



Parent Newsletter

MARCH
2011

www.childandfamilyopp.org



MARCH IS NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH!

Want to know more about what your child should or should not be eating? Talk to your Food Service Technician or teaching staff to learn more. We have information available on these topics: healthy snacks, quick but healthy meals, adding more fruits and vegetables to meals, cooking on a budget, feeding picky eaters, and healthier desserts. You can also request an individual meeting with our Nutrition Manager, who is a licensed dietician, if you have concerns about your child's diet.



RECRUITMENT FOR FALL PROGRAMS HAS BEGUN!

New applications for summer childcare and fall Head Start or Head Start Pre-K programs are in centers. Please fill out an application and return it to any staff member. If you need help with completing the application, we would be happy to assist you.

Families with children who are receiving child care who wish to continue care after June 30, 2011 must also complete a new application. These completed applications must be returned before June 30, 2011 in order to continue attending our program.

All parents are encouraged to spread the word about Head Start and take applications to friends and family members. Staff will be distributing applications in your community – let them know if you can help or if you have ideas about where it would be beneficial to have applications available.

Questions? Call the Enrollment Specialist at
1-800-834-4378 or 667-2995, ext. 237

We've Been Waiting For You

With one of the busiest Policy Council seasons behind us and with a lot of work in front of us, we look forward to the possibility of others joining us as Policy Council members.

Please consider this invitation as a way of giving back to our organization and your child and families program. If you are interested or would like to learn more about Policy Council, please talk to your center staff.

We hope you will consider this invitation!!

COMMUNITY MATTERS MORE

Vote for Child and Family Opportunities!

Bangor Savings is again hosting its "Community Matters More" votes that will award non-profits with either \$1,000.00, or \$5,000. Child and Family Opportunities, Inc. is not on the ballot this year, however they do welcome write-in candidates. Please feel free to write us in as **Child and Family Opportunities** on their on-line voting. Paper ballots are also available at the bank. The deadline is March 7, 2011 at 11:59pm! <https://www.bangor.com/Why-Bangor-Savings/Supporting-Our-Communities/Voting.aspx>

We will be Closed All Day Friday March 25th
to attend an agency-wide All-Staff Day.
Monday March 28th we will re-open as usual.

Our newsletters are available on
line on our website :
www.childandfamilyopp.org

Free Tax Filing Assistance for Many Mainers

Tax season has begun, and whether you use an accountant or a computer program, or try to file your returns on your own, it can be an expensive and complicated process. But thanks to the AARP Foundation, people in Maine with low-to-moderate incomes do not have to go it alone, and help is available for free.

Joan Jagolinzer is the state volunteer coordinator for the AARP Tax Aide program. She says there are several sites around the state staffed with volunteer counselors to help people file returns. **"We take care of people of all ages. We can handle people with a very simple return to a fairly complex return."** Jagolinzer says many of the tax-help sites have evening and weekend hours to accommodate different schedules. Drop-ins and appointments are welcome; just be sure to bring as much of your information as possible.

"The first thing that they would want to bring with them, if they can find it, is a copy of last year's tax return, and the social security cards of everybody that they are going to claim on their tax return, and then all of the 1099s and W-2s."

Jagolinzer says all the volunteer Tax Aide counselors must pass IRS certification exams, and are kept up to date with changing tax laws every year. Most returns are filed electronically and many taxpayers will receive their refunds within a week or two.

To find a Tax Aide site near you,
call 1-888-AARP NOW, or go to www.aarp.org

Getting Children Involved



An easy way to get children to try new foods is to get them involved in meals. Here are some age-appropriate suggestions.

3-year-olds can

- Wipe table tops.
- Scrub and rinse fruit and vegetables.
- Wash and tear lettuce.
- Snap green beans.
- Bring ingredients from one place to another.
- Mix ingredients and pour liquids.
- Knead and shape yeast dough.
- Put things in the trash.
- Shake liquids in a covered container.

4-year-olds can also

- Peel oranges or hard cooked eggs.
- Mash bananas with a fork.
- Set a table.
- Cut parsley or green onions with kid-safe scissors.

5-year-olds can also

- Measure ingredients.
- Use an egg beater or whisk.



Pizzas in a Pocket! Serves 4,

Prep Time 8 minutes Cook time 8-10 minutes

Help your kids make their own pizzas! All you need is the following ingredients to create this healthy snack:

- 2 6-inch whole-wheat pitas
- 1/2 cup grated mozzarella cheese
- 1/2 cup grated provolone or other cheese
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce (a small can is one cup)
- 1/2 cup sliced peppers, mushrooms, onions, broccoli, or thinly sliced zucchini squash

Preheat oven to 375, cut each pita in half, to form a “pocket”, use kitchen scissors or a sharp knife.

Combine cheeses in a small mixing bowl and add tomato sauce and stir well to blend—kids will enjoy helping with the stirring.

Put each pita half on a piece of foil. Help kids spoon 1/4 cup of the cheese mixture inside each pocket. Have them choose a few veggies to place on top of the cheese mixture. Wrap the pitas in the foil and seal shut.

Place foil packages on a cookie sheet and bake till cheese is melted 8 to 10 minutes. Carefully remove from oven and cool for a few minutes before unwrapping. Use caution opening the foil packets—there will be steam; allow pizzas to cool before serving.

Each pizza contains 180 calories.



Toddler Portion Sizes

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, a good guideline is that a toddler portion size should equal about a quarter of an adult portion size. Example of toddler size portions include:

- * 1/4 to 1/2 slice of bread
- * 1/4 cup dry cereal
- * One to two tablespoons cooked vegetables
- * 1/2 piece fresh fruit
- * 1/3 cup yogurt
- * 1/2 egg
- * 1 tablespoon smooth peanut butter (if no risk of food allergies) spread thinly on bread or cracker
- * 1 ounce of meat

If your toddler wants to eat more, you can always give seconds, like another tablespoon of vegetables or the other half of the piece of fruit.

The only important nutritional limits are not to overdo it on milk and juice. Any more than 16 to 24 ounces of milk and four to six ounces of fruit juice will likely fill up your child so he/she is not hungry for real food.

Preschoolers and Younger School-age Portion Sizes

A good guideline is that portion sizes for your preschooler or younger school age child, kids from the age of about four to eight years old, should be about a third of an adult portion size. Examples of portion sizes for these kids include:

- * 1/2 slice of bread
- * 1/2 cup dry cereal
- * 1/2 cup cooked vegetables
- * 1/2 piece fresh fruit
- * 1/2 cup yogurt
- * 1/2 cup low-fat milk
- * 1 egg

Healthy Children, Healthy Choices

As a parent, your responsibility is to buy healthy groceries and serve nutritious food to your growing children. Start by establishing a routine, even if it is difficult at first. This means a set time for breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks. Once you have a routine for meals and snacks, meal times are more relaxed. Most children are happier on a schedule and become hungry at regular times. You'll feel happier about your parenting job when the family has a routine.

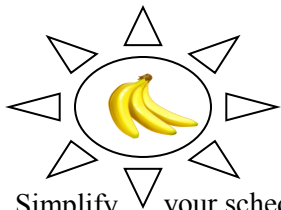


- Be consistent! Children need a meal routine just like they need a bedtime routine. Plan for three meals and two snacks each day. Serve a vegetable or fruit at every meal. Fruits and vegetables are great for snacking too.
- Avoid arguments about high-fat, high-sugar foods by not bringing them into the house. Leave the candy, soft drinks, chips, and cookies at the store.
- Serve water when your child is thirsty. Water is inexpensive and healthy.
- Tired of hearing your children beg for sugary, high-fat foods? They may be influenced by too many commercials. Limit the amount of time your children watch TV to less than two hours a day.

Eat at Home

Part of having a healthy family includes spending time together. The family meal is a great way for everyone to get together, have a conversation, and eat together.

- Serving meals at home requires planning. Before you do your shopping, sit down and plan your meals for the week. Make a list of all the ingredients you'll need to prepare healthy, balanced meals. When fatigue kicks in and you want dinner on the table fast, your menu is already planned and the ingredients are right on hand.
- Make sure to always include low-fat or nonfat dairy products, fruit, and vegetables. Limit the amount of processed ready-to-eat-snacks you buy (such as potato chips or cookies). Prepackaged and processed foods are usually higher in calories and fats and often more expensive. For the price of a large bag of chips and box of cookies you can buy the items listed below:



- * 1 pounds of apples
- * 1 pound of bananas
- * 1 pound of carrots
- * 3 pounds of potatoes
- * 1 pound of peppers



- Simplify your schedule for lessons, teams, and commitments that don't interest you or your child. If you or your child are feeling overwhelmed, consider limiting the number of organized activities your child participates in to one per season.

better quality of life. Say no to

Picky Eating Tips

- Parents are role models! Set a good example by eating healthy foods yourself! Buy and try new fruits and vegetables. Drink water between meals. Set an eating routine at home for your meals and snacks. Your children will learn by your good example.
 - Don't expect your child to like something new the first time. Offer it again in a week. It usually takes several tries before children are willing to try new foods.
 - Let your child serve him/herself a small amount of each food on his/her plate. If your child is too young to do this, a parent can offer to place a small amount of food on the plate. Assure the child that he/she can ask for more if still hungry.
 - It's normal for children to explore foods. Young children often touch or smell the food on their plate.
 - Children thrive on routine. Just like you have a bedtime routine, stick to a feeding routine. Your child is less likely to be tired or fussy at mealtimes! Offer healthy foods. Your child soon learns these are the foods in your home and will eventually eat!



PRODUCT RECALLS

Refreshing Rings Infant Teethers/Rattles—Small pieces of the plastic ball can detach as a result of children chewing on the teether/rattle, posing a ingestion hazard. The product has a red-water-filled ring on one end and a black and white polka dot ball on the other. The two ends of the rattles/teethers are connected by a black and white flexible plastic rod with 3 floating rings — it is style number 80026. Immediately take the teether from children and contact Sassy Inc for directions on how to return it. Call 1-800-323-6336 or visit the website at www.sassybaby.com.

Generation 2 Worldwide “SafetyCraft” Brand Drop-Side Cribs. The hardware can fail and place infants at the risk of strangulation. Immediately stop using these cribs and find an alternative, safe-sleeping environment. This recall involves the “Foundations” SafetyCraft crib. It has the word “Foundations” printed on the mattress support assembly label under the mattress. This warning involves all SafetyCraft drop side cribs. Some have clear plastic headboard and footboard.

The drop-side hardware can break and detach from a corner of the crib. It then creates a space where an infant or toddler can be wedged or be entrapped. In addition the crib’s mattress support can detach and create another hazard.

Never use any crib with missing, broken or loose parts. Make sure to tighten hardware from time to time to keep the crib sturdy. Check to make sure the moving part operates smoothly; check all sides and

corners of the crib for any disengagement. Do not try to repair any side of the crib, especially with tape, wire or rope.

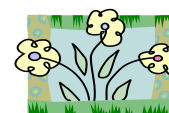
Sniglar Cribs: The recall involves non-drop-side, full-size cribs with model number 60091931 by IKEA. The bolts provide to secure the mattress support are not long enough and can cause the mattress to collapse. They were sold at IKEA stores from October 2005 through June 2010 for about \$80. If the bolt on the crib does not extend through the nut, the crib is included in the recall. Contact IKEA for a free repair kit. Contact at www.ikea-usa.com or 888-966-4532.

LED Nightlights AmerTac model numbers 71193,71194, and 327879. Model 7719 is square, and Model 71194 and 327879 resemble a computer mouse. They were sold at various stores and home centers from March 2009 through Jan 2011. The lights are reported to smoke, burn, melt or char, sometimes resulting in property damage. Immediately unplug them from the wall. Contact AmerTac at 800-420-7511 or visit the website at www.amertac.com or www.recall-center.com for a full refund.

Hoover WindTunnel Canister Vacs are recalled due to fire and shock hazards. The power cord can short-circuit even if the machine has been turned off but left plugged in. The model number is 53755, in black and silver with a power nozzle. It was sold nationwide from March 2003 to December 2008 for between \$250-\$280. Immediately stop using the machine and contact Hoover for a free repair. Call toll-free at (888) 564-2066 or visit www.hoover.com/windtunnelcanisterrecall. They offer a free repair.

Basic Household Poison Prevention Tips from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission

1. Keep all household products and medicines locked up, out of sight and out of children’s reach.
2. Use child-resistant packaging properly by closing the container securely after each use or choose child-resistant packaging, which does not need to be re-secured.
3. Call **1-800-222-1212** immediately in case of poisoning.
4. When products are in use, keep children in your sight, even if you must take them along when answering the phone or doorbell.
5. Keep items in their original containers.
6. Leave the original labels on all products, and read the label before using.
7. Do not put decorative lamps or candles that contain lamp oil where children can reach them. Lamp oil can be very toxic if ingested by young children.
8. Always turn the light on when giving or taking medicine so you can see what you are taking. Check the dosage every time.
9. Avoid taking medicine in front of children.
10. Clean out the medicine cabinet periodically and safely dispose of unneeded and outdated medicines.





GUIDE TO MAKING IT THROUGH THE MAINE WINTERS ...

Kids got the blah's? Try these ideas to wake them up ~ ~ ~

k

SNOW ACTIVITIES

- ⇒ SLEDDING ! (with and without sleds)
- ⇒ dressing practice before going out in the snow
- ⇒ “dressing chart” (can create sequencing cards using catalogs with photos of winter clothes, or photos of the children themselves)
- ⇒ allow opportunities for kids to *experience* dressing themselves

SLOW DOWN ...

- ⇒ gross-motor activities inside for those really cold days...Brr. (indoor gym available?)
- ⇒ exercise with kids - daily !
- ⇒ break up indoor/outdoor transitions
- ⇒ flexible indoor/outdoor time
- ⇒ be consistent, but allow for subtle changes
- ⇒ get extra rest, exercise
- ⇒ calm down with relaxation exercises (Try some Mozart and other forms of great music.)
- ⇒ create warm, quiet, cozy spots.

FIND/CREATE MORE BEAUTY IN YOUR ENVIRONMENT

- ⇒ (plant some bulbs and watch them bloom, find some rich, brown dirt to play with, share extra pictures and stories, etc...)
- ⇒ be flexible (What ideas do the kids have to share?)
- ⇒ try to balance the work load, challenges - Is everyone doing the best they can?
- ⇒ treat yourself
- ⇒ bring the *outside in...* (wood stumps and hammers, seaweed, brush, snow, frozen ice (with color, manipulatives) and spray bottles with warm water in the water table, etc...)

LAUGH !

- ⇒ Remember the light-heartedness and joy of childhood - *recreate it for yourself*
- ⇒ make footprints in the fresh snow
- ⇒ allow for lots of sensory experiences
- ⇒ build a cardboard stage and make some puppets
- ⇒ have a “FUN DAY” (clowns, special luncheon, “Teddy Bear Picnic”, “Pajama Day”, Stone Soup Picnic, etc...) Remember to invite friends.

COOKING !

- ⇒ Put some newsprint *under* the tables and let the kids draw on their backs
- ⇒ make a pile of crumpled newspaper and jump in it, crawl through it
- ⇒ “mummify” yourself in toilet paper and unwrap
- ⇒ Find lots of extra, big **cardboard boxes and “loose parts”**
- ⇒ stomp on some egg cartons - How does it feel without shoes?

DANCE !

- ⇒ Listen to music and make your own
- ⇒ take a walk
- ⇒ Allow for creative urges
- ⇒ follow the children’s lead as they create other roles for you and for themselves - let yourself be a part
- ⇒ more music - find/make some instruments and have a parade
- ⇒ keep some chocolate nearby - for emergencies