

Party Suggestions and Ideas for Mississippi Licensed Early Education/Childcare Centers

Mississippi Childcare Nutrition Guidelines were revised and approved April 2013. With the revisions, it is recommended that parties in the childcare setting be limited to one per month. Some centers may opt to forgo birthday celebrations entirely. We know that each parent wants to recognize and have a celebration on their child's birthday. You may participate in a celebration on your child's birthday if allowed by your center, but we have other suggestions besides cake. It has been in the regulations that no homemade items may be brought into the center. This eliminates a parent making a cake or cupcakes at home. We want to share some suggestions besides a high-sugar, high-fat birthday celebration. For more information on nutrition, contact the Mississippi State Department of Health at: 1-866-HLTHY4U (1-866-458-4948) or visit our website at: www.HealthyMS.com.

Parents could ask to bring in snack items for the day. For a snack, two components must be served and 100% fruit juice is limited to once a day. Centers may ask for the parents to supply the entire snack component or they may ask you to supply a food item that the children have during snack time as a food educational activity. Two components would be fruit and crackers or fruit and yogurt, cheese and crackers or cheese and fruit, raw veggies with dip and crackers. Your center may have other suggestions. Some items could include:

Healthy Snacks for Childcare Centers

Fresh fruit: watermelon, pineapple, cantaloupe, kiwi, grapes (and low fat yogurt)

Apples or bananas w/peanut butter (or soynut butter for children with peanut allergies)

Vegetables w/ranch dip (carrots, celery, broccoli, cucumber, or cherry tomatoes) (and whole grain crackers)

Hummus with whole wheat pita wedges or sliced veggies like carrots, cucumbers, bell peppers or broccoli

Edamame (frozen green soy beans, either shelled or in the pod)
Great for an activity!

Yogurt w/granola or fruit

Gogurt (yogurt in a tube) (and vanilla wafers, animal crackers, or teddy grahams)

Cupcakes without the icing (bakeries will do this for you)

Low fat granola bars (with 1% milk or low fat yogurt)

Jelly or peanut butter or yogurt on mini rice cakes

Kosher pickle spears wrapped in deli-counter turkey slices (with cheese cubes)

Ants on a log – celery filled with peanut butter and topped with raisins

Applesauce (with graham crackers or in an ice cream cone)

Peanut butter and banana tortilla

***Peanut butter, nuts, eggs, etc. may not be allowed due to allergies. Check with your center before using these items.**





Non-Traditional Suggestions for Birthday Celebration at Schools

Ask your center what is needed. Most centers could use equipment for physical activity. Consider purchasing items for your school in honor of your child's birthday.

Some suggestions could be:

- Soccer balls, basketballs, kick balls, any type of ball
- Have a dance party and give everyone a CD of the music
- Jump ropes, hula hoops, horseshoes
- Sidewalk chalk, bubbles, lego packs, kites, puzzles, stickers, coloring books
- Reading books, art supplies, educational board games

Centers may allow a parent to participate in preparing a food item at the center. Check with your center about bringing items to make snack trays or treats for the monthly birthday party.



MISSISSIPPI STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH