

# potpourri

March 2023

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Spring is near and there's lots to celebrate this month. **March 3 is Employee Appreciation Day.** Employees are key to an organization's success. I am proud of the ACD team and all of their hard work!

**CACFP Week is March 12-18.** As a CACFP sponsor for more than 45 years, I thank our providers for participating in this program and teaching our children healthy eating habits to last a lifetime. To celebrate, we're having a giveaway. To enter, post a comment (before 3/17) on Facebook sharing why you think CACFP is important for the children in your childcare. On Friday, March 17 (St. Patrick's Day), we'll select four providers to win a surprise box!

Providers using the manual claiming option will soon be transitioned to KidKare (ACD's online claiming platform). Your field monitor will discuss this option at your next review.

**Enrollments reminder:** To ensure maximum reimbursement, send enrollments in a timely manner to: [ilcustomerservice@acdids.org](mailto:ilcustomerservice@acdids.org) (IL) or [mifrontdesk@acdids.org](mailto:mifrontdesk@acdids.org) (MI).

Lastly, Daylight Saving Time starts March 12 – set clocks 1 hour forward.

*Denise Meyer*  
**Denise Meyer**  
Executive Director

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# March Greens

No shenanigans...just tasty recipes using in-season March greens

## Broccoli Cheddar Tots

36 servings

todaysparent.com

### Ingredients

1-1/2 tsp. salt, divided  
6 cups broccoli florets  
(about 2 heads)  
1 egg  
2 cups shredded aged  
cheddar cheese  
3/4 cup panko bread crumbs  
1/2 cup green onions, chopped  
1/2 tsp. pepper

- Preheat oven to 400° F.
- Line baking sheet with parchment.
- Fill large pot with water and bring to a boil.
- Add 1 teaspoon salt and broccoli, cook 1 minute.
- Remove to large bowl of ice water and submerge broccoli to stop cooking.
- Drain and pat dry with clean kitchen towel.
- Pulse broccoli in food processor until finely chopped, then transfer to large bowl.
- Add egg, cheddar, panko, green onions, pepper and remaining salt.
- Stir to combine.
- Scoop out heaping one tablespoon of broccoli mixture and shape into 1-inch long cylinder.
- Repeat with remaining mixture, placing tots one inch apart on prepared sheet.

- Bake until golden brown, 28 to 30 minutes.

- **Vegetable**
- **Grain/Bread Product**
- **Meat/Meat Alternate**

## Spinach Meatballs with Feta

2-4 servings

acouplecooks.com

### Ingredients

14 oz. baby spinach (or 9 oz. frozen spinach, thawed)  
2/3 cup crumbled feta cheese  
1 tbsp. mixed dried herbs  
1 egg  
1/2 cup bread crumbs or oat flour (process 1/2 cup rolled oats in blender or food processor)  
1/4 cup olive oil (optional)  
10 oz. dry spaghetti  
2 tbsp. unsalted butter or extra virgin olive oil  
2 tbsp. soy sauce or tamari  
1 medium zucchini, shredded  
5 oz. cherry tomatoes, halved  
Freshly ground pepper

- If using fresh spinach, add to large saucepan with a small splash of water.
- Place over medium-low heat and cover with lid.
- Cook until wilted, 3 to 5 minutes, then rinse under cold running water.
- Squeeze spinach over sink to remove as much liquid as possible, then coarsely chop and set aside.

- In medium bowl, mix feta, dried herbs, a generous amount of black pepper, egg and bread crumbs (or oat flour) together.
- Stir in spinach, then scoop heaping tablespoons of mixture and roll into balls.
- You should get 20 balls.
- Place balls on parchment paper-lined baking sheet and bake in preheated 350° F oven for 20 to 25 minutes.
- Boil pasta, then drain.
- Return pasta to pan off the heat, then stir in butter, soy sauce (or tamari), and shredded zucchini.
- Toss with halved cherry tomatoes and serve.

- **Fruit**
- **Vegetable**
- **Grain/Bread Product**
- **Meat/Meat Alternate**

## Kale Cake with Apple Frosting

12 servings

veggiedesserts.com

### Ingredients

3 cups loosely packed raw kale (discard woody stalks)  
3 eggs  
1/2 cup vegetable oil  
2 tsp. vanilla extract  
1/2 cup applesauce  
3/4 cup granulated sugar  
2 apples, peeled and grated  
2 cups all-purpose flour  
2 tsp. baking powder  
1/2 tsp. salt

[Continued on page 5]

■ Image: SEE D DAN/Getty Images



	CACFP	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI
<b>BREAKFAST</b>	<b>1. GN/BP OR MT**</b> <b>2. FT OR VG</b> <b>3. MK</b>	1. Oatmeal 2. Grapefruit 3. Milk	1. WG Bagels 2. Peas (Mashed) 3. Milk	1. Muffins 2. Pineapples 3. Milk	1. Rice Cakes 2. Bananas 3. Milk	1. Scone 2. Kumquats 3. Milk
<b>LUNCH/DINNER</b>	<b>1. MT</b> <b>2. GN/BP</b> <b>3. VG</b> <b>4. FT OR VG</b> <b>5. MK</b>	1. Eggs 2. Grits 3. Spinach 4. Clementines 5. Milk	1. Tempeh 2. WG Tortillas 3. Mushrooms 4. Broccoli 5. Milk	1. Dumplings 2. Soy Yogurt 3. Cabbage 4. Bok Choy 5. Milk	1. Legumes 2. Lean Pork 3. Potatoes 4. Tangelos 5. Milk	1. Lentil Soup 2. Rice 3. Tomatoes 4. Sweet Potatoes 5. Milk
<b>SNACKS*</b>	<b>1. MT</b> <b>2. GN/BP</b> <b>3. FT</b> <b>4. VG</b> <b>5. MK</b>	1. Tofu 2. Tortillas 3. Grapes*** 4. Radishes 5. Milk	1. Cashews*** 2. WG Chips 3. Strawberries 4. Beets 5. Milk	1. Peanuts*** 2. Popcorn*** 3. Smoothie 4. Bell Peppers 5. Milk	1. Ricotta Cheese 2. Pretzels*** 3. Cherry Tomatoes 4. Cucumbers 5. Milk	1. Peanut Butter 2. WG Crackers 3. Kiwi 4. Cauliflower 5. Milk
(*) Choose two food groups from “Snacks” list.  <b>FT:</b> Fruit <b>VG:</b> Vegetable <b>GN:</b> Grain <b>WG:</b> Whole Grain <b>MK:</b> Milk <b>BP:</b> Bread Prdt. <b>MT:</b> Meat/Meat Alternate				(**) MT may be substituted for GN/BP up to 3x a week.  (***) Choking hazard for children under age 4.		

### REMINDERS:



- **ACD offices will be closed for Employee Appreciation Day: March 3 (Fri)**
- Check/update expiring enrollments & submit new enrollments by **March 13 (Mon)**
- February first claim due: **March 20 (IL)** & January final claim due: **March 28 (MI)**
- Mark school-age children “**out-of-school**” if caring for children during school break.
- Complete “**Holiday Note**” form with required signatures if caring for children on a holiday.

■ Image: DAPA Images ■ Graphic: Chanakarn Kwang ■ Source (pg. 5): [actionagainsthunger.org](http://actionagainsthunger.org) | [ers.usda.gov](http://ers.usda.gov) | [fabbs.org](http://fabbs.org) | [feedingamerica.org](http://feedingamerica.org) | [mfbn.org](http://mfbn.org) | [rtrtglobal.org](http://rtrtglobal.org) | [secondharvestmidtn.org](http://secondharvestmidtn.org) | [ymca.org](http://ymca.org) ■ Image (pg. 5): Kat Smith/Pexels



# Hunger

Address food insecurity = end childhood hunger



**In America, hunger affects more than 9 million children.**

Defined by the United Nations as “the distress associated with lack of food,” hunger can result from food insecurity – a consistent lack of access to adequate food due to issues such as unemployment or poverty; lack of healthcare and affordable housing; and systemic racism and racial discrimination.

**For children, food insecurity is especially harmful.** Children from homes with limited access

to regular meals and healthy foods are more likely to experience delayed language and motor skills development; behavioral problems (e.g. anxiety, depression and aggression); higher rates of diet-related diseases (e.g. Type 2 diabetes); and chronic illnesses such as asthma and anemia.

In March, we celebrate CACFP Week and National Nutrition Month®. Both shine a light on the importance of good nutrition and the need to combat hunger so that every child has a bright future.

**Providers, spot child hunger by watching for these common signs:**

- Child is anxious for meals to be served.
- During meals, child eats all of their food without being picky.
- Child lingers for second helpings or asks for more.
- Child is extremely hungry on Monday morning.
- Child has short attention span and/or inability to concentrate.

**NOTE:** Carefully observe a child to check for patterns and/or behaviors that point to food insecurity.

**Parents/Caregivers, community resources are available:**

- **Backpack program:** provide free meals for weekends and school breaks.
- **Drive-thru pantry:** provide free shelf-stable food, meat, dairy, fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Mobile food pantry:** bring free groceries to local communities.
- **Summer meal program:** provide free meals for kids, teens and families during summer months.
- **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP):** a federal/state program that helps households buy food.
- **Women, Infants and Children (WIC):** provides participants vouchers to purchase food and baby supplies.

[Continued from page 3]

## Kale Cake with Apple Frosting (Cntd')

- Preheat oven to 350° F.
- Grease and line two 8-inch round cake pans with parchment paper.
- Tear kale leaves into bite-sized pieces and boil or steam 3-5 minutes until tender.
- Run kale under cold water, drain and squeeze out excess liquid.
- Add kale to blender with eggs, oil, vanilla, sugar and applesauce and whiz until smooth. Pour into bowl.
- Squeeze excess moisture out of grated apple, then add to bowl and stir to combine.
- Sift in flour, baking powder and salt and gently combine, **do not overmix.**
- Pour into pans and bake 20-25 minutes or until inserted skewer comes out clean.
- Cool 2 minutes in pans and turn onto wire rack to cool completely.

## Apple Frosting

2 cups powdered sugar  
2 tbsp. butter, softened  
2 tbsp. applesauce, smooth (puree if necessary)  
1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

- Beat butter, apple sauce and vanilla, then sift in the powdered sugar and beat until thick and smooth.
- Frost completely cooled cake.

- ⊕ **Fruit**
- ⊕ **Vegetable**
- ⊕ **Meat/Meat Alternate**

# Celebrate CACFP Week!

Recognize providers' impact on childhood hunger

Now that March is here, it's time to celebrate **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Week (March 12-18)**, honoring providers like you who play a significant role in combatting childhood hunger.

**Every day in the United States, 1 in 8 children face hunger.** Black and Latino children are at greater risk, with about 1 in 5 children facing hunger daily.

It's possible some of the children you care for come from low-income households where food insecurity is a reality. According to Feeding America, food insecurity is defined as a consistent lack of food to maintain a healthy life due to an individual's economic situation. Being food insecure also translates to an increased risk of inadequate nutrition, which can lead to impaired growth and development for children. Research has also shown a link between food insecurity and an increased risk of certain chronic diseases and behavioral problems.

**By providing care to children as part of the CACFP, you are fighting childhood hunger and food insecurity with each meal you serve!**

Be proud of the impact you are making and help spread the word about CACFP week in your community.

Visit the campaign website ([cacfpweek.org](https://cacfpweek.org)) to access resources listed below (and more) to promote CACFP week:

- 14 Ways to Try Broccoli
- Sample CACFP Menu
- "What Do Components Do for the Body?" nutrition series

To grab children's attention, the campaign partnered with Sesame Street, which means Elmo, Big Bird and the whole crew is featured in promotional materials. And, if you post a creditable snack on social media using hashtags **#NCASnack** or **#CACFPWeek** and tag it with **@NationalCACFP**, you could win \$100!

**Thank you for all you do as a CACFP provider, not only in March but every day!**

- **Source:** [feedingamerica.org](https://feedingamerica.org) (Accessed February 3, 2023)
- **Images:** Danr13/Canva (top) | Horiyan/Getty Images (bottom)





## Fruit Sushi

4 servings (5 pieces/serving)

This snack is a creative way to introduce kids to sushi, using fruit in place of fish. A minimal amount of fruit is used in the recipe, so use leftovers in a fruit salad, on top of oatmeal or blended into a smoothie.

### Ingredients

4 tsp. kiwi  
 4 tsp. red grapes\*\*\*  
 4 tsp. strawberries  
 4 tsp. mango  
 4 tsp. blueberries\*\*\*  
 2 bananas  
 6-2/3 tbsp. whipped cream cheese



- Wash fruit and pat dry.
- Peel kiwi and mango. Remove stems from strawberries.
- Finely dice all fruit (except bananas) into small pieces.
- Peel banana and slice into 1/2-inch coin slices.
- Spread 1 teaspoon of whipped cream cheese onto each banana coin.
- Top each coin with 1 teaspoon of diced fruit.
- **Option #1:** Swap out cream cheese for nut or seed butter to increase protein content.
- **Option #2:** Before cutting into coins and topping with fruit; place banana on soft whole wheat tortilla (spread with nut or seed butter) and tightly roll. Use sharp knife to cut into sushi pieces.

**Safety Note:** (\*\*\*) Choking hazard for children under age 4.

**Safety Note:** Cut grapes length-wise to avoid choking hazard.

**Safety Note:** Monitor children while using sharp knife.

**Nutrition Information (5 pieces):** 121 calories, 6 grams fat, 5 grams carbohydrate, 2 grams fiber, 1.8 grams protein.

✚ Fruit

■ Images: blog.skinnyfit (top) | Alferrec/Canva (bottom) | Billion Photos (right)

## BUSINESS

**Save your tax refund.** Instead of spending your refund on a new pair of shoes or vacation, put it into a savings account where it can accrue interest and be used for emergencies or put toward a large business purchase such as upgrading computers, hiring new staff, equipment, or undertaking a major expansion. [sofi.com]



## LEISURE

**Negotiate your bills.** Think you're spending too much on cable or your cell phone? Be a truly savvy consumer by calling service providers and negotiating a lower monthly rate. [sofi.com]

## HEALTH

**Stop drinking sweetened beverages.** Sweetened beverages not only cost a lot of money, but also contribute to America's growing diabetes rates. Sweetened beverages don't end at sodas. Bottled or canned tea, coffee or energy drinks also count. Instead, drink water – it is virtually free and far healthier than sweetened beverages. [moneycrashers.com]



# March Produce

In-season produce saves money & tastes best!

## Vegetables

Artichoke  
Asparagus  
Avocado  
Beets  
Broccoli  
Broccolini  
Brussels Sprouts  
Butternut Squash  
Cabbage  
Cauliflower  
Celèriac  
Celery  
Fennel  
Green Garlic  
Leeks  
Mushrooms  
Parsnips  
Peas  
Pumpkins  
Radishes  
Rutabagas  
Spring Garlic  
Spring Onion  
Sweet Potato  
Turnips  
Winter Squash

## Citrus

Clementine  
Grapefruit  
Kiwi  
Kumquats  
Lemons  
Limes  
Oranges  
Pineapple  
Tangerines  
Tangelos

## Greens

Arugula  
Swiss Chard  
Lettuce  
Mustard Greens  
Spinach  
Watercress

It's "March Madness"  
with the bounty of  
in-season produce.  
This month, add these  
powerhouse foods  
to your roster!

Image: Freepik



## Cupcake Liner Shamrocks

Cupcake liner  
Scissors  
Green food coloring



- Open cupcake liner and flatten out.
- Fold it in half and fold it in half again...and fold once more.
- Cut heart shape with scissors but **DON'T** cut all the way to the bottom.
- Open up liner and you should have a four-leaf clover.
- If using white liners, wet them with water and drip green food coloring on top.
- After dried, you can add a stem or hang them up for a St. Patrick's Day banner!

## Homemade Shamrock Gummies

1-1/2 cups applesauce  
2-1/4 cup sugar  
2 lime Jell-O (3 oz. boxes)  
Unflavored gelatin (2 packs)  
1 small shamrock cookie cutter



- Mix all ingredients in saucepan over medium to high heat.
- Stir until it reaches a boil. Boil for one minute.
- Remove from heat and pour into parchment lined 13x9 baking dish (this allows for easier removal).
- Place dish in refrigerator to cool for 2 hours or until set.
- Once set, remove from dish and dust the top with sugar.
- Using cookie cutter, cut out shamrock shapes (dip cutter in sugar after cutting first shamrock to prevent sticking).
- Take gummy and roll in sugar to coat bottom and sides.
- Set aside on a parchment-lined cookie sheet.
- Gummies can be kept stored in an airtight container.
- For longer storage, store in refrigerator for up to two weeks.

✚ Fruit

March marks the passing of winter and beginning of springtime wonders.



### I See Spring by Charles Ghignaz

Celebrate spring with colorful illustrations and easy-to-read text that explores rain falling, flowers blooming and other springtime wonders.



### El Jardín Mágico by Lemniscates

“El Jardín Mágico” follows a curious girl named Cloe who lives in a magic garden. Of course, it’s not magic. It’s spring! A stellar book to motivate kids to go into the world and become explorers.

# Reduce Poison Risk

March 19-25 is National Poison Prevention Week

March not only means springtime, it also means a nationwide focus on poison prevention. Enacted by Congress in 1961, **National Poison Prevention Week is March 19-25** with the goal to highlight poisoning hazards and risks – especially for children – and the need for community involvement in poisoning prevention.

Each year across the country, more than 2 million poisonings are reported to the nation's poison control centers.

In 2021:

## Illinois callers contacted poison centers for:

- **66,694** human exposure cases with **96%** of cases occurring in a residence and **71%** being the result of unintentional exposure.
- **37%** of cases were for children ages five or younger.

## Michigan callers contacted poison centers for:

- **57,446** human exposure cases with **93%** of cases occurring in a residence and **77%** being the result of unintentional exposure.
- **42%** of cases were for children ages five or younger.

The top most dangerous potential poisons are medicines, cleaning products, liquid nicotine, antifreeze, windshield wiper fluid, pesticides, furniture polish, gasoline, kerosene and lamp oil.

## Parents/caregivers, follow these tips to prevent child poisoning:

- Store potential poisons in their original containers in cabinets secured with child-resistant locks.
- Regularly read and follow product labels and directions.
- **NEVER mix cleaning chemicals!** Cleaning products like bleach and ammonia can create highly toxic fumes when combined.
- Practice safe food preparation and handling to avoid food poisoning.

## Providers can also help reduce poisoning risk:

- Supervise young children when using hand sanitizer. Sanitizers contain chemicals that may cause serious health problems if used in the wrong way or in the wrong amounts.
- **NEVER use disinfectants on surfaces that come into contact with food.** A child's natural curiosity increases the chances of their coming in contact with hazardous chemicals.

## If a child in your care experiences a poisoning – take immediate action:

- **Skin contact:** Wash area thoroughly with soap and water.
- **Eye exposure:** Thoroughly rinse for 20 minutes.
- **Ingestion/swallowed:** Call Poison Help at 1-800-222-1222.
- **If a child is unconscious, not breathing, or having convulsions or seizures due to poison contact or ingestion, call 911 or the local emergency number IMMEDIATELY!**

■ **Source:** [aapcc.org](https://aapcc.org) | [betterhealth.vic.gov.au](https://betterhealth.vic.gov.au) | [healthychildren.org](https://healthychildren.org) | [poisonhelp.hrsa.gov](https://poisonhelp.hrsa.gov)

■ **Images:** Pixelshot/Canva (top) | Adventtr/Getty Images Signature (bottom)





# Mar. 2023

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

**1. Hunger affects how many American children?**

- a. 125,000
- b. 30
- c. 1,000
- d. 9 Million+

**2. Disinfectants can be used on surfaces that come into contact with food:**

- a. True
- b. False

**3. For eye exposure – rinse the eye for:**

- a. 2 Hours
- b. 12 Minutes
- c. 20 Minutes
- d. 5 Seconds

**4. Short attention span is a common sign of child hunger:**

- a. True
- b. False

**5. Liquid nicotine is a top potential poison:**

- a. True
- b. False

**6. Every day, 1 in 8 children face hunger:**

- a. True
- b. False

**7. Research shows a link between food insecurity and behavioral problems:**

- a. True
- b. False

**8. Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Week is:**

- a. May 12-18
- b. October 2-8
- c. March 12-18
- d. Fall 2023

**9. Children with limited access to regular meals and healthy foods do not experience diet-related diseases:**

- a. True
- b. False

**10. National Poison Prevention Week was enacted in:**

- a. 1619
- b. 1916
- c. 1691
- d. 1961

**11. Poison Help phone number is:**

- a. 517-222-1222
- b. 773-222-1222
- c. 800-888-1222
- d. 800-222-1222

**12. How many poisonings are reported annually to poison centers?**

- a. 96
- b. 2+ Million
- c. 66,694
- d. 80

**13. Bleach and ammonia combined create highly toxic fumes:**

- a. True
- b. False

**14. Mobile food pantries bring free groceries to local communities:**

- a. True
- b. False

**15. Backpack programs provide:**

- a. Shoes
- b. Coats
- c. Weekend Meals
- d. School Supplies



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 more than 45 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](http://www.acdkids.org).**