

NON-FOOD REWARDS AT HOME

How can you celebrate a job well done without using food treats?

Here are some ideas:

- Make a list of fun, non-food rewards that don't cost much and post it where the whole family can see it. Allow your child to choose something from the list when appropriate.
- Have a separate list of special and inexpensive rewards for those really big achievements.
- Give certificates or ribbons for healthy behaviors.
- Allow your child to have a few friends over after school to play sports.
- Invite a few of your child's friends to a sleepover.
- Have a family game night.
- Keep a box of special toys or art supplies that can only be used on special occasions.
- Go to a sports game.
- Camp out in the back yard.
- Allow the use of electronics that support physical activity, like Dance Dance Revolution.
- Choose toys and games that promote physical activity like jump ropes, balls, or Skip-Its.

Food as a reward:

- Contributes to poor health.
- Encourages over-consumption of unhealthy foods.
- Contributes to poor eating habits.
- Increases preferences for sweets.

Be sure to avoid giving extra time in front of the TV or computer as a reward!

Words of appreciation can go a long way. Children love to hear "You did a great job" or "I appreciate your help."

