

## Dear Room Parents,

At Earth's we are trying to promote a healthy environment for the students which includes making healthy food choices. Please check with your teacher regarding her policy for classroom parties and birthday recognition.

Generally, healthy, non-sugary snacks are encouraged for classroom parties. Many teachers suggest, if a child wants to share something with the class on his/her birthday that it be non-edible items or a book for the classroom library. Of course, there is no obligation to bring anything at all. Cupcakes, cookies, candy, ice-cream and similar items should not be brought to school.

There are many benefits of a healthy classroom party:

- Students are less likely to get sick from eating too much junk food
- Students are less likely to be overactive from eating too many sweets
- Students have an opportunity to try healthy foods they have not eaten before
- Students learn that a "healthy" party can still be a "fun" party
- Encourages students to develop good eating habits
- Everyone benefits from a healthy party – the students, the teachers, and the parents

Attached you will find suggestions for healthy snacks and activities for classroom parties. These are just a few suggestions. Of course, there are an endless number of yummy, healthy foods for the kids to enjoy and the Wellness Committee is always open to new ideas and suggestions to help our kids make good food choices.

We are working on putting up more information on the school's website or in the Earth's core. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Adonna Ebrahimi, Chairperson of the Wellness Committee at 480-4030.

## Healthy Food suggestions:

- Fresh fruit kabobs
- Banana Dogs (whole wheat hot dog buns, banana as the “hot dog”, all natural peanut butter (without added sugar or hydrogenated oils) as the “mustard” and all natural strawberry preserves as the “ketchup”; )
- Variety of small sandwiches can be cut into triangles or shapes to make them more fun.
- Cheese cubes and pretzel sticks
- Pita Bread and hummus
- Fresh fruit and yogurt dip
- Cherry tomato pops (cherry tomatoes on string cheese – they look like lollipops)
- Turkey & Cheese Wheels (take a flat bread, spread a thin layer of cream cheese on it, cover half of it with turkey and a mild cheese, roll it up and cut into wheels)
- Low fat vanilla yogurt and granola
- Cheese and crackers
- Veggies & dip
- Goofy Waldorf Salad (Waldorf Salad served in plain, non-sugary ice cream cones)
- Ants on a log (spread all natural peanut butter on some celery sticks and place raisins, the ants on top of the peanut butter)
- Pineapple “French Fries”
- Unsweetened dried fruit
- Drinks: water , 100% fruit juice, milk (low-fat, not flavored)
- Unsweetened applesauce cups
- Frozen grapes on a toothpick (“mouse popsicles”)
- Apple slices with peanut butter (be aware of nut allergies in the classroom)
- Fruit Smoothies
- Plain popcorn
- Trail Mix
- Rice cakes, rice crackers

## Suggestions for craft activities:

Paint miniature pumpkins for Halloween.

Make spiders using black pipe cleaners at Halloween.

Fashion ghosts out of Styrofoam balls and popsicle sticks covered with squares of white fabric tied on the stick and decorated.

Create snowmen out of Styrofoam balls, pom-poms and buttons for winter parties.

Make gingerbread houses at a winter party. Give each child a small, empty, clean milk or juice carton. Let them paint their house with brown paint, or give them brown construction paper (cut into appropriate size pieces) to cover their house. Then have them decorate it with paint, buttons, yarn, and other items (the possibilities are endless).

Make hearts with pipe cleaners and beads for Valentine's Day gifts for a loved one.

Decorate large cut-out hearts at Valentine's Day.

Paint and plant small flower pots for a springtime party.

Create tissue paper flowers for a springtime party.

Create marble art by placing a sheet of paper in a shallow box, dipping marbles into different color paints, and roll around in box for a colorful design.

## Suggestions for games:

Relay races using plastic eggs and spoons.

Water balloon toss (obviously, outside only, weather permitting).

Freeze dance - an ever-popular classroom activity where you play music, the children dance, then suddenly stop the music and the children freeze. If they're caught moving when the music is off, they're out. Continue to play until one dance is left.

A variation on musical chairs where hula hoops are placed on the ground and the children parade around the hoops and jump into one when the music stops. Works well in the gym or outside.

Duck, Duck, Goose - The children sit in a circle, one child goes around and gently taps each child on the head saying duck, until she decides to make one the goose. The child tapped as goose needs to chase the child around the circle. If the child gets back to the open spot without being caught, the new child becomes "it".

Pass the potato or pumpkin, valentine, or any theme appropriate object. Play until one person is left in circle.

Mummy Wrap - A fun game for Halloween. Divide children into groups; give each group a roll of toilet paper. Then the race is on to see who can wrap a member of their group with the complete roll of toilet paper first. No face wrapping is allowed!