Prom is one of the season’s biggest rites of passage for teens and it’s only a few weeks away. Now is the time to work on fancy dance moves with a pre-prom party. Let your kids invite their best pals over for a night of in-house clubbing and fun – light show and fog machine optional! Whether they’re into techno, re-mix, house, club or pop, they’ll need plenty of energy for the big night ahead. Pop up a big bowl of Spicy Italian Popcorn (recipe below) for a welcome tasty treat before— or after— tearing up the dance floor! You’ll keep your teens interested and safe, and they’ll have fun too!

Take the fun a step further with a creative, hands-on activity. After explaining to these tender youngsters what a vinyl LP is, invite them to melt a few of yours! What took hours to musically create will take only seconds to undo as they reshape the likes of Chicago and Beatles record albums into interesting bowls in which to place their popcorn goodies (see directions below).

Then, let them truly enjoy your advanced age by suggesting they make popcorn the “old-fashioned” way—in a pan on the stovetop. As the oil sizzles, the kernels burst open to a rhythmic beat that will make your teens giggle, and the smell is guaranteed to make their mouths water!

For more great popcorn recipes, visit www.popcorn.org.

Spicy Italian Popcorn

Yield: 10 servings

- 10 cups hot, freshly popped popcorn
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan and Romano cheese
- 1 teaspoon oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt

• Drizzle olive oil over popcorn in large bowl.
• Add remaining ingredients, toss well.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION: (Based on 1 serving)
Total calories: 90; Fat: 7 g; Carbohydrate: 7 g; Sugar: 0; Fiber: 1 g; Protein: 2 g; Sodium: 180 mg; Cholesterol: 0 mg.

33 1/3 Popcorn Containers

The first step of the project should be done by an adult or with adult supervision. All you need to make it yourself is an oven, a 6-inch terra-cotta/ceramic flowerpot or other oven-proof bowl, oven mitts and a full-length vinyl LP. Caution: Do not use a plastic flowerpot or other flammable material.

1 Step One: Position rack low in the oven to provide plenty of clearance for the flowerpot. Preheat to 400 degrees.

2 Step Two: If your record needs cleaning, wipe it with a damp towel. Center the LP on top of the upside-down flowerpot and place it on the center of the rack. Bake for approximately 45 seconds, checking progress often (every 10 seconds) until the record has gone limp and hangs loosely over the flowerpot. Caution: Do not leave the record unattended, or in the oven for more than one minute.

3 Step Three: Using oven mitts and touching only the bottom rim of the flowerpot, remove from the oven—being careful not to disturb the record—and place on a heat-resistant surface to cool. You can shape the sides of the vinyl bowl to your satisfaction just after you’ve pulled it from the oven, while it is still pliable.

If you want a different shape, experiment with any oven-safe bowl or pot: mixing bowls, oversize soup bowls, saucepans, and the like. As soon as it’s out of the oven, try sandwiching the record between two bowls or flowerpots to give the shape more height or a tighter edge. Once cooled, the bowl can be washed with warm, soapy water. Do not place in the dishwasher.