ChooseMyPlate.gov is 3 years old already, so they’re celebrating. How about your family? What might you celebrate this year?

We all have things to celebrate - birthdays, weddings, maybe just good grades at school. The trick is to celebrate and still be healthy.

Here are a few of the tips from ChooseMyPlate.gov. Look for more on their website.

Keep the focus on fun, not just food!

Have fun moving. Dance! Play games! The more you wiggle and giggle together, the more fun you can have.

Choose foods from all the food groups, not just sweets and sweet drinks. Put out a plate of colorful fruit cubes and let everyone make fruit kabobs. Be sure there’s a dish of yogurt for sauce.

It’s hot, have plenty of healthy drinks to keep everyonehydrated. Make ice cubes from 100% fruit juice. Or, put a berry or slice of fruit in each section of the ice cube tray and freeze in water. Frozen fruit ice cubes make glasses of chilled water much more attractive to the children.

Decorate foods with health in mind. Instead of piles of sugary frosting, use just a thin layer of frosting to hold slices of fruit, chopped nuts or seeds in place. Add slices of almonds to a basic fruit salad, or slivers of green onion to a vegetable salad.

Take time to taste. Have time for games, and then a quieter time for food. If children are just grabbing bites as they run they’re more likely to take just the sweets, and to end up eating more. Adults do it too. So have a sit down time for enjoying the better food.

Don’t break your budget with parties. Shop smart, buy what’s in season or what’s on sale.

Make it simple, and easy on yourself. Choose easy foods. Ask others to help you with the games, foods or clean up.
Here are 2 activities for children: a recipe that’s not too sugary, and a coloring sheet. Have fun!

**Crispy Cereal Treats**

3 Tbsp margarine       5 cups puffed rice cereal  
10 oz bag marshmallows  
Waxed paper       pan spray  
Popsicle sticks or plastic spoons if you want.  
Decorations if you want.

Melt the margarine in microwave, or large pan. Put heat on LOW. Add marshmallows and stir until they melt. Stir in cereal until it’s all coated with marshmallow.

► You can make this with colored puffed cereal too, or cocoa puffs. Just get cereal that is not too sugary, less than 10 g of sugar per serving.

**Option 1:** Spray a 9x13 inch pan with cooking spray. Put cereal mixture in pan, and use waxed paper to press it down flat. Let cool, then cut in squares or slices.

**Option 2:** When cereal is cooled, let children use cookie cutters to cut their own treat shapes.

**Option 3:** Let cereal cool a little. Give each child a piece of waxed paper and a large spoonful of cereal. Help them make a ball.

**Option 4:** Help them make the ball around the top of a plastic spoon or stick. Eat it like a lollipop.

► Help children stick chocolate chips or other decorations on their treats to make faces or designs.

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