

HEALTHY IDEAS FOR SERVICE PARTIES AND CELEBRATIONS

There are many celebrations in early learning services such as birthdays and holidays. Along with the fun usually comes food. At just one celebration children can have pizza, sugary juice or soft drinks, lollies, chips, cake and ice-cream. Offering so many treats so often can contribute to unhealthy eating habits. However, with a few easy changes, parents and staff can shift the focus for celebrations from unhealthy food to healthy food. Here are a few ideas. Don't forget to select appropriate food for the age group i.e. choking hazard.

Healthy Party Snacks

Serve snacks with fun plates, napkins, cups or straws or have a tasting party where children can vote for their favourite healthy snack. Try some of the following:

- Fruit smoothies
- Fruit Kebabs made with a variety of fruits
- Seedless watermelon
- Melon balls
- Rockmelon 'smiles'
- Pineapple with crushed mint
- Strawberries
- Grapes and cherries
- Orange quarters – try them frozen in summer
- Frozen fruit blocks
- Fruit in Jelly
- Apple slinkies
- Little pizzas
- Cheese cubes
- Low fat yogurt parfaits with fruit and muesli topping
- Low fat popcorn
- Trail mix (dried fruit, whole grain low sugar cereals, sunflower and sesame seeds etc) Parents can bring in ingredients and kids could make their own
- Veggie strips with low fat dip or salsa
- Little sandwiches
- Spiral sandwiches
- Raisin bread
- Slices of uniced fruit bun
- Uniced fruit scroll
- Apricot fruit loaf
- Pikelets
- Carrot cake (uniced)
- Rice crackers
- Date scones
- Sweet or savoury uniced muffins (not chocolate)



Ideas for healthier celebrations

Here are some ideas of ways to celebrate birthdays and other events without food:

Ways to celebrate a birthday and recognise a child on their special day

- * Make a sign, sash, crown, button or badge for the birthday child
- * Let the birthday child be the assistant for the day – they can do special tasks
- * Let the birthday child choose an activity or game
- * Allow the child to pick a book and ask a parent to come in and read it
- * Play an indoor game of the child's choice
- * Have a scavenger hunt for items or information in the room or around the play area.
Have children search for items related to a party theme
- * Celebrate creatively by setting up craft stations and playing music in the background. Ask parents to provide any special supplies
- * Plan special party games
- * Have a dance party
- * Read a children's book related to a party theme
- * Allow children a trip to a treasure box (parents can supply it with books, notepads, coloured pencils etc)
- * Allow students to pick a book of their choice and ask a parent to come in and read it

