

Healthy Rewards



Food preferences can be affected when they are associated with rewards or praise. When food is used as a reward, the child’s preference for that food is increased and it can encourage them to eat when they’re not hungry to reward themselves. Food rewards that are high in sugar can also cause tooth decay. Using unhealthy foods as rewards sends mixed messages to students since they do not reflect the healthy eating messages in the curriculum.

This handout provides alternatives to food rewards that teachers may decide to use to encourage positive behaviour. Students may also have ideas for alternative rewards.

No Cost Alternatives	Low Cost Alternatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attention, praise or thanks • Sit by friends • Going first in line ups • Teacher’s assistant • Read or have class outdoors • Extra recess • Play an active video game • Read to a younger class • Reduced or no homework pass • Extra art, music, PE, or reading time • Listening to music while working • Make deliveries to office • Play a favourite game or puzzle • “Free choice” time at the end of the day • A song, dance, or performance by the teacher or students • A book read to the class • Reading school announcements • Listen with a headset to a book or CD • Going to the library to select a book to read • Designing a class or hall bulletin board • Writing or drawing on the blackboard/whiteboard • 1 extra day extension for an assignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School supplies, e.g. ruler, pencil sharpener, pen, pencil, eraser, glitter glue, marker, highlighter, notepad/notebook • Sticker or stamp • Ribbon, certificate or card with an affirming message, e.g., “Great job!” • Photo recognition board in a prominent location in the school • Bookmark • Hair accessories, shoe laces, chap stick • Water bottle • Activity items, e.g. jump rope, hula hoop, Frisbee, ball, pedometer, hacky sack • Plastic sliding puzzle or other puzzle game • Playing cards • Temporary tattoos • Key chain • Crazy straw • Book • A plant, or seeds and pot for growing a plant • “Mystery pack” (notepad, folder, cards, etc.) • Take a trip to the treasure box (non-food items) • Enter a draw for donated prizes • Create class “money” for students to accumulate to purchase items (items from this list)

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