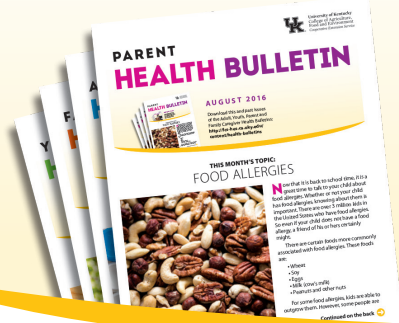


# PARENT HEALTH BULLETIN



**FEBRUARY 2020**

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## THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: HEALTHY HEART GATHERINGS



**F**ebruary is American Heart Month. Together we can use this month to raise awareness about heart disease and how families can prevent it, both at home and in the community. It is so important because heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women in the United States. Every year, 1 in 4 deaths are caused by heart disease. The good news? Heart disease can often be prevented when families make healthy choices and manage their health conditions.

Valentine's Day is a perfect opportunity to promote a healthy heart gathering by creating excitement around healthy food choices and physical activity. Surprisingly, on the holiday devoted to love, our hearts tend to be forgotten. Valentine's Day celebrations are usually focused around sweets but this year, switch out some of the sweets and emphasize the importance of a balanced healthy heart lifestyle.

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## Use heart- and floral-shaped cookie cutters to cut fresh fruits and vegetables such as melon and bell peppers.



➔ Continued from page 1

### Ways to celebrate with heart-healthy treats

- **Fruit and vegetable bouquet:** Use heart- and floral-shaped cookie cutters to cut fresh fruits and vegetables such as melon and bell peppers. Fill green skewers with cut fruits and vegetables, and arrange into a bouquet. Tie them together with red and pink ribbons. Kids might like to dip them in yogurt or hummus.
- **Heart sandwiches:** Create healthy sandwiches using whole grain bread and strawberry fruit spread. Use heart-shaped cookie cutters to cut out mini-sandwiches.
- **Valentine's Day taste test:** Host a taste test at your Valentine's Day party using only red fruits and vegetables. Pomegranate, cranberries, apples, blood oranges, raspberries, red peppers, and cherry tomatoes are great options.
- **Berry yogurt:** Kids can add fresh or dried strawberries, bananas, blackberries, or raspberries to strawberry yogurt.

### Healthy heart activities

- **Cupid Says:** Played like Simon Says, have kids complete the exercises that Cupid says. If the leader does not say "Cupid says" before saying the action,

kids should not complete the action. For example, "Cupid says jog in place while touching your nose!"

- **Feel the beat:** Teach kids how to measure their heart rates. To measure your heart rate, simply check your pulse. Place your index and middle fingers on your neck to the side of your windpipe. To check your pulse at your wrist, place two fingers on the thumb side of your wrist. Have kids measure their heart rates at rest and after they complete exercises such as running or jumping jacks.

Eating healthy and being active as a family is important for the growth of children. Children who eat healthy and get enough physical activity perform better in school. Lifestyle habits are formed when healthy choices take place at home.

#### REFERENCES:

- [https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Healthy\\_Celebrations-Valentines\\_Day.pdf](https://www.actionforhealthykids.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Healthy_Celebrations-Valentines_Day.pdf)
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PARENT  
**HEALTH BULLETIN**

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