

# potpourri

March 2025

Volume 51 | Issue 3



## What's Inside?

Whole Foods  
CACFP Week  
Dr. Seuss' Birthday  
Child Influencers  
Dangers of Water Beads  
& 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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March marks an exciting time for our mission to support child nutrition as we celebrate national CACFP week. ACD has been a sponsor for nearly 50 years! I want to express my deepest gratitude for your dedication to providing nutritious meals to the children in your care. Your participation in the CACFP makes a significant difference in the lives of countless families in our communities.

Some food program history:

The idea that became the CACFP as we know it, began in the mid-1800s with the Children's Aid Society of New York. Fast forward a little more than a century, and the government passed the Child Nutrition Act that began, among other things, a pilot breakfast program in schools. Here we are, in 2025, with the food program helping to provide home and center providers as well as schools and adult day care with the capability to provide healthy meals and snacks to the people it serves. Celebrating the annual CACFP week highlights the critical role the Child and Adult Food Care Program plays in supporting this mission.

This month, let us come together to raise awareness about the importance of child nutrition and CACFP's role in ensuring children have access to healthy, nutritious meals that fuel their growth and learning.

*Denise Meyer*

**Denise Meyer**  
Executive Director

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# March is About CACFP Week!

Here are some recipes straight from CACFP!

## Quiche Florentine

10 servings  
cacfp.org

### Ingredients

- 1 (200 g) enriched pie crust
- 6 cups fresh spinach, chopped
- 1/2 tbsp butter
- 3 large whole eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup shredded cheese
- 1 tsp onion powder
- 1 tsp garlic powder

### Instructions

- Preheat oven to 425° F. Bake pie crust for 8-9 minutes. Then allow to cool. Lower oven temperature to 350°F.
- Sauté the spinach with butter over medium heat until spinach has wilted. Set aside and allow to cool.
- In a medium bowl, mix all ingredients together including the spinach. Salt and pepper to taste. Pour mixture into pie crust and bake for 50-55 minutes.
- Cut into 10 even slices and serve warm.

⊕ Grain ⊕ Vegetable ⊕ Meat/Meat Alternate



## Asian Chicken Wraps

8 servings  
cacfp.org

### Ingredients

- 1 cup shredded lettuce
- 1 cup shredded cabbage
- 1 cup shredded carrots
- 2 cooked boneless chicken breasts, cubed (12 oz.)
- 2 tbsp. mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup Asian toasted sesame dressing
- 4 - 100% whole wheat flour tortillas, small

### Instructions

- Mix mayonnaise and dressing together in a large bowl until well blended.
- Stir in chicken, lettuce, cabbage, and carrots. Spread mixture evenly on four tortillas.
- Roll, cut in half, and serve.

⊕ Meat/Meat Alternate ⊕ Vegetable  
⊕ Grain



## Broccoli Chicken Quesadilla

8 servings  
cacfp.org

### Ingredients

- 1/2 lb (1 1/2 cups) shredded cooked chicken
- 1 tsp taco seasoning
- 8 whole-wheat tortillas (6 inches)
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 2 cups shredded Mexican blend cheese
- 1/2 cup finely chopped cooked broccoli

### Instructions

- Combine chicken and taco seasoning in a bowl.
- Brush one side of each tortilla with butter and place butter-side down on a lightly greased baking sheet.
- Spoon 1/4 cup of chicken mixture on half of each tortilla. Sprinkle 1 tbsp of broccoli and then 1/4 cup of cheese on top.
- Fold plain side of tortilla over mix. Repeat for remaining seven tortillas and bake at 375° F for 9-11 minutes or until golden brown.

⊕ Meat/Meat Alternate ⊕ Grain



# Meals & Menus

## CACFP Requirements



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. WG Waffle 2. Banana 3. Milk	1. WG Toast w/ Nut or Seed Butter 2. Apple Slices 3. Milk	1. Oatmeal 2. Strawberries 3. Milk	1. WG English Muffin 2. Blueberries*** 3. Milk	1. WG Cereal 2. Orange Slices 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. Grilled Chicken Strips 2. Brown Rice 3. Steamed Broccoli 4. Diced Pineapple 5. Milk	1. Turkey & Cheese Sandwich 2. WG Bread 3. Baby Carrots*** 4. Peaches 5. Milk	1. Black Bean & Cheese Quesadilla 2. WG Tortilla 3. Corn*** 4. Orange Wedges 5. Milk	1. Baked Fish Sticks 2. WG Roll 3. Green Beans 4. Cantaloupe 5. Milk	1. Lean Ground Beef 2. WG Bun 3. Shredded Carrots 4. Pears 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. Lowfat Yogurt 2. WG Granola 3. Strawberries 4. Celery*** 5. Milk	1. Cheese Cubes*** 2. WG Crackers 3. Grapes*** 4. Cherry Tomatoes*** 5. Milk	1. Hummus 2. WG Crackers 3. Apple Slices 4. Sliced Bell Peppers*** 5. Milk	1. Nut or Seed Butter 2. WG Toast 3. Raspberries*** 4. Cucumber Slices 5. Milk	1. Hard-Boiled Egg 2. WG Mini Muffin 3. Mixed Berries*** 4. Edamame*** 5. Milk
(*) Choose two food groups from "Snacks" list.			(**) MT may be substituted for GN/BP up to 3x a week. (***) Choking hazard for children under age 4.			
<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						



### REMINDERS:

January 2025 final claim due: **March 24 (Mon.)**

- Please remember to submit enrollments/renewals in a timely manner.
- 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 mark children out of school and to call in daycare closures.
- Send enrollments to: **Michigan:** [mifrontdesk@acdkids.org](mailto:mifrontdesk@acdkids.org) | Fax: (517) 332-5543  
**Illinois:** [ilcustomerservice@acdkids.org](mailto:ilcustomerservice@acdkids.org) | Fax: (708) 236-0872

# Why CACFP Week is Important and How Providers Can Celebrate

Each year, CACFP Week shines a spotlight on the vital role the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) plays in fostering nutrition, education, and healthy habits for millions of children and adults across the country. This dedicated week is not only an opportunity to raise awareness but also a chance for providers, families, and communities to come together and celebrate the program's impact.

CACFP ensures that children in child care settings, afterschool programs, and even at-risk environments have access to nutritious meals and snacks. For many, these meals represent the foundation of their daily nutrition. Proper nourishment is critical for brain development, growth, and overall well-being, and CACFP makes it possible for providers to meet these needs in a cost-effective way. It also provides valuable resources and training, empowering caregivers to deliver high-quality care.

But CACFP is about more than just food—it's about education. Providers play a key role in teaching children lifelong healthy habits by introducing them to balanced meals, fresh fruits, vegetables, and diverse cuisines. When paired with lessons about physical activity and self-care, CACFP becomes a tool for shaping healthier futures.

As a CACFP provider, you can amplify the importance of this week by engaging your community in meaningful and fun activities. Here are a few ways you can celebrate and spread awareness:

- 1. Host a Nutrition Workshop:** Invite families to learn about the benefits of balanced eating, portion control, and meal planning. Share recipes featuring CACFP-compliant meals that they can recreate at home.
- 2. Get Kids Involved:** Plan fun, hands-on activities like cooking demos, taste tests, or food art projects. These can help children build positive associations with healthy foods.
- 3. Share on Social Media:** Use your platform to post photos of meals, share success stories, or highlight how CACFP has benefited your program. Don't forget to use official hashtags like #CACFPWeek to join the national conversation.
- 4. Partner with Local Media:** Write an op-ed, send press releases, or invite reporters to visit your program. Advocacy and visibility can inspire others to support CACFP initiatives.

CACFP Week is a time to reflect on the difference this program makes and to empower providers and families to continue building healthier communities. By taking an active role in the celebration, you're helping to sustain the program and its critical mission.



■ Sources: [cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org) ■ Images: [cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org)

# The Importance of Whole Foods in a Healthy Diet

In today's fast-paced world, where processed and convenience foods dominate grocery store shelves, whole foods offer a crucial foundation for a healthy diet. Whole foods—such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and seeds—are unprocessed or minimally processed, retaining their natural nutrients and fiber. These foods are vital for overall health, particularly for growing children.

Unlike processed foods, which often contain added sugars, unhealthy fats, and artificial ingredients, whole foods are nutrient-dense. They provide essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that support bodily functions, boost immunity, and prevent chronic diseases like diabetes and heart disease. For children, whole foods play a key role in brain development, bone growth, and maintaining energy levels throughout the day.

The fiber content in whole foods is another major benefit. Fiber not only promotes healthy digestion but also helps regulate blood sugar levels and keeps kids feeling fuller longer, reducing the likelihood of overeating or reaching for sugary snacks. Whole grains, for example, are an excellent source of complex carbohydrates that fuel the body with sustained energy, unlike the quick highs and crashes from processed snacks.

Whole foods also help build healthier habits early in life. When children are exposed to a variety of natural, unprocessed foods, they are more likely to develop a preference for these nutrient-rich options as they grow. This creates a strong foundation for lifelong health.

Incorporating whole foods into meals doesn't have to be complicated. Swap refined grains for whole-grain bread, rice, or pasta. Serve fresh fruits and vegetables as snacks or side dishes, and experiment with plant-based proteins like beans or lentils. These simple changes can transform eating habits and set the stage for a lifetime of good health.

By focusing on whole foods, families can cultivate healthier eating patterns that provide real nourishment. Whole foods aren't just fuel for the body—they are building blocks for long-term wellness, offering a natural and delicious way to thrive.



## Rainbow Veggie Wraps

**Yield:** 6 wraps

### Ingredients:

6 whole-grain tortillas  
 1 cup shredded carrots  
 1 cup sliced bell peppers  
 1 cup spinach leaves  
 1 cup shredded chicken or turkey  
 1/2 cup low-fat ranch or hummus (optional)

### Instructions:

1. Wash all vegetables thoroughly. Slice the bell peppers and shred the carrots if not pre-shredded.
2. Lay one tortilla on a flat surface. Spread 1 tbsp of low-fat ranch or hummus evenly over the tortilla.
3. Layer a handful of spinach leaves, a portion of shredded carrots, bell peppers and 2-3 tbsp of shredded cooked chicken onto the tortilla.
4. Tightly roll up the tortilla, tucking in the ends to secure the filling.
5. Cut each wrap in half for easier handling.
6. Serve with a side of diced fruit and a glass of milk to complete the meal.

**Nutrition Information:** (serving size 1 wrap): 320 calories, 8 grams fat, 36 grams carbohydrate, 5 grams fiber, 18 grams protein.

**Safety notes:** *Keep children away from knives used to cut the vegetables.*

⊕ Grain ⊕ Vegetable  
 ⊕ Meat/Meat  
 Alternate

■ Images: Adobe  
 Stock Images



## ASK PARENTS FOR DONATIONS

Asking parents for donations of art supplies, books, toys, cleaning products, or even gently used furniture is a way to save money on new items.



Many parents are eager to contribute, especially when they know it directly benefits their child's learning environment.

Create a list of items you regularly use like wipes or paints, and post the list where parents will see it - on your social media page, or a visible spot near the entrance. Be specific! Parents are more likely to donate when they understand exactly what's needed and how it will be used.

Timing is also important. Consider seasonal donation drives, such as requesting craft supplies well before the holidays. You can also encourage parents to bring in items they no longer need, such as clothes, puzzles, or books their older children have outgrown.

To encourage participation, express gratitude! Acknowledge donations in your social media posts or by creating a "thank you" board in your daycare.

Lastly, keep it optional. Donations should never feel mandatory. Frame the request as a way for parents to play a more active role in enriching their child's care experience. By fostering a spirit of collaboration, you'll not only save money, but also strengthen relationships with the families you serve.

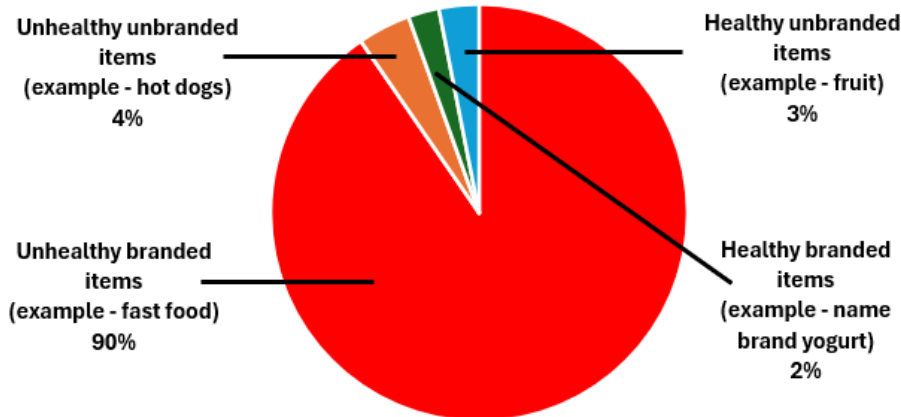
# How Child Influencers Can Affect Kids' Food Choices

Over the past years vlogs rapidly have become an attractive platform for food industries, sponsoring social media influencers to promote their products. As with more traditional media, social media influencers predominantly promote unhealthy drinks and foods that are high in sugar, fat, and salt – consumption of which may increase the risk of obesity and non-communicable diseases.

In 2019, a study published in the Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics found that social media had a definite influence on kids' diets. The study aimed to determine the frequency with which kid influencers promote branded and unbranded food and drinks during their YouTube videos and assess the nutritional quality of food and drinks shown.

The study used data to identify the five most-watched kid influencers (ages 3 to 14 years) on YouTube. Researchers looked at 50 of their videos that featured food and/or drinks on the thumbnail image of the video. Here are some of the results:

Videos Featuring Food & Drink



All videos watched in the study had over 48 billion views total. The videos featuring food and/or drinks had 1 billion views. The conclusion of the study was that kid influencers generate millions of impressions for unhealthy food and drink brands through product placement. The study recommended that The Federal Trade Commission strengthen regulations regarding product placement on YouTube videos featuring young children.

■ Source: [aap.org](http://aap.org), [nih.org](http://nih.org) ■ Image: [fda.gov](http://fda.gov)

## Dr. Seuss's Birthday March 2nd

**GET INVOLVED!** Dr. Seuss's Birthday is a nationwide reading celebration that takes place annually on March 2 — Dr. Seuss's birthday.

With the publication of *The Cat in the Hat* in 1957 and *Green Eggs and Ham* in 1960, Theodor Geisel, AKA Dr. Seuss, revolutionized the way kids learn to read.

Celebrate with these fun activities!

### ACTIVITY #1

#### LETTER SCAVENGER HUNT:

Choose a letter. Provide students with small colored sticky notes. Invite them to mark words that start with the letter they are searching for on classroom signs, posters, or book covers. Make a list of all the words your class finds in the classroom that start with your featured letter.

### ACTIVITY #2

#### SENSORY LETTERS:

Cut letters out of fine grain sandpaper or another textured material. Mix them and have kids sort and match them. Encourage kids to trace the letters with their fingers as they sort. Provide clay for students to make letter shapes. Alternatively, use raw whole grain pizza dough. Start with clean hands and have students create letter shapes with the dough. Bake and serve!



■ Source/Image: [seussville.com](http://seussville.com)



## Classic Pine Cone Bird Feeders

Pine Cones  
Peanut Butter  
Small Bowls  
Popsicle Stick  
Paper Plate or Tray  
Bird Seed  
Twine or String  
Scissors

### STEP 1

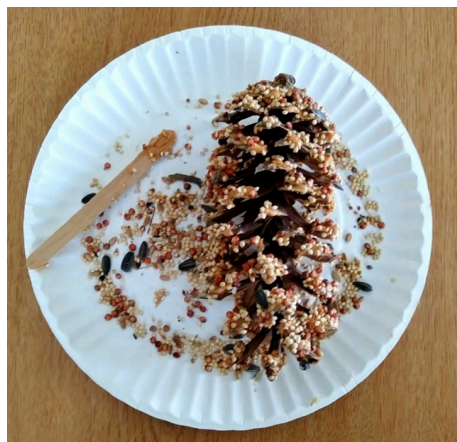
To begin making the pine cone bird feeders, have children place their pine cone onto their paper plate or plastic tray and spread peanut butter on it with a popsicle stick.

### STEP 2

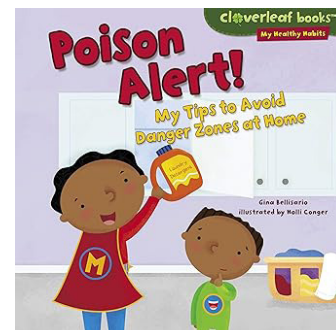
Sprinkle the bird seed on the pine cone so it sticks to the peanut butter. You can also roll the peanut butter-covered cone in the bird seed.

### STEP 3

Tie the twine or string around the top of the pine cone and hang from a tree or hook.

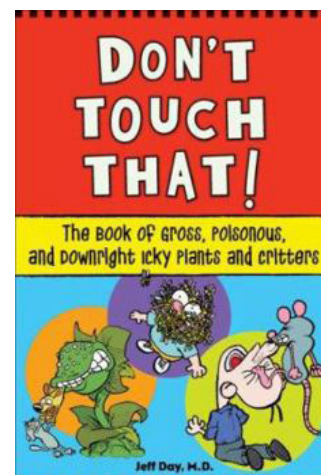


March makes us aware of danger during Poison Prevention Week. Here a few books about staying away from danger!



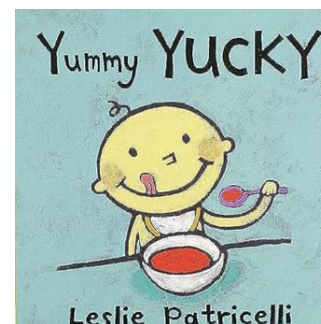
**Poison Alert!: My Tips to Avoid Danger Zones at Home**

by Gina Bellisario (Author)



**Don't Touch That!: The Book of Gross, Poisonous, and Downright Icky Plants and Critters**

by Jeff Day MD (Author)



**Yummy Yucky**

by Leslie Patricelli (Author, Illustrator)

# National Poison Prevention Week

## Watch Out for Water Beads

National Poison Prevention Week (March 16-22, 2025) is a time that highlights the risk of being poisoned by household products. Take a peek under your kitchen sink or in your laundry room and there will be several items that could be dangerous. Household cleaning agents, prescription medications, pesticides, and other items can pose serious hazards to the health and well-being of our families and even our pets. National Poison Prevention Week is here to raise awareness of these dangers and to make sure we are all mindful of what lurks in our own homes.

This month, we are focusing on the dangers of ingesting water beads. Water beads, also known as Orbeez, Aquabeads, Beados, PixOs, Magic Beads, MarvelBeads, and Sooper Beads are known for the fun, sensory experience kids have when playing with them.

Water beads are made from superabsorbent material that can swell to hundreds of times their original size when exposed to fluids. They are commonly sold as child sensory products, gel projectiles for toy "gel blaster" guns, and decorations. If swallowed, they can expand in the gastrointestinal tract and cause intestinal blockage and even death. They can also cause injury if placed in the ear canal or nose.

Water beads in dehydrated form are often sold in sets of tens of thousands, which makes it more likely that misplaced water beads in the home will not be noticed until found by a young child, a group known for exploring their environment by placing objects in their mouth – especially objects like water beads that look like candy.

According to a study published in American Journal of Emergency Medicine, there were an estimated 8,159 visits to U.S. emergency departments from 2007 through 2022 involving water beads among people younger than 20 years. More than half (55%) of cases involved children younger than 5 years. Most emergency department visits in this study involved children swallowing water beads (46%), followed by putting water beads in the ear (33%)

or nose (12%). Eye injuries made up 9% of cases in this study. Most patients were treated and released (92%). The proportion of cases admitted was highest among children younger than 5 years (10%), and this age group accounted for most (90%) of admissions in this study.

If ingested, these beads also can block off your child's airway or rupture an eardrum once they grow to their maximum size after being exposed to the body's fluids or moisture, says Omoyemi Adebayo, MD, FACEP, the chair of emergency medicine at University of Maryland Baltimore Washington Medical Center.

"If only one or a few of these [beads] were to be accidentally inhaled by a child, the child could begin to suffer mysterious, recurrent pneumonia or bronchitis from the retained foreign material in their airway that essentially serves as a magnet for bacteria," says Dr. Adebayo. "And, these infections would appear unexplained because these beads are notoriously difficult to identify on a regular x-ray of the neck, chest, or abdomen."

To prevent these injuries, try using other materials for children's sensory experience like spaghetti, tapioca pearls, cubed Jello, etc., to prevent the accidental ingestion of water beads.



# March 2025

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

**1. Whole foods include**

- \_\_\_\_.
- a. Whole grains
  - b. Legumes
  - c. Nuts
  - d. All of the above

**2. What percentage of food-related child influencer videos contain unhealthy branded items?**

- a. 80 percent
- b. 4 percent
- c. 90 percent
- d. 75 percent

**3. Dr. Seuss is the author's real name.**

- a. True
- b. False

**4. Water beads in dehydrated form are often sold in sets of tens of thousands.**

- a. True
- b. False

**5. ER visits related to water beads involve \_\_\_\_.**

- a. Swallowing them
- b. Putting them in ears
- c. Putting them up nose
- d. All of the above

**6. Fiber does not help regulate blood sugar.**

- a. True
- b. False

**7. Posting on social media is not a good way to celebrate CACFP week.**

- a. True
- b. False

**8. The videos watched in the child influencer study had how many views?**

- a. 10 billion
- b. 48 billion
- c. 4 billion
- d. 100 million

**9. Whole foods provide nutrients that support bodily functions and boost immunity.**

- a. True
- b. False

**10. Water beads are dangerous in the intestinal tract because?**

- a. They absorb nutrients
- b. They make people feel full
- c. They cause nausea
- d. They can cause a blockage

**11. The Cat in the Hat was published in \_\_\_\_.**

- a. 1957
- b. 1949
- c. 1952
- d. 1961

**12. Whole foods can be processed foods.**

- a. True
- b. False

**13. Whole, unprocessed foods retain their nutrients and fiber.**

- a. True
- b. False

**14. \_\_\_\_ are an excellent source of complex carbohydrates.**

- a. Smoked meats
- b. Whole grains
- c. Donuts
- d. Lunchables

**15. Most emergency room cases of water bead ingestion occur in kids older than 5 years.**

- 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 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).**