



FOR BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Everyone loves to have that one day when they are the most special person around—their birthday. Birthdays are often a time for the birthday child to bring in treats. These treats can not only disrupt teaching time but usually don't support the lessons taught in class about healthy eating. Parties can turn into a weekly event when you include other holiday celebrations with student birthdays. The health of today's children is at risk. Childhood obesity has nearly tripled in the last twenty years. Michigan ranks tenth in the nation for adult obesity. It is time to turn the focus of birthday celebrations away from the treats back to honoring the birthday student.

Build a healthy classroom by making it a practice to honor students in a way that will support a healthy body and sharp mind. Let parents know your plan and give them ideas for healthy ways to celebrate their child.

Tips to Pass on to Parents

Suggest that the family donate a book to the classroom library/school library in honor of their child.

Suggest that the family donate recess equipment. **(INDOOR AND OUTDOOR IDEAS)**

Encourage family members to visit the school to read a book to the class and/or have lunch with their child

Ask for birthday money donations **(WHAT A FAMILY WOULD SPEND ON A TREAT)** to be used to support a special activity, game, or recess equipment.

Tips for Teachers

Create a construction paper balloon and have classmates write well wishes to the birthday child.

Have students draw a picture of the birthday child and create a book of those as a birthday present.

Have the birthday child pick their favorite game to play with classmates.

Make a birthday chair decoration using a pillowcase.

Create a birthday crown or sash.

Extra recess or an extra "special" of the birthday child's choice.

Dance party or karaoke.

Have the birthday child be the line leader for the day, choose their seat of the day, be the helper, be part of morning announcements.

Have the birthday child select a gift out of a treasure box. **(PENCILS, ERASERS, JUMP ROPES, FRISBEES, STRESS BALLS, STICKERS, NOTEBOOKS, BOOKS, ETC.)**

Celebrate monthly birthdays and have students plan an activity and a healthy snack. This will give an opportunity to teach students about healthy lifestyles.

REFERENCES USED | Healthy Celebrations – Connecticut Department of Education, F is For Fat 2010 – Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

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