

potpourri

July 2026

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What's Inside?

**Cool Down with Dairy
Smart Shopping Strategies
Outdoor Eating
Fire Safety Fun
& More!**



Potpourri is published monthly by the Association for Child Development (ACD), a sponsor of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Child care providers sponsored by the ACD for participation with the CACFP receive Potpourri free of charge. No portion of Potpourri may be reprinted without the consent of ACD.

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July is a time when summer is in full swing, bringing longer days, active children, and busy routines in childcare settings. It also comes at a time when many families and providers are feeling the impact of rising food prices and ongoing cost increases across the board.

These economic pressures make the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) more important than ever. CACFP helps ensure that children continue to receive nutritious, balanced meals and snacks, even as food costs fluctuate. For providers, it offers critical support in maintaining high-quality meal service without compromising nutrition or care.

Every day, the meals you serve through CACFP do more than meet a requirement: they provide stability, consistency, and reassurance for children during a time when many families are stretched thin. Your ability to continue offering healthy, dependable meals is a powerful source of support for the children in your care.

We recognize the extra effort it takes to plan, prepare, and serve meals in this environment, and we are deeply grateful for your commitment. Your work ensures that children are nourished, supported, and ready to enjoy all that summer has to offer.

Thank you for continuing to make child nutrition a priority, especially in challenging times.

Denise Meyer

Denise Meyer
Executive Director

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Cool Down with Dairy!

Refreshing, nutritious favorites to keep kids fueled all summer long!

Homemade Fruit and Yogurt Popsicles

6 servings
usdairy.com

Ingredients

3 cups frozen blueberries, and/or strawberries
3 cups vanilla yogurt

Instructions

- Place 1/2 cup fruit in each cup.
- Place 1/2 cup yogurt into cups of fruit.
- Stir each cup with plastic spoon and place in center of cup.
- Freeze until firm.

✦ Fruit ✦ Meat/Meat Alternate



Tropical Oatmeal Parfait

4 servings
usdairy.com

Ingredients

1 1/2 cups old fashioned oats
2 cups fat-free dairy milk
2 cups pineapple, peeled, cored and diced
2 cups fat-free vanilla greek yogurt
Pinch of salt
1/4 cup walnut pieces (optional)

Instructions

- (If using walnuts) In a small skillet, toast walnut pieces over medium heat, turning halfway through, for 3 to 4 minutes or until walnuts are lightly browned.
- In a small saucepan, combine oatmeal and milk; simmer for 5 to 7 minutes over medium-low heat or until oats are tender and have absorbed the milk.
- In a bowl or glass, layer 1/2 cup cooked oatmeal with 1/2 cup pineapple, 1/2 cup yogurt and 1 tablespoon walnuts.

✦ Grain ✦ Meat/Meat Alternate

✦ Fruit



Cottage Cheese Baked Oats with Freeze-Dried Fruit

6 servings
usdairy.com

Ingredients

1/4 cup strawberries, and dried blueberries (freeze)
2 cups old fashioned oats, or quick cooking oats
1 cup low-fat cottage cheese, or fat level of choice
2 banana, ripe
4 egg
4 tablespoons agave syrup, or honey
1 teaspoon baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

Instructions

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease four 8-ounce ramekins or oven-safe bowls with butter or cooking spray.
- Place freeze-dried blueberries and strawberries in a zip-top bag and crush using a rolling pin. Fruit pieces should be roughly the size of sprinkles. Set aside.
- In a blender, combine oats, cottage cheese, bananas, eggs, agave nectar (or honey), baking powder and salt. Puree until the mixture is combined and the oats are starting to break down but not completely smooth. Do not over mix. Remove blender cup from base.
- Using a spoon or spatula, gently fold 1/4 cup of freeze dried fruit into batter.
- Divide batter between four prepared ramekins or bowls. Bake in preheated oven for 25 minutes, or until cakes are set. Remove from oven and allow to cool for 5 minutes before serving.
- To serve, garnish each cake with a dollop of Greek yogurt, freeze dried fruit "sprinkles" and a drizzle of honey, if desired.

✦ Meat/Meat Alternate ✦ Grain

✦ Fruit



Meals & Menus

CACFP Requirements



CACFP		MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
BREAKFAST	1. GN/BP OR MT** 2. FT OR VG 3. MK	1. WG Waffles 2. Blueberries*** 3. Milk	1. Scrambled Eggs w/WG Toast 2. Sliced Tomatoes 3. Milk	1. Lowfat Vanilla Yogurt w/ Granola 2. Strawberries 3. Milk	1. WG Zucchini Bread 2. Peach Slices 3. Milk	1. Oatmeal 2. Cherries (pitted, halved) 3. Milk
	1. MT 2. GN/BP 3. VG 4. FT OR VG 5. MK	1. Baked Chicken 2. WG Orzo 3. Roasted Yellow Squash 4. Raspberries*** 5. Milk	1. Egg Salad 2. WG Bun 3. Sliced Radishes 4. Apricot Halves 5. Milk	1. BBQ Pulled Turkey 2. WG Bun 3. Coleslaw 4. Cantaloupe 5. Milk	1. Cheese & Spinach Shells 2. WG Pasta Shells 3. Roasted Eggplant 4. Plums 5. Milk	1. Chickpea Salad 2. WG Crackers 3. Steamed Green Beans 4. Blackberries*** 5. Milk
LUNCH/DINNER	1. MT 2. GN/BP 3. VG 4. FT OR VG 5. MK	1. Baked Chicken 2. WG Orzo 3. Roasted Yellow Squash 4. Raspberries*** 5. Milk	1. Egg Salad 2. WG Bun 3. Sliced Radishes 4. Apricot Halves 5. Milk	1. BBQ Pulled Turkey 2. WG Bun 3. Coleslaw 4. Cantaloupe 5. Milk	1. Cheese & Spinach Shells 2. WG Pasta Shells 3. Roasted Eggplant 4. Plums 5. Milk	1. Chickpea Salad 2. WG Crackers 3. Steamed Green Beans 4. Blackberries*** 5. Milk
	1. MT 2. GN/BP 3. FT 4. VG 5. MK	1. Cottage Cheese 2. WG Bun 3. Honeydew Melon 4. Sliced Kohlrabi Sticks*** 5. Milk	1. Black Bean Dip 2. WG Corn Muffin 3. Nectarines 4. Diced Cucumbers*** 5. Milk	1. Chicken Breast 2. WG Crackers 3. Melon of Choice 4. Carrots*** 5. Milk	1. Lentil Spread 2. WG Naan 3. Orange Wedges 4. Bell Pepper Strips*** 5. Milk	1. Ricotta Cheese 2. WG Waffle 3. Blackberries*** 4. Celery Sticks*** 5. Milk
SNACKS*	1. MT 2. GN/BP 3. FT 4. VG 5. MK	1. Cottage Cheese 2. WG Bun 3. Honeydew Melon 4. Sliced Kohlrabi Sticks*** 5. Milk	1. Black Bean Dip 2. WG Corn Muffin 3. Nectarines 4. Diced Cucumbers*** 5. Milk	1. Chicken Breast 2. WG Crackers 3. Melon of Choice 4. Carrots*** 5. Milk	1. Lentil Spread 2. WG Naan 3. Orange Wedges 4. Bell Pepper Strips*** 5. Milk	1. Ricotta Cheese 2. WG Waffle 3. Blackberries*** 4. Celery Sticks*** 5. Milk
	(*) Choose two food groups from “Snacks” list.			(**) MT may be substituted for GN/BP up to 3x a week.		
FT: Fruit VG: Vegetable GN: Grain WG: Whole Grain MK: Milk BP: Bread Prdt. MT: Meat/Meat Alternate			(***) Choking hazard for children under age 4.			



REMINDERS:

May 2026 final claim due: **July 27, 2026 (Mon.)**

- **CENTERS:** All claims require supporting documentation before being submitted to the state for reimbursement. No documentation = no reimbursement.
- Please open any mail that comes from ACD. Also, please check your email and spam folders for news and information from us.
- Please remember to record any children out of school or daycare closures in My Food Program.
- Send enrollments to: **Michigan:** mifrontdesk@acd-kids.org | Fax: (517) 332-5543
Illinois: ilcustomerservice@acd-kids.org | Fax: (708) 236-0872

Cool, Strong, and Summer-Ready: Dairy for Kids

Summer is a great time to highlight the benefits of dairy foods for children. With busy days, higher temperatures, and increased activity, kids need nutrients that support growth, hydration, and energy. Dairy foods offer a convenient and kid-friendly way to meet those needs.

WHY DAIRY MATTERS

Dairy products like milk, yogurt, and cheese are packed with essential nutrients that growing bodies rely on:

- **Calcium & Vitamin D:** Build strong bones and teeth during critical growth years
- **Protein:** Supports muscle development and keeps kids feeling full longer
- **Potassium:** Helps maintain healthy blood pressure and hydration
- **Vitamin B12:** Supports brain development and energy production

DID YOU KNOW?

- About 90% of Americans do not meet recommended dairy intake levels
- Children ages 4–8 need 2 1/2 cups of dairy per day; ages 9–18 need 3 cups
- Dairy provides 13 essential nutrients in one group of foods



EASY SUMMER DAIRY IDEAS

Keeping dairy fun and refreshing can encourage kids to enjoy it more often:

- Smoothie Popsicles: Blend milk or yogurt with fruit and freeze
- Yogurt Parfaits: Layer yogurt, berries, and granola for a cool snack
- Cheese & Fruit Kabobs: Alternate cubes of cheese with grapes or melon
- Frozen Yogurt Bark: Spread yogurt, top with fruit, freeze, and break into pieces

Snack Idea	Key Nutrients	Prep Time
String Cheese & Apple	Protein, Calcium	2 minutes per child
Yogurt & Berries	Calcium, Vitamin C	3 minutes per child
Cottage Cheese & Peach	Protein, Potassium	2 minutes per child
Milk & Whole Grain Bar	Protein, Energy	1 minute per child

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Serve dairy cold to make it more appealing in hot weather.
- Keep shelf-stable milk boxes on hand for outings or field trips.
- Pair dairy with fiber-rich foods like fruit and whole grains for balanced snacks.
- Introduce new dairy foods gradually. For example, kefir or cottage cheese.
- Practice safe food handling: keep cold foods below 40 F and don't leave them outdoors.
- Use clear cups or fun containers to make milk and yogurt more appealing.

Outdoor Eating: Safe & Healthy Summer Meals

Whether it's a backyard grill session or a picnic at the park, summer is a great time to serve a meal outdoors. When serving food outdoors to children, keeping food safety in mind is key- since children's developing immune systems make them more susceptible to foodborne illness.

Certain foods pose more of a food safety risk than others, due to their higher pH level. These foods are called Time and Temperature Control for Safety (TCS) foods.

TCS foods include:

Dairy	Cooked vegetables (including beans)
Eggs	Cut melon
Baked potatoes	Cut tomatoes
Soy foods	Leafy greens
Fish and shellfish	Sprouts
Meat (beef, pork, poultry, lamb)	Untreated garlic & oil mixtures
Cooked grains (pasta, rice, etc.)	



If you are serving TCS foods, the goal is to keep these foods out of the temperature "danger zone" of 40°F-140°F. When foods are in this temperature zone, bacteria like Salmonella and E.Coli can multiply rapidly. To prevent foods from staying in the temperature danger zone, keep cold foods cold by using ice. If using a cooler, keep it out of direct sunlight if possible. On the flip side, keep hot foods hot with chafing dishes, steam tables or other hot holding equipment.

TCS foods should be tossed after they have been out for four hours, even if they were kept hot or cold. And if the temperature is over 90°F, TCS foods should not be kept out for more than one hour maximum.

As a reminder, cook protein foods to a safe internal temperature, verified with a thermometer:

PROTEIN FOOD	MINIMUM INTERNAL TEMPERATURE
Whole cuts of meat, fish or seafood	145°F
Ground meat, fish or seafood	160°F
All poultry (whole or ground)	165°F

Eating outdoors is just one way to enjoy the summer season, and by following these guidelines you can ensure children will be safe while eating outdoors too.



Red, White & Blue Frozen Yogurt Bark

Celebrate Fourth of July and our country's 250th birthday with this easy recipe featuring berries and yogurt frozen into a refreshing snack!

Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients:

- 1 1/2 cups plain Greek yogurt*
- 3 tbsp honey
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup strawberries
- 1 cup blueberries

*Non-fat Greek yogurt contains more water and may not freeze as well as low fat or full fat Greek yogurt.

Instructions:

1. In a mixing bowl, add Greek yogurt, honey and vanilla extract. Stir to combine.
2. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
3. Spread the yogurt evenly over the parchment paper, to about 1/4 inch thickness.
4. Wash the berries, then slice any large strawberries before sprinkling onto yogurt.
5. Freeze for a minimum of 4 hours.
6. Slice into equal sized pieces and enjoy!

Optional: Use frozen berries if desired, but be sure to still slice any large strawberries.

Nutrition information: (serving size 1/6th recipe): 120 calories, 3 grams fat, 18 grams carbohydrate, 6 grams protein



Savings Beyond the Pump & Pantry

Finding ways to trim the budget when you're already watching every penny can feel like squeezing water from a stone.

However, shifting focus toward your operational overhead can reveal hidden savings that don't compromise care quality.

The Power of the Pivot

Don't buy new toys. Organize a "resource swap" with other local providers. It refreshes your environment for free and keeps the children engaged. Similarly, lean into "loose parts" play. Using safe, upcycled items like cardboard tubes, smooth stones, or clean containers saves a fortune on pre-packaged kits while significantly boosting creative development.

Audit the Invisible

Take a hard look at your "business use of home" expenses. From utility proportions to specialized insurance riders, ensuring you are maximizing your tax deductions is effectively a deferred raise. Also, always ask about "provider discounts" at local craft or hardware stores; many offer 10%–15% off for educators, which adds up quickly over a fiscal year.

Community Capital

Use the "Library of Things" at your local library. Check out games, supplies, etc., and you keep your program high-quality without the high-end price tag.

■ Source: aarp.org



Smart Shopping Strategies for Childcare Providers

Stretching food dollars while serving nutritious meals is a daily priority for childcare providers. With a little planning, smart shopping can reduce costs, minimize waste, and make the most of fresh, seasonal foods without sacrificing quality.

When to Buy in Bulk

Buying in bulk can save money, but only when done thoughtfully. Consider these tips:

Best for bulk:

- Shelf-stable items (brown rice, oats, canned beans)
- Frozen fruits and vegetables
- Frequently used items like milk or whole grain pasta

Check storage space: Make sure you have adequate pantry, refrigerator, or freezer room

Watch expiration dates: Only buy what you can realistically use before it spoils

Compare unit prices: Bulk isn't always cheaper: check cost per ounce or pound

Tip: Team up with another provider to split bulk items and save money without waste.

Minimizing Food Waste

Reducing food waste helps your budget and models good habits for children:

Plan menus first: Build a weekly menu before shopping to avoid overbuying

Use "first in, first out" (FIFO): Rotate older items to the front

Repurpose leftovers:

- Roasted vegetables = wraps or pasta dishes
- Fresh fruit = smoothies or yogurt parfaits

Serve appropriate portions: Start small and offer seconds to reduce plate waste

Store food properly: Keep produce fresh longer with correct refrigeration and storage methods

Maximize Seasonal Foods

Seasonal foods are often fresher, more affordable, and more flavorful:

Shop local when possible: Farmers markets and local stores often have better prices on in-season items.

Know Midwest summer picks:

- Berries, peaches, cherries
- Tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini
- Sweet corn and green beans

Freeze extras: Preserve seasonal produce for later use in smoothies, soups, or baked goods.

Incorporate into menus: Feature seasonal fruits and vegetables in meals and snacks to boost nutrition and variety.

QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE		
Strategy	Benefit	Example
Buy in Bulk	Lower cost per unit	Large bag of frozen blueberries
Plan Menus	Reduce overbuying	Weekly meal plan
Use Seasonal Foods	Better price & quality	Fresh local strawberries
Repurpose Food	Less waste	Leftover chicken = wraps



Firework Fork 4th of July Craft

MATERIALS

- Paper plates
- Plastic forks
- Red craft paint
- Blue craft paint
- Silver glitter

STEP 1

Pour a quarter size amount of red and blue paint onto a paper plate.

STEP 2

Using the back side of the fork, dip one fork into the desired color of paint. **Important:** Dab the fork onto the paper plate a few times to make sure you get the excess paint to come out of the middle of the fork prongs.

STEP 3

Gently press the back of the fork that's covered in paint onto the clean paper plate. Continue to do this in a full circle, getting more paint as necessary as you press the fork down.

STEP 4

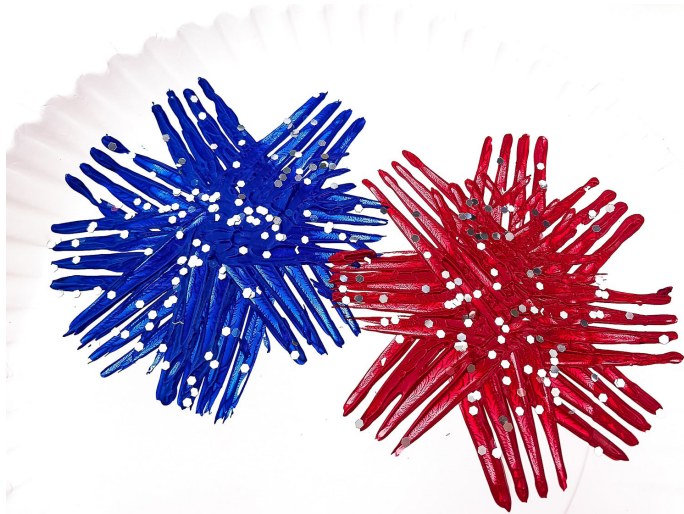
Repeat these steps about 3 times. (I found that for this activity, you can fit about three sets of fireworks onto the plate.) You can alternate the colors if you'd like (for example a red and blue set of fireworks).

STEP 5

After each set of fireworks is complete, sprinkle glitter on the fireworks.

STEP 6

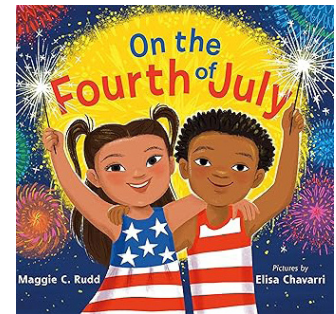
Once the activity is complete, set aside to dry.



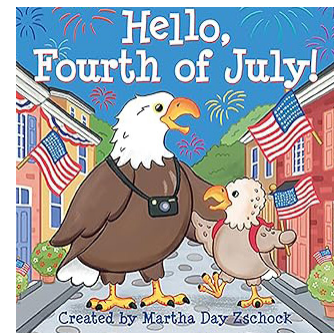
2026 is the 250th year of the United States! Celebrate with some fun books for kids about Independence Day!



Fourth of July Book for Kids
by Ambaschi Nila (Author)



On the Fourth of July: A Sparkly Picture Book About Independence Day
by Maggie C. Rudd (Author),
Elisa Chavarri (Illustrator)



Hello, Fourth of July!
by Martha Day Zschock
(Creator)

■ Books: [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

Stop, Drop & Play

Making Fire Safety Fun for Kids

Teaching fire safety to young children doesn't have to be intimidating—in fact, it's most effective when it's playful, engaging, and age appropriate! Through games, songs, and hands-on activities, children can learn life-saving skills in a way that feels natural and memorable.

STOP DROP & ROLL

Start by introducing key fire safety concepts through movement. One of the most important is "Stop, Drop, and Roll." Turn this into a game by calling out the phrase and having children practice the motions together. You can even make it fun with music—play a song and have children freeze, drop, and roll when the music stops. Repetition helps build muscle memory, so if they ever face a real emergency, their response will be automatic.

Stop.



Drop.



Roll.



STAY LOW AND GO

Another essential concept is "Stay Low and Go," which teaches children to crawl under smoke to safely exit a building. Set up a simple obstacle course using tables or chairs draped with sheets to simulate a smoky environment. Encourage children to crawl through while staying low to the ground and heading toward a "safe exit." This kind of dramatic play helps children understand why these actions matter.



ROLE PLAYING

Role playing is also a powerful teaching tool. Create pretend scenarios where children practice recognizing a fire alarm sound, identifying exits, and "escaping" safely. Reinforce the idea of having a designated meeting spot outside. You can also introduce basic fire prevention habits, like not touching hot surfaces or staying away from matches and lighters, using visual aids or storytelling.

BOOKS & PUPPETS

Books and puppets can further support learning. Use stories to talk about firefighters as helpers, not something to fear, and discuss what happens during a fire in a calm, reassuring way.



By incorporating fire safety into play, caregivers and educators can empower children with knowledge and confidence. These simple, interactive lessons can make a lasting impact—and help keep children safe in ways they'll remember when it matters most.

July 2026

Submit quiz answers to your Field Monitor to receive FREE training credit.
Do not (e)mail quiz to the ACD office.

1. Which nutrient in dairy supports hydration and healthy blood pressure??

- a. Potassium
- b. Vitamin C
- c. Vitamin B12
- d. Zinc

2. Which of the following is an example of "loose parts" play used to save money on pre-packaged kits?

- a. Buying specialized kits
- b. Ordering high-end furniture
- c. Using upcycled items like cardboard tubes
- d. Purchasing new seasonal toy sets

3. Firefighters should be depicted as frightening figures so that children avoid them during a fire.

- a. True
- b. False

4. The temperature 'danger zone' where bacteria like Salmonella multiply rapidly is between 40F 140F.

- a. True
- b. False

5. Farmers markets can offer better prices on in-season items.

- a. True
- b. False

6. Which of these items is classified as a Time and Temperature Control for Safety (TCS) food?

- a. Cooked pasta
- b. Fresh, whole apples
- c. Dry crackers
- d. Uncooked white rice

7. Dry/canned beans are a shelf-stable item.

- a. True
- b. False

8. To save money, only buy what you can realistically use before it spoils.

- a. True
- b. False

9. Using repetition in 'Stop, Drop, and Roll' games helps children build muscle memory for an automatic response.

- a. True
- b. False

10. How many daily cups of dairy are recommended for ages 9–18?

- a. 1
- b. 2
- c. 3
- d. 4

11. Which snack is made by layering yogurt, berries, and granola?

- a. Pudding
- b. Parfait
- c. Berry Split
- d. Porridge

12. If the outdoor temperature reaches 95F, what is the absolute maximum time a TCS food should be left out?

- a. One hour
- b. Two hours
- c. Three hours
- d. Four hours

13. The "Stay Low and Go" concept teaches children that the safest way to exit a smoky room is by standing tall and running quickly.

- a. True
- b. False

14. What percentage of Americans fail to meet recommended dairy intake?

- a. About 50 percent
- b. About 65 percent
- c. Exactly 70 percent
- d. About 90 percent

15. TCS foods are safe to consume for up to six hours as long as they are kept in a cooler with ice.

- a. True
- b. False



The Association for Child Development educates parents and caregivers about nutrition to promote the development of children and establish healthy eating habits to last a lifetime.



As a nonprofit, ACD has been operating for 50 years in Illinois and Michigan. A large part of our work involves serving more than 36,000 children through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) – a program ensuring children have access to nutritious meals.

Alongside this critical work, ACD looks to make a greater impact by expanding our mission to include a safety component focused on decreasing the risk of harm or injury in homes children are cared for through outreach, education and safety products.

Support ACD's efforts to prevent child injury.

Donate today at www.acdkids.org.