

March is National Nutrition Month

Your overall health, and the health of the children in your care, is affected by diet, exercise and rest. Good nutrition, including a balance of fruits, vegetables, whole grains and lean proteins, is vital to improving overall health. CACFP Meal Patterns for children are a blueprint designed to meet 2/3 of the nutrient needs of children for optimal growth and development when they are in care for 8 or more hours. Following the CACFP Meal Patterns is also a requirement for USDA reimbursement. If you haven't already taken the 2023 free training course on Updated Meal Patterns for CACFP, consider doing that this month to complete your required Nutrition training for the year. Good nutrition can be easy to achieve with the help of the CACFP Meal Patterns.

March is also National Women's History Month, National Noodle Month, National Frozen Food Month, National Celery Month and National Flour Month (who knew?!). There are so many opportunities to celebrate good nutrition this month. Please read on in this newsletter for recipes, tips, and crafts.



CACFP Week is March 12-18

Brought to you by the National CACFP Sponsors Association (NCA). This year, CACFP week will feature free daily webinars on the themes of **Community**, **Advocacy**, **Children**, **Food Program** and **Participation**. All registrants will receive an exclusive sample cycle menu developed with input from real CACFP providers. Register today by visiting info.cacfp.org/calendar and clicking "Register" on the CACFP Week button.



Sesame, the Ninth Major Allergen

As of January 2023, sesame has been added to the list of major allergens that already included milk, eggs, fish, shellfish, tree nuts, peanuts, wheat and soy. The Institute of Child Nutrition recently offered a webinar called "Tips on Managing the Ninth Major Food Allergen, Sesame," and that content is now available on their website. If you care for kids with food allergies, this information may be helpful for you in terms of reading food labels, avoiding cross contact and managing paperwork and communication that will keep kids safe.

Visit theicn.org/icn-ilearn, click "Enroll Now," and search for "sesame" to enroll in this free, recorded webinar.

Leprechaun Traps



Let kids work together to design a leprechaun trap using construction paper, cardboard, popsicle sticks or other craft supplies you have around the house. Add some gold coins or mini marshmallows as "bait." Leprechauns are very good at escaping from traps! They may make a mess getting out, but they may also leave behind stickers, temporary tattoos or gold coins for the kids to enjoy.

Fun Events in March

Mar 2 - Dr. Seuss Day

Mar 7 - National Cereal Day

Mar 14 - National Pi Day

Mar 17 - National Corned Beef and Cabbage Day & St. Patrick's Day

Mar 23 - National Chip and Dip Day

Mar 28 - National Something on a Stick Day

Mar 31 - National Tater Day

Pizza Kebab Recipe

(for National Something on a Stick Day March 28)

**one kebab provides 1/2 oz eq grains, 1 1/2 oz meat/meat alternate and 1/4 cup vegetable; recipe serves 8*

Ingredients:

- 4 oz eq turkey pepperoni +
- 8 (1 oz) mozzarella string cheese sticks
- 2 - 100% whole wheat pita bread
- 24 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 8 dull kebab sticks
- 1 cup marinara tomato sauce
- 16 fresh basil leaves (optional)

+ CN Label or PFS needed to determine correct serving size for ounce equivalency



Directions:

- Cut string cheese into 4 pieces each.
- Cut pita breads in half and then cut each half into 8 triangles.
- On the kebab stick, alternate sliding on pepperoni, cheese piece, pita bread and half a cherry tomato. Repeat until kebab has 1/2 oz eq of turkey pepperoni, 4 pieces of cheese, 3 cherry tomatoes and 4 pita triangles. Add two basil leaves to each kebab if desired. Continue this pattern for the other 7 kebabs.
- Serve 1 kebab with a 1/8 cup of marinara tomato sauce for dipping!



CLAIMS

CORNER

Claims Corner has reminders to help providers receive the most money possible each month.

- Remember to mark holidays and "Out of School" days on your calendar so you can be reimbursed if you're providing care to school-age children over Spring Break.
- Submit your claim by the 5th of the month to be eligible for on-time payment. Claims received after that date will be processed and paid the following month.
- Check KidKare for expiring Child Enrollment Forms. Children will "fall off" your roster when their paperwork expires. Although Wildwood staff can easily reactivate children upon request, reimbursement will not be possible for those children until updated paperwork is received in the Colorado office.
- One WGR component is required each day. If a WGR item is not marked, the meal with the lowest reimbursement will be deducted. Some easy, creditable WGR items include whole wheat bread, whole wheat tortillas, brown rice, oatmeal, Triscuits, Wheat Thins, Cheerios and Frosted Mini Wheats.
- Milk is a critical part of the CACFP Meal Patterns. Remember that unflavored whole milk must be served to children ages 13 months to 23 months, while children ages 2 to 5 years must be served unflavored skim or 1% milk. Here are some other facts about milk in the CACFP:
 - Flavored skim or 1% milk is only allowed for children ages 6 and older.
 - Breastmilk can be served at any age.
 - If you care for infants, remember that breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula must be served at all meals/snacks.
- Plan and record menus ahead of time, but only record attendance and meals/snacks at the time of service.
- Record ALL MEALS and snacks in KidKare even if you don't claim them. Pull a report at the end of the year showing a complete record of food costs for tax purposes.

***The last day Wildwood can receive original WY & CO January claims for processing is March 28, 2023.**

***The last day Wildwood can receive original WY & CO February claims for processing is April 25, 2023.**



Often-Missed Questions on Wildwood Training:

Participating in the CACFP requires each provider to complete annual training in Civil Rights, Nutrition and Program. Here are some questions that have stumped providers in recent online training:

Civil Rights Compliance for CACFP:

Q: Reasonable accommodations may include food substitutions or modifications for participants with a Medical Statement or Special Diet Statement.

A: True. Civil Rights rules require that all children, regardless of their inclusion in any protected class, be given equal access to the food program. A child with a Medical Statement or Special Diet Statement must be accommodated by the child care provider, even if the accommodations include food components that are not creditable on the CACFP. Child care providers may not charge more for meal accommodations, and the USDA also will not reimburse at a higher rate.

Crediting Store-Bought Combination Baby Foods:

Q: When serving store-bought combination baby food as part of reimbursable infant meals, it is important to have documentation on file showing the product information.

A: True. Store-bought combination baby foods must demonstrate, through the ingredients list and product label or a separate product formulation statement, that individual components like meat/meat alternate, fruit or vegetable are present in the appropriate amounts. This is similar to requiring a CN label for store-bought combination foods for older children.

Updated Meal Patterns 2023:

Q: 100% juice can be served at any meal or snack during the day.

A: True. 100% fruit or vegetable juice may be served at any meal or snack. CACFP Meal Patterns limit juice to one meal/snack per day, and HMI (Colorado's Healthier Meal Initiative) recommends no more than two servings of juice per week. Further, snack cannot be comprised of two liquids like 100% fruit juice and milk. But it is permissible to serve 100% juice at any meal or snack.

Free training is available on Wildwood's website at www.wildwoodonline.org. From the homepage, click **CACFP | Child Care Homes | FREE Online Training**. Password is milk2014. At the end of the course is a link to the online test. Grades are sent via email automatically, and certificates are sent via email for grades of 80% or higher. If you prefer paper courses and tests, call the Colorado office to request that any of our training be mailed to you. Return completed tests to the Colorado office, and receive a printed certificate in the mail for scores of 80% or higher.



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