

## Nutritious Halloween Fun

Usually, the first thought that comes to mind when you think of Halloween is loads of candy! At the end of a long evening of Trick-or-Treating, you are exhausted and your child has a bag full of treats that are full of sugar and empty calories. This year why not start a new, healthy Halloween tradition? Host a party that puts the focus on family, friends, fun, and foods that are good for you.

Start with getting everyone involved by creating “Pumpkin Pizza Faces.” Start with a plain English muffin and let each person create their own face by first spreading a small amount of spaghetti sauce on the muffin. Then using green and black olives, mushrooms, and pepperoni they create the “scary face,” topping it off with mozzarella cheese to create hair on the pumpkin. Last, pop it in the microwave until the cheese melts.

Instead of serving a cola for your beverage, brew up some “Ghoulish Party Punch.” Mix apple cider and cinnamon sticks in a large pot on the stove-top. Once it reaches a warm temperature serve it in an insulated Halloween cup. Your guests are sure to enjoy this warm treat on a cool evening.

To satisfy your party guest’s sweet-tooth, try serving “Ghostly Fruit Kabobs and Dip.” Whisk 2 cups of vanilla yogurt with 2 tablespoons of honey and chill. Put whole washed strawberries, pineapple chunks, cantaloupe balls, and grapes on wooden skewers. Then display the fruit and dip on a great Halloween platter. They will love this fun, sweet finish to the evening.

With all this great food, entertain your guests with a mini-pumpkin decorating contest. Use mini-pumpkins and provide washable paint, glue, glitter, buttons, rhinestones, ribbon, and other miscellaneous craft supplies you might have on hand. Then let them get creative! Give a small prize for the Most Creative, Scariest, and Cutest Pumpkin.

At the end of the evening, send your little “ghosts and goblins’ home with goody treat bags. Instead of candy, fill them with string cheese, sugar-free gum, small boxes of raisins, beef jerky, juice boxes, stickers, pencils, crayons, or anything else that is fun, healthy, and kid-friendly.

This guilt-free approach to the beginning of the Fall holiday season is not only good for you, but it provides the opportunity to create some wonderful memories with your family and friends!