

## **HOLIDAYS AND HEAD START**

Head Start of Yamhill County (HSYC) respects the right of individual families to observe holidays, customs, and traditions according to their own beliefs. HSYC approaches holidays with the philosophy of discussing culture and heritage through educational activities rather than through classroom parties.

Holidays, including birthdays, will not be the focus of a weekly lesson plan. However, they need to be acknowledged. The extent of the acknowledgement will depend upon parent preference, with guidance from the teaching staff about what is developmentally appropriate. Respect for each family's beliefs and traditions must be foremost in all planning.

Parent groups will work with staff to decide individually on activities that may include celebrations of holidays, seasons, or accomplishments within the context of parent meetings. The goal of the holiday policy is to respect and honor each family's culture without being offensive or objectionable, thereby excluding any Head Start family from the opportunity to participate fully in the program.

Please do not send treats or other items when it is your child's birthday. We also know that it can be very expensive to do so and not all families are able to budget for these expenses. Additionally, some children have food allergies you may be unaware of and we also have policies at Head Start to serve nutritious foods. Talk with your child's Teacher for some advice regarding what will work best for the class: see if a favorite story can be read, a cooking activity can be one of the day's experiences, or a group game can be played that is your child's favorite.