

## Sample Parent Communication: Healthy Food and Beverage Policies

Your child has a birthday in {month}! If you are planning to celebrate at school, please consider a non-food celebration to help us encourage lifelong, healthy habits. We know that it's hard to break old habits like cake, ice cream and other sweets, but let's give it a try! With allergies and special dietary needs, some children can end up being left out when they can't eat the birthday treat. Also, sugary snacks have short and long-term consequences. In the short term, children have spikes and crashes in blood sugar that alter moods and the ability to self-regulate. When a bunch of children are having these spikes and crashes all together, the day can get pretty tough for everyone- including our teachers. Sweet treats can also disrupt children's regular dinner times and impact their nighttime sleep. In the long-term, children can develop painful cavities and poor eating habits that can lead to more severe health consequences. By celebrating with healthy alternatives, we hope to promote happier, healthier lives for {name of child care center} kids. Your support is greatly appreciated!

Non-food ideas include:

- Ø Special party napkins or party hats to use at snack
- Ø Party favors, stickers, or fake tattoos
- Ø Bring in a c.d. with your child's favorite song(s) for a dance party
- Ø Bring in your child's favorite book to read during group time
- Ø Come in to have lunch or snack with your kiddo at {name of child care center}
- Ø Bring in a craft project all of the kids can help put together

If bringing food to help celebrate is important to your family, please select healthier food options that your child enjoys. Suggestions include:

- Ø Favorite fruits
- Ø Favorite foods that aren't desserts or sweets
- Ø 100% fruit popsicles
- Ø Foods with special family or cultural significance

Please note that due to changes in state health regulations, we are no longer able to serve foods prepared at home. Please talk with your child's teachers if you have questions or would like more ideas, or feel free to contact {name of child care center}.