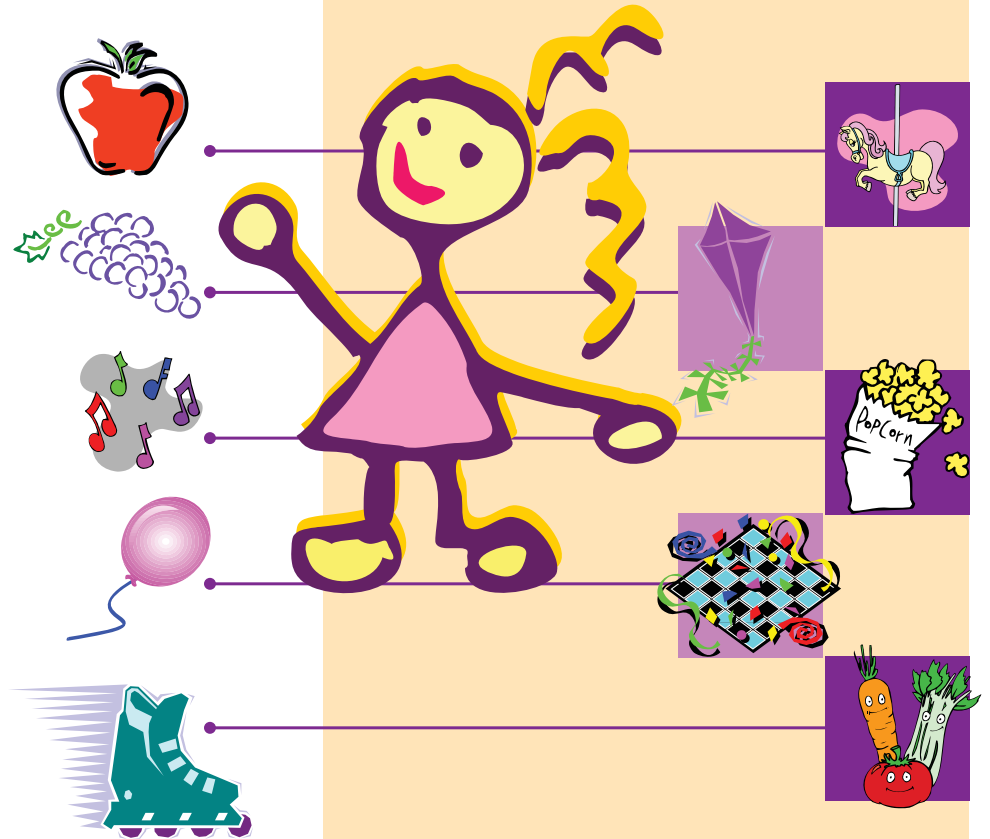


Kids Parties



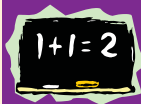
- *Healthy*
- *Party*
- *Ideas*





Healthy Party Ideas

Benefits of Healthy Celebrations



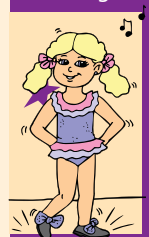
Healthy Kids Learn Better:

Research clearly demonstrates that good nutrition is linked to better behavior and academic performance.

To provide the best possible learning environment for children, schools must also provide an environment that supports healthy behaviors.

Provides Consistent Messages:

Providing healthy classroom celebrations demonstrates a school's commitment to promoting healthy behaviors. It supports the classroom lessons students are learning about health, instead of contradicting them.



Healthy celebrations promote positive lifestyle choices to reduce student health risks and improve learning.

Promotes a Healthy School Environment:

In order to positively change eating behaviors, students need to receive consistent, reliable health information and ample opportunity to use it. Healthy celebrations are an important part of providing a healthy school environment.

Creates Excitement About Nutrition:



Children are excited about new and different things, including fun party activities. School staff and parents need not worry that children will be disappointed if typical party foods aren't served in the classroom. Holiday treats and traditional birthday parties with cake will still be available at home.

Celebration Ideas

When planning classroom or school celebrations consider the following: focus on the holiday, person, or event rather than food; plan creative experiences such as art or music; plan party games and activities asking parents to provide game supplies instead of food; involve students in planning and preparing by making decorations and favors; avoid using food as rewards or prizes.

Birthday Parties—Honor the child with a special button, badge, or crown; allow the child to be "first" at something that day; instead of food, ask the parents to donate a book for the classroom or school library in the birthday child's name; have the parents read it to the class; sing "Happy Birthday."

Halloween—There's more to Halloween than just candy. Explore the history and legends behind Halloween; make homemade masks.

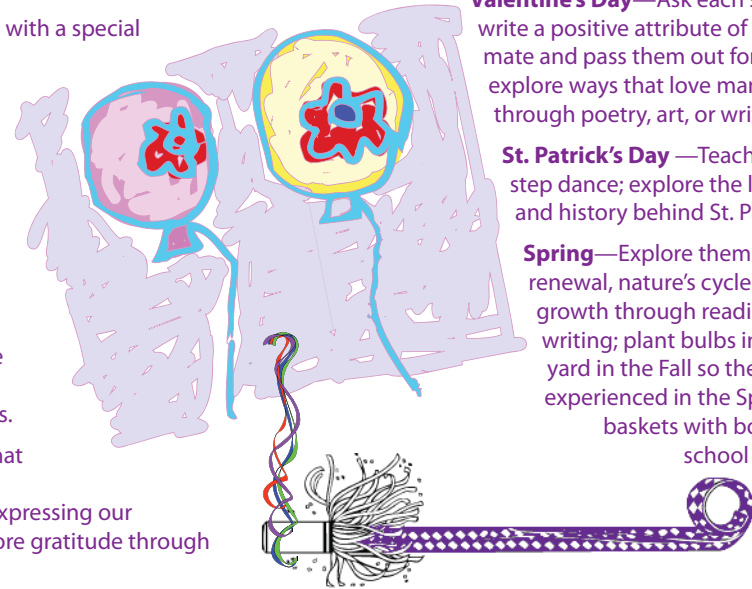
Thanksgiving—Give thanks for what we have and for the people we have in our lives; write a letter expressing our gratitude to someone special; explore gratitude through poetry, art, or writing.

Winter—Community outreach is a natural activity at this time of year. Use money that would be spent on food for a worthy community cause. Examples include decorate pillowcases for a homeless shelter; make holiday cards for a nursing home; collect animal treats for the animal shelter.

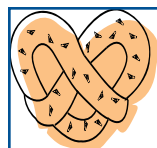
Valentine's Day—Ask each student to write a positive attribute of each classmate and pass them out for valentines; explore ways that love manifests through poetry, art, or writing.

St. Patrick's Day—Teach an Irish step dance; explore the legends and history behind St. Patrick's Day.

Spring—Explore themes of renewal, nature's cycles, and new growth through reading, art, writing; plant bulbs in the school yard in the Fall so they can be experienced in the Spring; fill baskets with books and school supplies.



Make the Healthy Choices



If food is necessary consider simple food that is fun and nutritious like popcorn, cut up fruit or vegetable platters with interesting dips, squeezable yogurt, and 100% juice mixed with sparkling water for a beverage.

Typically, foods for school celebrations include cupcakes, candy, cookies and soda. So what's the harm? There is nothing wrong with an occasional treat, but unhealthy choices have become the norm rather than the exception.

Mt. Diablo Unified School District
Food and Nutrition Services
(925) 682-8000, ext. 4124

