

Healthy Classroom Celebrations



You can help your students practice what they learn about healthy eating and Canada's Food Guide by ensuring that all classroom celebrations, from birthday parties to special holidays, are healthy. With a little imagination, these events can provide nutritious, tasty choices and still be fun!

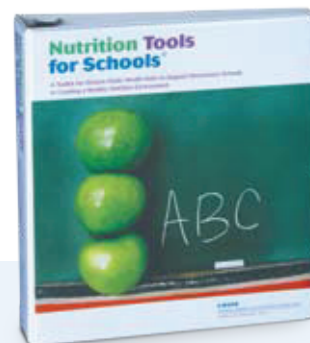
Apply nutrition standards to classroom celebrations

Nutrition Tools for Schools© (NTS) encourages schools to embrace the spirit of P/PM 150 and go beyond. For classroom celebrations, keep it simple and **only** offer food and beverages with Maximum Nutritional Value. Use the Nutrition Tools for Schools© Nutrition Standards (revised 2010) when selecting food and beverages.

Healthy menu ideas

- Fresh fruit kabobs and vanilla yogurt (2% MF or less) for dipping
- Whole grain muffins and fresh orange wedges
- Vegetable sticks with low fat dip or salsa and white milk (2% MF or less)
- Air-popped popcorn, fresh fruit and water
- Apple wedges sprinkled with cinnamon and served with yogurt cups (2% MF or less)
- Whole grain crackers and lower-fat cheese cubes
- Carrot and celery sticks with hummus for dipping
- Pizza on whole grain crust with vegetable and lean meat toppings
- Have each parent bring in one type of fruit and make a fruit salad

Nutrition Tools for Schools



Nutrition Tools for Schools© is a program consisting of a Toolkit and public health support to help your school create a healthy nutrition environment.



The NTS Nutrition Standards classifies food and beverages into four categories:

- Maximum Nutritional Value - nutrition criteria that meet or exceed P/PM 150
- Sell/Offer Most*
- Sell/Offer Less*
- Not Permitted*

Apply NTS Nutrition Standards wherever food and beverages are sold and offered.

Using the NTS Nutrition Standards will ensure compliance with P/PM 150.

* Nutrition criteria are the same as P/PM 150.

Success to share



The parents of the children who attend Summitview Public School in Stouffville, Ontario, were encouraged to bring in healthy snacks for classroom Halloween parties. One parent of a grade 3 student made fresh vegetables into a 'scary' snack. She prepared a vegetable skeleton with a brain dip. Along with Mr. Vegetable Skeleton, she took extra bowls of vegetables for the kids to snack on. The students loved it and not one vegetable was left over for any goblins to get!

Submitted by Lucy Valteau, Public Health Nutritionist, York Region Health Services

Shift the focus from food to fun!

Celebrate the child and the occasion with activities, games and crafts:

- Ask parents to provide game supplies, pencils, erasers, craft supplies and other fun activity items instead of food
- Create a healthy party idea book. With input from parents and school staff compile healthy recipes and activity ideas into a book that everyone can use
- Organize a scavenger hunt in the classroom or around the school
- Create a 'Celebrate Me' book. Classmates can write stories or poems and draw pictures to describe what is special about the birthday child
- Assist students in planning a dance party with music and decorations
- Make a sign, sash, crown, button or badge for the birthday child. Let the child visit the principal's office for a birthday surprise (eg, fun pencil)
- Let the birthday child be the teacher's assistant for the day, helping with deliveries to the office or choosing a game or story
- Plan one monthly birthday celebration for all children. Create a healthy snack list and have parents sign up to bring an item for that day

Together we can make the healthy choice the easy choice!

For more information about Nutrition Tools for Schools®, P/PM 150, or healthy eating, please contact your local public health unit:

York Region Community and Health Services
Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653
or visit
www.york.ca/nutrition

For information on healthy schools go to the Ministry of Education Healthy Schools website: www.ontario.ca/healthyschools.