

FOOD REWARDS **ADD UP**

$$\begin{array}{r} 61 \\ 230 \\ 200 \\ 100 \\ 160 \\ + 220 \\ \hline 971 \\ \text{calories} \\ \text{(yikes!)} \end{array}$$

Often times we think that “little treats” don’t add up; however, one of our own staff members here at Let’s Go! shared what her 6 year old daughter ate in one day, just from food rewards. Check it out, you’ll be amazed!

FOOD REWARD # 1

Sally arrives at pre-school and shortly after receives **Skittles** to practice adding and subtracting. She gets to eat them all when she is done.

Small snack pack of Skittles = 61 calories

FOOD REWARD # 2

Sally’s classmate Ben is turning 6! Sally gets a **cupcake** (right before lunch) to help Ben celebrate!

Cupcake = 230 calories

FOOD REWARD # 3

After pre-school, Sally goes to Grandma’s house. Mom provided a healthy snack for after school, but Grandma offers Sally treats instead because she is excited to spend the afternoon with her (**a milkshake, juice box, and cookies!**).

Small milkshake = 200 calories

Juice box = 100 calories

Cookies = 160 calories

FOOD REWARD # 4

Sally gets picked up by her dad from Grandma’s house and on the way home is given a **candy bar** for being so well-behaved at Grandma’s.

Candy bar = 220 calories

Throughout the day, Sally took in **971 calories** just in food rewards! That’s over half of the calories she needs in a day, and doesn’t even include her three meals. These treats are full of “empty calories” and offer little nutrition.

Wondering what you can do to help prevent this?

- Work with children to learn what, besides food, makes them feel rewarded – an extra 5 minutes of playtime? Picking out a book to be read? Listening to music? Then, provide these rewards instead of food.
- A word of praise or a high five is a great way to reward a child.
- Talk to your provider about setting policy about not using food as a reward.
- Use physical activity as a reward!
- Occasional treats are okay, but they should be just that – occasional, and not a reward but a treat!