

# Host a Healthy Harvest Festival

## Overview

Celebrate the changing of the seasons! Host a Healthy Harvest Festival with harvest-themed fitness activities and healthy seasonal snacks.



## Move More Activities

### Harvest Dash

#### *Materials:*

- Several large containers (like paint buckets)
- Sunflower seed bird feed
- Several small clear containers
- Cups

#### *Activity:*

- Fill large containers with sunflower seed bird feed and place them on a start line, spaced apart. On the opposite end, place smaller clear containers.
- Divide students into relay teams.
- Ask students to fill a cup with seeds and race to dump it in the empty container before sprinting back to the start line to hand-off the cup to their teammates.

- Teams continue racing back and forth until they fill up the small container with the seeds. The first team to fill their small container wins!

### *Tips:*

- As an extra challenge, give the kids an over-sized soup ladle instead of a cup. *Don't worry if the seeds spill; that's part of the fun! The birds will easily find them later.*
- Try a dollar store for inexpensive clear containers. They usually stock plastic ones in apple or pumpkin shapes in the fall. Popcorn kernels also can be used in place of sunflower seeds.

## **Gourd Race**

### *Materials:*

- Spoons
- Gourds

### *Activity:*

- Set up start and turn around lines about 10 feet apart.
- Divide students into equal teams.
- At the signal, the first student in line walks from starting line to the turn-around line and back to the starting line while holding a spoon with a gourd on it. The student passes the spoon to the student next in line.
- If the gourd falls off the spoon, players must stop and pick up the gourd with the spoon to continue.
- Continue until each student has had a turn. The team that has everyone finish first wins!

### *Tips:*

- For an extra challenge, require students to go back to the start line if the gourd falls off the spoon.
- Make sure the spoon size is appropriate for the size of the gourd and for the age of the participating student. Consider using large serving spoons for

younger students.

## **Pumpkin and Broom Race**

*This is a simple race, but since pumpkins are not smooth balls and refuse to roll in straight lines, you'll need plenty of room!*

*Materials:*

- Several medium-sized pumpkins
- Several sturdy sticks (or brooms)

*Activity:*

- Use one pumpkin and one stick/broom for each team.
- The racers line up on the starting line with the pumpkins turned on their sides.
- On the signal, the racers use the stick to roll the pumpkins to the finish line.

*Tips:*

- Younger players may want to use their hands instead of the stick.
- This can be played as an individual or team (relay) challenge.
- When playing inside, consider using smaller pumpkins.

## **Pass the Pumpkin!**

*Materials:*

- Two medium-sized pumpkins

*Activity:*

- Line up into 2 teams, one student behind another student.
- The first person passes the pumpkin OVER their head to the person behind them in line.
- The next person passes the pumpkin UNDER their legs to the person behind them, and so on.

- When students get to the end of the line, that last person runs up to the front and starts all over again.
- Continue this process until the person who was originally first line is back at the front of the line.

## **Pumpkin Bust**

### *Materials:*

- 4-by-5 half-foot piece of foam board
- Two yards of burlap or other fabric
- Duct tape
- Removable hooks
- Thirty-five 12-inch orange balloons
- Paper with harvest-themed physical activities
- Green paper (for pumpkin stem)
- Pushpins
- Optional: darts (for older students)

### *Preparation:*

- Cover the foam board with burlap and secure in back with duct tape. Adhere the foam board to the wall using removable hooks.
- Fill balloons with pieces of paper that require an action. For example, walk like Frankenstein, fall like a leaf, etc.
- Inflate the balloons and tie them with a knot.
- Attach the balloons to the board with pushpins, in the shape of a pumpkin.
- Cut the shape of a stem from green paper, and secure with push pins at the top of the pumpkin.

### *Activity:*

- Divide into two groups.
- Have the first player from each team run to the pumpkin and pop a balloon.
- The student must act out what is on the paper and run back to the start line.
- Once finished, the next person in the group runs to the pumpkin and repeats the process.

- Rotate until every group member has had a chance to participate.
- The group to finish first wins!

### *Tips:*

- Add an extra challenge and blindfold students as they walk up to pop the balloons.

## Snack Healthy

### Apple Flat Snacks

- Your favorite seasonal apple
- Bananas
- Plain yogurt
- Almond butter
- Nutella
- Granola
- Strawberries
- Honey

### Directions:

Wash the apples. In a small bowl mix the yogurt and honey. Remove the cores from the apples and then slice. Place a banana slice on the middle of the core hole and then add your toppings. Be creative!

### Zucchini or Kale Chips

- Zucchini and/or Kale
- Olive Oil
- Sea Salt

**Directions:**

Preheat oven to 300F. Tear the kale leaves off stem and slice zucchini. Place in medium size bowl and pour oil over. Stir or toss until well coated. Place a single layer on a large baking sheet and sprinkle with sea salt. Bake for 10 minutes and then flip and bake for 8 additional minutes. Remove from the oven when crispy. Enjoy!

**Harvest Trail Mix**

- Fresh popped pop corn
- Whole almonds
- Dried Cranberries
- Pumpkin Seeds
- Banana Chips

\*You can add any additional dried fruit or nuts

**Directions:**

Mix all ingredients and toss until combined.

**Tips to engage volunteers:**

Reach out to local farmers and invite them to come in and share a taste of their harvest.



Ask a local chef to host a demo station with some of their favorite fall recipes.



Parents and community members make great station hosts or can make and hand out prizes for each activity!



Parents may also have other great ideas for stations that they'd be willing to plan and set up – just ask! Make sure to give them plenty of advanced notice, so start reaching out shortly after school starts.

## Related Activities

### **Celebrate National Farm to School Month**

From taste tests in the cafeteria and nutrition education activities in the classrooms, to farm visits and school garden harvest parties, join the celebration!

### **Host a Healthy Harvest Festival**

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### **Celebrate National Nutrition Month**

This annual observance is a nutrition education campaign led by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics to help people develop healthy eating and physical activity habits.

### **School Garden**

A school garden is a wonderful way for students to physically connect with nutrition education, understand the process of growing healthy foods, and recognize environmental stewardship.