



Action for Healthy Kids™  
of Alabama

# GUIDE TO HEALTHY school parties



## FOOD IN SCHOOL SHOULD SUPPORT CLASSROOM LESSONS

Students are taught in classrooms about good nutrition and the value of healthy food choices. However, many times foods served in the classroom, in the case of a class party, are low in nutrients and high in calories. This sends them a mixed message – that good nutrition is just an academic exercise that is not supported by school administration and is not important to their health or education. To send the right message administrators, teachers, parents and students need to promote healthy lifestyle principles, replacing unhealthy food offerings with healthy ones.

## OBESITY RATES ARE SKY-ROCKETING

Obesity rates among children and adolescents are sky-rocketing. Rates have doubled among children and tripled among teens since 1990. Two pilot studies in Alabama schools in different regions found 17% of youth at risk for overweight and 27% already overweight. The health consequences of this are serious: more youth are becoming diabetic, more have elevated blood pressure and more suffer the psycho-social effects of being overweight. Overweight is caused by a combination of too many calories from foods and beverages and too little physical activity. With physical activity programs declining in schools, it is even more important to provide students with nutritious beverages and snacks in appropriate portion sizes wherever food is offered. Snack ideas for school/classroom parties are listed on the back.

## RECOMMENDED SNACK IDEAS FOR SCHOOL/ CLASSROOM PARTIES

- ▶ Low-fat Milk/ flavored milk
- ▶ 100% Juice
- ▶ Water/ flavored water (calorie-free)
- ▶ Fresh fruit assortment
- ▶ Fruit and cheese kabobs
- ▶ Fruit w/ whipped topping
- ▶ 100% fruit snacks
- ▶ Vegetable trays
- ▶ Cheese- cubes, string
- ▶ Pretzels
- ▶ Low-fat popcorn
- ▶ Graham crackers
- ▶ Fig Newtons
- ▶ Animal crackers
- ▶ Angel food cake- plain or topped with fruit
- ▶ Pizza with low fat toppings (veggie, lean ham, Canadian bacon)
- ▶ Pizza dippers (pizza toppings and bread on skewer with marinara dip)
- ▶ Ham, cheese, or turkey sandwiches (with low fat condiments)
- ▶ Low-fat pudding
- ▶ Low-fat Yogurt (ex: Great Value Light, Dannon Light 'n Fit, Trix and Yumsters by Yoplait)
- ▶ Yogurt smoothies
- ▶ Yogurt parfaits/ banana splits
- ▶ Quesadillas with salsa
- ▶ Low-fat breakfast or granola bars
- ▶ Trail/ Cereal Mixes
- ▶ Nuts, seeds

# Recipes

## EASY LOW-FAT FRUIT DIP

- 1/2 cup vanilla low-fat yogurt
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

Directions: Mix ingredients together until blended. Serve with your favorite fruits!

## LOW-FAT VEGETABLE DIP

- 1 cup dry-curd low-fat cottage cheese
- 1/2 cup nonfat yogurt

Choose from these seasonings:

- Ranch: 2 tablespoons dry dressing mix.
- Onion: 2 tablespoons dry onion soup mix.
- Garlic: 1/2 teaspoon powdered garlic.
- Parmesan: 2 – 4 tablespoons grated cheese.

Mix all ingredients in a blender or mash cottage cheese with a fork before mixing with yogurt. Chill 1 hour to let flavors blend. Serve with fresh vegetables.

Source: University of Minnesota, Extension Service

## PARTY CUPCAKES (makes 24)

Prepare an 18-1/4 ounce package white cake mix as directed, except substitute unsweetened applesauce for oil. Add other ingredients (egg whites and water) in amounts specified. Add 2 Tablespoons multi colored sprinkles, if desired.

Line muffin tins with paper baking cups and fill 2/3 full with batter.

Bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes.

When cool, drizzle with a glaze made by melting 1/4 cup chocolate chips in the microwave.

For more information and to see guides on other topics, visit the Alabama section of the Action for Healthy Kids Website:

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

For additional copies of this document or questions, call the Alabama Department of Public Health Nutrition and Physical Activity Unit.

**334-206-5651**