign up for our news and updates](#). And if you like what you see, please [donate to support our work](#) creating more ways to help build a healthier future for kids.

Additional Resources

[Active Indoor Party Games for Kids \(Very Well Family\)](#)

[10 Tips: Make Celebrations Fun, Healthy, and Active \(USDA\)](#)

[Healthy Celebrations Toolkit \(USDA\)](#)

[Healthy Celebration Lessons and Ideas \(USDA\)](#)

Active Sensory Spaces

Use colorful and playful sensory hallways to turn a passive environment into an active one.

Common Objects: Fun and Games with Household Items

Use imagination to turn common household items into creative and active fun and games!

Scavenger Hunt

Scavenger hunts are a great way to get the whole family and community physically active. Provide healthy snacks, and create a friendly competition by handing out prizes for the person or group that completes the hunt first.

Kick Off Summer With a Healthy BBQ

What better way to celebrate another successful school year wrapping up and the start of summer than a barbeque?