



# The Healthy Classroom Newsletter

A Newsletter for SNAP-Ed Program Educators  
From the Michigan Nutrition Network at MSU Extension

## Plan a Healthy Valentine's Day Party!

Valentine's Day is just around the corner. Why not make your class party a healthy one? READ THIS NEWSLETTER FOR TIPS ON HOW.



### Choose a Healthy Party Theme

There are plenty of fun and exciting ways to celebrate Valentine's Day that take the focus off of sweet treats like chocolate. Try one of these ideas:

**Red Party:** kids wear red, write about red things they love, play games with red balls, and eat healthy red foods (see the next page for recipes).

**Heart Healthy Party:** Kids take part in fun physical activities and games that keep their healthy hearts pumping. Explain to students that our hearts push blood to our cells and lungs. Show the children where their hearts are and how to feel their pulse.



#### CRAFT IDEA!

Ask each student to write something positive about each classmate and pass them out for valentines.

**Romantic Poet's Convention:** Kids write poems about something or someone they love, parents are invited to the party for a poetry reading, kids and parents receive a classroom poetry book (a collection of their poems) and kids autograph the books.

### Plan the Party, Involve Parents/Families

Communicate to parents that you want to focus on making parties healthier this year. Give them ideas for what they can bring or send in. If you ask someone to bring in a high-priced item like fresh fruit, be sure to ask more than one person so it's not too costly. Ask a parent, grandparent, or another family member to be a guest reader or to lead a game or craft activity. Ask parents to provide game supplies or a few small prizes instead of bringing in candy.

This project is partially funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program by way of the Michigan Department of Human Services, the Michigan Nutrition Network at Michigan State University, the Michigan Department of Community Health and the Michigan Fitness Foundation. MSU is an affirmative action, equal-opportunity employer. MSU Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status.

### Healthy RED Valentine's Day Party Foods

- Fresh strawberries (they're shaped like hearts!), apples, raspberries or red grapes
- Pink smoothies made with strawberries, bananas, and vanilla or strawberry low-fat yogurt
- Strawberry milk, cran-raspberry juice, tomato or V8 juice
- Mini-rice cakes with strawberry flavored cream cheese and dried cherries or cranberries on top
- Red gelatin Jigglers
- Fruit kebabs made to look like a flower basket
- Strawberry yogurt and granola parfaits, served in ice cream cones
- Radishes, grape tomatoes, red pepper strips with veggie dip, bean dip or hummus



### Play Games to get Kids Up and Moving!

#### Fruit and Veggie Bean Bag Toss

Obtain a large piece of cardboard. A large, unfolded box works well. Cut three (small, medium and large) heart shapes out of the cardboard. Paint the cardboard pink, white and red or cover it with colored paper. When dry let the children throw fruit and veggie beanbags through the holes.

#### Party Streamers

Make streamers with red ribbon or a plastic lei glued (use strong glue) to the end of a popsicle stick. Have the children dance and move with the streamer.

#### Fit Bits

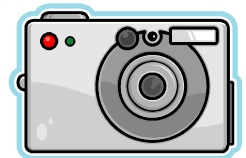
Choose one or two *Fit Bits* and lead the students through the activity during the classroom party.

### Take Pictures of Your Healthy Party

Please take digital pictures of your HEALTHY PARTY and post the photos around your classroom MyPyramid poster to reinforce healthy habits.

#### Great photo ops include:

- Kids eating healthy party food;
- Kids playing an active game;
- Kids exchanging valentines or poems.



The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your local DHS office, check online at [www.mfia.state.mi.us/mars/index.asp](http://www.mfia.state.mi.us/mars/index.asp) or call 1-800-481-4989.

# Healthy Valentine's Day Recipes

Brought to You by the Michigan Nutrition Network

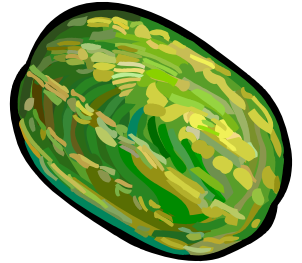
**Don't forget to wash hands before preparing or eating food!**

## Watermelon Hearts

### INGREDIENTS:

Seedless watermelon slices  
Orange slices  
Bamboo kitchen skewers

1. Use a heart-shaped cookie cutter to cut out watermelon slices.
2. Poke a bamboo kitchen skewer through each heart lengthwise (not from back to front) then complete the arrow with an orange slice tip and tail. To make the tail of the arrow use half an orange slice; to make the tip, use a ¼ slice.



## Lovable Mice

### INGREDIENTS:

Strawberries  
Mini chocolate chips, almond slivers, red lace licorice or small gummy worms  
Toothpick  
Cheese wedges (any kind, your choice)

1. For each mouse, slice a small section from the side of a strawberry so it sits flat.
2. Press a mini chocolate chip or almond sliver into the tip for a nose.
3. Add chocolate chips or another almond sliver for eyes and stick 2 almond slivers into the top of the berry for ears.
4. For a tail, use a toothpick to carve a small hole in the back of the berry and push the end of a piece of licorice lace or a gummy worm into the hole. Serve these treats with small triangles of cheese, or cut up a small chunk of cheese and scatter on the plate.



*Kids love to play with their food!* Give kids cut-up fruits and vegetables and tell them to arrange them in a heart shape on their plates. Put frozen strawberry yogurt or red pepper hummus in the middle for dipping.

## Hearty Pizzas Makes 24 pizzas

### INGREDIENTS:

12 whole grain English muffins, split in half  
3 small cans pizza sauce or 2 jars

24 slices low fat mozzarella cheese slices (or any white low fat cheese)  
several heart shaped cookie cutters

Lay 1 English muffin half on plate in front of you. Spread 1 Tablespoon of pizza sauce on top of English muffin half all the way to the edges. Lay piece of cheese flat on plate or table, and cut heart shape out using cookie cutter. Place heart on top of pizza sauce and eat! Don't forget to eat the cheese scraps.

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