



Healthy Valentine's Day at School

Holiday celebrations are great opportunities to promote a healthy lifestyle, provide consistent messages and create excitement around nutritious choices and physical activity at school. Valentine's Day celebrations are usually focused around sweets: boxes of chocolates, conversation hearts and "fun size" candy. On this holiday, switch out sweets and emphasize the importance of healthy foods. Share ways students can eat healthy and stay active.

GAME ON ACTION FOR HEALTHY KIDS

TIP SHEET

Eat Better at School on Valentine's Day

Whenever possible, focus on fun rather than food. However, if you plan to incorporate food into your school's Valentine's Day celebration, consider trying one of these delicious snack ideas.

Fruit and Vegetable Bouquet Use heart and floral-shaped cookie cutters to cut fresh fruits and vegetables such as melon and bell peppers. Fill green skewers with cut fruits and vegetables and arrange into a bouquet. Tie together with red and pink ribbons. Students may enjoy with low-fat yogurt, hummus, salsa or low-fat ranch!

Heart Sandwiches Have students create healthy sandwiches using whole grain bread and strawberry fruit spread. Use heart-shaped cookie cutters to cut out mini heart sandwiches.

Valentine's Day Taste Test Host a taste test at your party using red fruits and vegetables. Pomegranate, cranberries, apples, blood oranges, raspberries, red peppers and cherry tomatoes are great options. Have students vote on their favorite red fruit and vegetable!

Berry Yogurt Looking for a healthy and simple snack? Have students add fresh or dried strawberries, blackberries or raspberries to low-fat strawberry yogurt.



Tips for Nutrition Education and Promotion

- February is Heart Health Month. Teach students about nutritious foods that support a healthy heart. Learn more about heart healthy foods from the American Heart Association.
- Incorporate nutrition education into classroom lessons. Find Valentine's Day-themed activities in Game On.
- Plan food tastings that give students the opportunity to try healthy foods. Use these tips to host a successful taste test at your school.

Importance of Healthy Eating at Home

Eating healthy is important for the growth of children. Children who eat healthy perform better in school. Better eating habits are formed when healthy eating takes place at home.

Extend Eating Better to Home

Try these healthy snacks at home:

Cherry Cocktails

- Mix water with 100% cherry juice and freeze to create ice cubes.
- Add ice cubes, frozen berries and sparkling water to a cup.
- Mix and enjoy! Experiment with other red juices (choose 100% juice)!

Fruit Lollipops

- Cut watermelons, cantaloupes, apples or pineapples into heart shapes.
- Place onto popsicle sticks and freeze for a sweet treat!



Every kid healthy, active and ready to learn

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Move More at School on Valentine's Day



Classroom

Valentine's Day Exercise Cards

- Allow students to create Valentine cards with directions of their favorite exercise written on the back. They may draw a picture to match.
- Have students share their Valentine card with another student and have fun performing the exercises.

Cupid Says...

- Played like Simon Says, have students complete the exercises that Cupid says. If the leader doesn't say "Cupid says" before saying the action, students shouldn't complete the action.
- For example, Cupid says... "jog in place while touching your nose!"

Gym/Playground

Feel the Beat

- Teach students how to measure their heart rates.
- Have them measure their heart rates at rest and after they complete exercises such as running or jumping jacks.

Valentine Scavenger Hunt

- Use paper hearts to spell out the letters of Valentine words such as "love," "heart," and "flowers."
- Hide the paper hearts around the gym or playground.
- Have students run around to search for the letters and work together to figure out what they spell.

At Home

Heart Healthy Bean Bag Toss

- As a family, create an exercise game board using a poster board.
- Paste or draw 5-10 exercise pictures such as, jumping, stretching or push ups, on the board.
- Toss a bean bag on the board and complete 10 reps of the exercise on which the bag lands.

Find these activities and more at ActionforHealthyKids.org/GameOn

Action for Healthy Kids® is a nationwide grassroots network mobilizing school professionals, families and communities to take actions that improve school foods, nutrition education, physical activity and physical education for all students. Through funding opportunities, expert technical assistance, and our flagship program, Game On, Action for Healthy Kids supports schools in becoming healthier places where children thrive.



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