



## School Celebrations

# Celebrate in a Healthy Way

Your child's birthday only comes once a year, right? So what's wrong with a little classroom celebration? With 30 children in a class, plus holidays, that can add up to a celebration every week! Most classroom celebrations involve unhealthy foods such as cupcakes, doughnuts or candy.

These celebrations provide extra calories that your child doesn't need. They can also teach your child to associate celebrations with unhealthy foods. How often do you celebrate by going out for a meal, or with a special dessert? These eating habits form during childhood and can last a lifetime.

Birthdays and achievements are worth celebrating, but there are many ways to celebrate that don't involve unhealthy foods. Celebrations at school can be a great way to teach students that healthy eating and physical activity can be fun. Your school's Local Wellness Policy can include guidelines for foods served at school celebrations to ensure that these occasions are healthy ones. It can also encourage physical activity at celebrations.

Instead of staying up late to decorate cupcakes as clowns for your child's next birthday, consider an alternative celebration. Low-fat popcorn, games and music are healthy ways to celebrate in the classroom. Games that get kids moving, such as Twister and four corners, are great ideas. You can also donate a book to the classroom and read it while kids munch on apple slices or other fruit.

**For more information:**

[www.actionforhealthykids.org](http://www.actionforhealthykids.org)

[www.healthiergeneration.org](http://www.healthiergeneration.org)

