

National ECELC Newsletter



December is Healthy Holiday Month!

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KEEPING THE HOLIDAYS HEALTHY

The average person typically gains about one pound over the holiday season. Likewise, this same trend exists for children – with overweight kids putting on more weight during the holidays than normal-weight kids. Below are 7 tips to ensure children have a healthier experience during the holidays.

1. **Incorporate healthier substitutes.** Find ways to swap out ingredients in holiday recipes for healthier alternatives to lower the amounts of fat, added sugar, and calories children consume.
2. **Don't bring hungry children.** Never take children to a holiday party on an empty stomach because it leads to less self-control and more overeating on empty calories. Parents should aim to keep children on a regular schedule with three meals a day and healthy snacks.
3. **Involve kids in the preparation.** Parents can involve children in the holiday food preparation as early as their toddler years, but remember to keep the tasks age appropriate.
4. **Be a healthy role-model.** Show your children that you eat a variety of foods and monitor your own portion sizes at holiday celebrations.
5. **Shift the festivities' focus.** Make the holiday festivities more about enjoying family, traditions, and activities, rather than the food.
6. **Encourage kids to get moving.** Exercise is very important during the holiday season. Remember it's recommended that children get an hour a day, every day.
7. **Keep sleep schedules consistent.** With all the holiday excitement, it can be difficult for children to unwind from the festivities and get a good night's rest. Parents should try to stick to their child's regular bedtime schedule as often as possible.

The National ECELC

Welcome to the National Early Care and Education Collaboratives Project (ECELC) Newsletter! We hope this newsletter is helpful as we offer supplemental information to help you prepare for the Learning Sessions and provide technical assistance to early care and education (ECE) providers. Topics within each newsletter will emphasize areas outlined in the *Lets Move!* Child Care goals including healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and breastfeeding support. We hope you enjoy it!

-The National ECELC Team

Resources for Providers

INDOOR HOLIDAY GAMES FOR KIDS!

Here are two examples of games that can help your kids stay active during the holiday season. Choose any of these indoor games to keep your little ones entertained.



HOLIDAY "SIMON SAYS"

Play Simon Says according to the season and theme:

Santa Says, Frosty Says, The Snowman Says, The Elf Says, Rudolf Says, etc.

MYSTERY STOCKING

Fill a stocking or sock with a collection of "mystery items," then pass the stocking around the circle, letting each child guess what is inside. They may shake the stocking, smell it, or simply feel the shape of what is inside. We suggest filling the stocking with simple party favors like crayons or sidewalk chalk, a toy or small stuffed animals.

For more fun games, visit:
[Holiday Games](#)

Additional resources can be found on the *Let's Move!* Child Care website:
www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org

Questions?

Please contact your State/Local Project Coordinator or ECELC at Nemours
ecelc@nemours.org



HEALTHY HOLIDAY FOOD SWAPS

It's that time of year again when feasts become a centerpiece of the holidays. The traditional holiday table is full with all sorts of high-calorie, high-carb, and high-fat foods. Eating healthy doesn't have to be tasteless or boring. Below are some food swaps to your favorite dishes. Try some of these food swaps and feel the difference!

Original Recipe	Substituted Recipe
Skip Full-Fat dips	Try Yogurt Dips
Skip Candied Yams	Try Roasted Sweet Potatoes
Skip Dark Meat	Try White Turkey Meat
Skip Store-bought Stuffing	Try Homemade Stuffing
Skip Traditional Gravy	Try Low-fat Gravy
Skip Cranberry Sauce	Try Cranberry Relish
Skip Casserole	Try Fresh Green Beans
Skip White Flour Rolls	Try Whole Wheat Rolls
Skip Eggnog	Try Apple Cider
Skip Pecan pie	Try Pumpkin Pie

For more information, visit:

ChildrensNational.Org
EverydayHealth.Com



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