

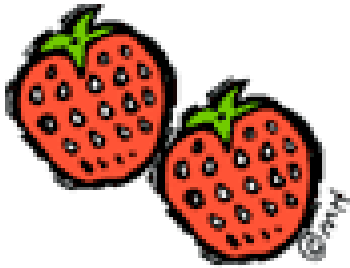
The Wellness Watch

November
2007

"News from the Coordinated School Health Team"

ALTERNATIVES TO FOOD AS REWARD

Promoting a Healthy School Environment



Food is commonly used to reward students for good behavior and academic performance. It's an easy, inexpensive and powerful tool to bring about immediate short-term behavior change. Yet, using food as a reward has many negative consequences that go far beyond the short-term benefits of good behavior or performance. Research clearly demonstrates that healthy kids learn better. To provide the best possible learning environment for children, schools must provide an environment that supports healthy behaviors. Students need to receive consistent, reliable health information and ample opportunity to use it. Finding alternatives to food rewards is an important part of providing a healthy school environment.

"Rewarding children with unhealthy foods in school undermines our efforts to teach them about good nutrition. It's like teaching children a lesson on the importance of not smoking, and then hanging out ashtrays and lighters to the kids who did the best job listening."

*Mariene Schwartz, PhD,
Co-Director, Rudd Center
for Food Policy & Obesity,
Yale University*

HEALTHY FOOD IDEAS:

- Low-fat or nonfat plain or flavored milk, 100% juice, water, flavored/sparkling water (without added sugars or sweeteners), sparkling punch (seltzer and 100% fruit juice)
- Dried fruit (raisins, cranberries, apricots, banana fruit chips), 100% fruit snacks
- Fresh fruit assortment, fruit and cheese kabobs, fruit salad, fruit with low-fat whipped topping
- Fruit Smoothies (blend berries, bananas and pineapple)
- Waffles or pancakes topped with fruit
- Angel food cake, plain or topped with
- Vegetable trays with low-fat dip
- Bagel slices with peanut butter or jam, fruit or grain muffin (low-fat), whole wheat English muffin, hot pretzels

OTHER FOOD RELATED WEBSITES

<http://www.foodsafety.gov/~dms/seniorse.html>

<http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=320754#Resources>