

November is National Gratitude Month

With Thanksgiving coming up at the end of the month, we get to thinking about big turkey dinners with all the trimmings or about friends and family gathering around the dinner table. Thanksgiving, and the entire month of November, is a good time to think about “giving thanks” or expressing gratitude. Practicing gratitude daily can help shift our focus away from the negative and appreciate what is positive in our lives. Research shows that gratitude enhances our mood, decreases stress and improves overall health and wellbeing. Here are some suggestions for ways to practice gratitude:

- **keep a gratitude journal** to remind yourself of the ordinary events or valued people in your life
- **“come to your senses”** and focus on something you’re grateful you can see, smell, touch, taste or hear
- **make a vow to practice gratitude** to be reminded of the commitment. You could write “I vow to count my blessings each day” and post it by your mirror or coffeepot so you remember to start each day with gratitude
- **“go through the motions”** of saying “Thank you,” smiling, journaling or writing letters of gratitude

November is also National Career Development Month, Spinach and Squash Month, National Pepper Month, National Peanut Butter Lovers Month, National Family Caregivers Month and Gluten Free Diet Awareness Month. Read on in this newsletter for menu tips, crafts and activities to help you celebrate November.



Use sharpies to write your statements of gratitude on pumpkins. These would make great centerpieces for your Thanksgiving table!

Events in November

November 1 - Day of the Dead
November 3 - National Sandwich Day
November 5 - Daylight Saving Time Ends, “Fall Back”
November 14 - National Pickle Day
November 23 - Thanksgiving
November 28 - National French Toast Day
November 30 - National Personal Space Day

Holiday Hours for Wildwood Offices

Thanksgiving: Thursday, Nov. 23 Closed
Day after Thanksgiving: Friday, Nov. 24 Closed
Christmas Eve: Friday, Dec. 22 Closed
Christmas Day: Monday, Dec. 25 Closed
New Year’s Day: Monday, Jan. 1 Closed

Thankful Pumpkin Craft

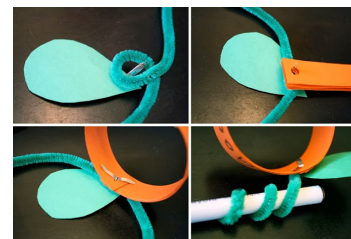


You'll need:

- green and orange construction paper
- 2 brads
- green pipe cleaner
- hole punch
- scissors
- marker



- Cut orange paper into 5 strips 8 1/2 inches long by 3/4 inches wide
- Punch holes at each end and in the middle of each strip
- Place a brad through the center of the strips and have kids use the marker to write (from the edge to the center) 10 things they are thankful for



- Cut a leaf from green paper, write “I’m thankful for” on it, punch a hole in it
- Layer pumpkin on second brad. Start with leaf (word side down), loop pipe cleaner on it, then stack orange strips (word sides down)
- Loop other end of orange strips onto brad and fasten
- Curl pipe cleaner to make tendrils
- Fan out strips to form a round pumpkin

Oatmeal Carrot Muffins



Recipe comes from Colorado provider Virginia Johnson

Muffin Ingredients:

- 2 c flour
- 1 c rolled oats
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 c brown sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 c oil
- 1 1/2 c yogurt
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 c grated carrots (about 3)

Streusel Topping Ingredients:

- 3 tbsp butter
- 2 tbsp flour
- 3 tbsp oats
- 3 tbsp brown sugar
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon

Directions:

For streusel:

- Combine the following ingredients in a bowl: flour, sugar, butter, cinnamon, sugar and oats
- Mix with fingers until mixture looks like cookie dough

For muffins:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees
- Prepare muffin tin with paper liners
- Add the following ingredients in a bowl and stir to combine: baking powder, oats, salt, nutmeg, baking soda, cinnamon, flour and sugar
- In another bowl, whip yogurt, eggs, vanilla and oil
- Incorporate grated carrots and stir
- Add dry ingredients to wet and stir
- Divide muffin batter evenly in muffin cups
- Top batter with streusel
- Bake for 30 minutes

Makes 12 muffins * 1 muffin provides .5 oz equivalent grain component for Breakfast/Lunch/Snack

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



CLAIMS

CORNER

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

- Send Child Enrollment Forms (CEFs) to Sue by the 25th of the month to allow time to update records before the start of a new claims month.
- Notify your field representative and update your calendar when you will be closed (prior notice). If your field rep attempts an in-person site visit during a scheduled mealtime and is unable to complete the visit because prior notice was not given, Wildwood is required to disallow reimbursement for that meal.
- If school age children are in care during school breaks, remember to mark them "Out of School" in KidKare.
- If you are open and providing care on a holiday, remember to mark this on your KidKare calendar or your paper claim. Otherwise, Wildwood must deduct meals served on holidays.
- Please ensure that provider name and date are included on all paperwork submitted to Wildwood. Names and dates must be printed clearly and legibly. Best practice is to open and review scanned electronic documents to ensure readability before sending via email.

***The last day Wildwood can receive original WY & CO September claims for processing is November 24, 2023.**

***The last day Wildwood can receive original WY & CO October claims for processing is December 26, 2023.**

Menu Tips:

- Peanut butter may only be used for 1/2 of the meat/meat alternate at Lunch. Add another m/ma like a cheese stick for the other 1/2.
- Food may not be "hidden" in a recipe, like cauliflower in mashed potatoes. At least 1/2 the required amount must be served separately so children can see/know what they are eating.
- Once an infant age 6-11 months is developmentally ready for solid foods, providers should introduce one component at a time. Once the infant is regularly eating solid foods, providers are required to offer them. Also, once an infant is regularly eating all components, providers must offer them at all meals/snacks to be reimbursed.
- Children with food allergies must be protected from harm. Replace allergens with creditable substitutes from the same component group or obtain a Special Diet Statement (SDS) signed by a medical professional to serve non-creditable food items.
- Remember that an SDS using the correct form does not expire, so it does not need to be updated annually.

2024 Training Year Has Begun

All providers must complete training annually in Civil Rights, Nutrition and Program. Visit the Wildwood website at www.wildwoodonline.org to see the two newest courses: **What Are Combination Foods?** and **Child Nutrition Labels**.

Often-Missed Questions on Wildwood Training:

Here are some questions that have stumped providers recently in Wildwood's training courses:

Child Nutrition Labels (2024)

Q: Examples of combination foods that require a CN Label to serve as part of a reimbursable meal are:

A: All of the above. Choices included boxed macaroni & cheese, store bought meatballs that are not 100% beef and canned ravioli. Any store bought combination food that includes meat/meat alternate plus other components, like grain or vegetables, requires a CN Label to determine the amount of creditable m/ma in a serving. Food items like hamburger patties and meatballs may seem like they contain only meat, but they often have fillers that make the amount of m/ma less than what is required for the meal pattern.

What Are Combination Foods? (2024)

Q: At least half of the portion of each food item on the menu must be recognizable in the original form, not hidden or disguised. This helps children learn about food and know what they are eating.

A: True. It may be tempting to "hide" cauliflower in a pasta dish so children get more servings of vegetables. In the CACFP, however, the provider must either serve 1/2 the minimum amount of cauliflower alongside the pasta dish or serve a different vegetable in the full portion size to meet the requirement for vegetables in the meal.

Feeding Infants Using Ounce Equivalents for Grains (2023)

Q: The USDA Food Crediting Handbook, "Exhibit A" includes a list of commonly used grain food items and can be used to determine the correct serving size using ounce equivalents.

A: True. The "Exhibit A" grain requirements document shows providers that, for example, a 28 gram serving of English muffin is a 1 ounce equivalent serving of grain or that 1 1/2 cups of puffed cereal is a 1 ounce equivalent serving of grain. Visit the USDA website at www.fns.usda.gov, and search for "Exhibit A grain" to find this resource online and in printable form.

Visit Wildwood's website at www.wildwoodonline.org to find FREE online training modules. From the homepage, click

CACFP | Child Care Homes | FREE Online Training. Use the password **milk2014**. Review the content and complete the training and test online or on paper. Wildwood will provide a certificate for scores of 80% or higher.