

Have a *Healthy Heart* Valentine's Day Party!



Leave the candy out of the classroom this Valentine's Day & teach students about the importance of aerobic exercise, in 4 easy steps:

Step1: Brainstorm a list of "healthy heart" snacks with your students. Here are some easy menu ideas:

- ♥ Friendship fruit salad: blood oranges, red and pink grapefruit, red grapes, apple slices, strawberries, pomegranates, dried cranberries, or other red fruit
- ♥ Friendship veggie plate: hearts of romaine, sliced red peppers, radishes, artichoke hearts, hearts of palm, beets and tomatoes
- ♥ Valentine's Day Kabobs: Alternate red fruit or vegetables pieces with cubes of skim milk mozzarella cheese on a tooth pick or skewer
- ♥ Pink Smoothies: Blend together low-fat yogurt, cranberry juice, frozen strawberries or raspberries, banana &/or soy milk
- ♥ Edible Valentines: Spread a whole wheat tortilla with low-fat cream cheese and decorate with dried cranberries, raisins, dried coconut, strawberries... for a delicious treat
- ♥ Pink Valentine Punch: Seltzer with a splash of cranberry juice and a sprinkling of frozen raspberries
- ♥ Valentine's Day Cider: warm a mixture of apple and cranberry juice with a cinnamon stick and a handful of cranberries. Garnish with apple slices.

Step2: Send a note home to parents telling them that you will be having a Healthy Heart party. Assign specific students to bring recipe ingredients.

Step3: Teach a lesson about the circulatory system and how aerobic exercise strengthens the heart. See www.heart.org, Educator tab 'For the Classroom' –for K – 12 lessons and activities from the American Heart Association.

Step 4: Teach students how to find their pulse or have younger students feel their heartbeat through their chest. Have students count the number of heart beats in 30 seconds and have them write down the number. Then play some upbeat music and encourage student to either dance or do some calisthenics. Have them measure their heart rate afterwards. Talk to them about the importance of aerobic exercise.