**STRATEGY 3:** Prohibit the Use of Food as a Reward

**why does this matter**

Rewarding kids with food, even healthy foods, encourages kids to eat outside of meal and snack times, when they may not be hungry, and can lead to poor eating habits.\(^1\,\text{2}\)

Using food, such as candy, cookies, doughnuts, sugary drinks, and pizza, as a reward for good behavior and academic performance is a common practice with kids and puts them at risk for excess weight gain and obesity.\(^3\,\text{4}\)

Encouraging kids to eat healthy foods, but at the same time rewarding good behavior with unhealthy foods, sends a mixed message and confuses kids.\(^1\)

Foods that are used as rewards are typically high in sugar, fat, and salt with little nutritional value, and can play a role in establishing kids' preferences for unhealthy foods.\(^1\,\text{2}\)

**References**