

# Parent Provider Connections - January 2023

## 1 Bear

### Bear Walk Workout

With a timer and music ready to go, tell the children they are going to do interval training with bear walks. Set the timer for 30 seconds and ask the children to bear walk in a safe area until the music stops. They will rest for 30 seconds and start again. Repeat as many times as the children would like.

### Cute Cutouts

Cut out the circle of a paper plate. Have children paint the circle ring brown. When dry, have them glue two circles of construction paper to the top of the unpainted side for ears and a popsicle stick to the bottom. Have them hold up to their faces and peek through to

### Three Bears Porridge

2 ½ cups oats, rolled dry  
2 ¼ cup milk  
2 ¼ cup water

Bring milk and water to a boil. Add oats. Reduce heat to medium. Stir constantly for 5-8 minutes until oatmeal slightly thickens. Add cinnamon to taste. Serve ¾ cup.

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### Fiber Facts

Oats are a good source of whole grains and are an especially good source of fiber. Other good sources of fiber include whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and legumes. Fiber helps the body with regular bowel movements, maintain a healthy weight, and lower the risk of heart disease and diabetes.



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**INSTRUCTIONS:** In the body of each newsletter, there is space for you to customize information you would like to convey to the parents. This is an opportunity to share with parents examples of the healthy food you provide, as well as the fun and educational activities their children are engaged in. To customize, open the PDF and click on the blank field to type your newsletter, like the example above. Then save the file and print your copies, or attach them in an email, to distribute them to parents.

Happy New Year Everyone!

We are excited to share the start of the new year with learning and adventures ahead. This month we will start our year of counting with animals with the bear. The children will have activities while they are in our care and you can try any of these at home as well. The Three Bears Porridge is an excellent, healthy breakfast on these cold winter mornings.

Please note, we will be open on Martin Luther King Day on January 16, 2023. Look for spring field trip and Valentine's Day Celebration information to be coming home soon!

As always, thank you for trusting us with the care of your children. We look forward to a wonderful 2023 together!

Sincerely,  
Donna



CACFP is an indicator of quality child care.  
This institution is an equal opportunity provider.



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## 1 Bear

### Bear Walk Workout

With a timer and music ready to go, tell the children they are going to do interval training with bear walks. Set the timer for 30 seconds and ask the children to bear walk in a safe area until the music stops. They will rest for 30 seconds and start again. Repeat as many times as the children would like.

### Cute Cubs

Cut out the center circle of a paper plate. Have children paint the exterior ring brown. When dry, have them glue two half circles of construction paper to the top of the unpainted side for ears and a popsicle stick to the bottom. Have them hold it up to their faces and peek through to see all the other cute cubs.

### Three Bears Porridge

2 ½ cups oats, rolled dry  
2 ¼ cup milk  
2 ¼ cup water

Bring milk and water to a boil. Add oats. Reduce heat to medium. Stir constantly for 5-8 minutes until oatmeal slightly thickens. Add cinnamon to taste. Serve ¾ cup.

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### Fiber Facts

Oats are a good source of whole grains and are an especially great source of fiber. Other good sources of fiber include roughage like vegetables, legumes and fruits. Fiber helps the body with regular bowel movements, helps maintain a healthy weight, and lowers risk of heart disease and diabetes.



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## 2 Kangaroos

### Ounce Equivalents

Serving grains is required by the CACFP. Ounce equivalents (oz eq.) are used to tell the amount of grain in a food and how the serving size is measured. Use the USDA Grains Measuring Chart to help determine serving sizes. Ounce equivalents can also be determined by weight or using the Homemade Grains Worksheet.

### Krafty Kangaroo

Help children cut out a kangaroo head and mouth that they have colored using the template from [cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org). They can glue these onto a brown paper bag to create their own kangaroo puppet. Add a kangaroo pouch using various colors of cut fabric.

### One Pouch Orzo, Chicken & Tomato

2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken  
1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes  
1 cup chicken broth  
¾ cup uncooked orzo pasta

Bring tomatoes, broth and pasta to a boil, reduce to a simmer and cover. Cook for 12-15 minutes or until liquid is absorbed. Add the chicken for the last 3 minutes of cooking. Add seasonings to taste. Serve ¾ cup.

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### Mother May I Kangaroo Jump?

A simple twist on a classic! Show the children how to kangaroo jump - legs together, squat as low as possible and JUMP! The children will line up on the opposite side from Mother Kangaroo and try to reach her as they take Kangaroo Jumps.



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## 3 Koalas

### Circle Up Koalas

Using newspaper, assist children in cutting two 3" circles and two 6" circles. Glue the two 3" circles to the back of one 6" circle to create ears. To form the body, glue the other 6" circle close to the bottom of a thick piece of paper. Add the head to the top. Add googly eyes and black oval nose.



### Koala Klimb

Koalas are terrific climbers! Children will have so much fun developing their gross motor skills as they climb like koalas around the house or on the equipment at a nearby park. They are increasing both their coordination and strength!

### Sautéed Tofu and Broccoli

4 oz spaghetti noodles, whole-wheat, uncooked  
½ pkg 14 oz tofu  
¼ cup soy sauce  
½ broccoli, fresh, chopped

Cook noodles. Press and drain the tofu and then cut into ½ inch cubes and pour soy sauce over. Sauté the broccoli for 5 minutes. Remove broccoli and set aside. Place tofu in skillet on medium-high heat and cook until golden on each side. Gently stir in broccoli and continue cooking. Add noodles and mix. Serve 1 cup.

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### Marvelous Meat Alternates

Tofu is packed with protein, making it a great meat alternate. Others include beans or peas, natural or processed cheeses, and eggs which are great options for breakfast. Meat alternates provide protein, B vitamins and minerals such as iron, zinc and magnesium.



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## 4 Pigs

### Pick a Pig

Using the pig movement cards available at [cacfp.org](https://cacfp.org), ask the children one by one to pick a pig. The child will call out the movement everyone should do while the music is on. Once the music stops, another child can call out the next pig movement. Use the blank pig templates to create your own action cards.

### Piggy Plate

Have children paint a paper plate with various colors of pig paint. They can attach two triangles made from construction paper that match the paint to the back of the plate for ears. Add a construction paper circle nose, black marker nostrils and googly eyes to finish your pig.

### Trough Stew

3 cups frozen spinach, chopped  
2 ½ cups canned low-sodium garbanzo beans, drained, rinsed  
1 cup golden seedless raisins  
¾ cup canned diced tomatoes  
1 ½ cups chicken stock

In a large pot, sauté spinach in oil for 15 minutes. Mix in garbanzo beans, raisins, tomatoes and stock. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Simmer uncovered for 15 minutes. Serve 1 cup.

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### A Complete Meal

Soup is a fantastic way to incorporate several CACFP components into one meal. You can easily meet vegetable and meat/meat alternate requirements in many soup recipes, but let's not forget to offer variety at mealtimes. Remember to add a fruit, grain and milk to complete the meal.



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## 5 Sheep

### Counting Sheep

Using sidewalk chalk or large number posters, create a large number grid. Using the number card templates from [cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org), ask one child to draw a card. They will leap to the number on the grid and then jump the same number of times. Repeat. While waiting, all other children can do the same number of jumps in place.

### Soft Sheep

Using the sheep template at [cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org), have children practice fine motor skills by gluing cotton balls to the sheep printout. They can then cut out and glue it onto large construction paper to decorate and create a meadow scene.

### Sleepy Stir Fry

$\frac{3}{4}$  cups carrots, frozen, sliced  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  cups green beans, frozen, cut  
1 cup broccoli, frozen, chopped  
Soy sauce

Sauté carrots, green beans and broccoli. Cook for 3 minutes, until vegetables are tender. Add soy sauce to taste. Serve  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup.

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### Canned or Frozen

Commercially canned and frozen vegetables can both be a quick and easy way to get important nutrients in any meal. These vegetables are harvested and immediately packaged, preserving a majority of the vitamins and minerals. To avoid too much sodium, look for no salt added or reduced sodium versions.



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## 6 Foxes

### Quick Quesadilla

1 ½ cups chopped spinach  
16 oz can kidney beans, dark red, drained and rinsed  
4 whole-grain tortillas, 8 inch  
1 ½ cups mozzarella cheese, low-fat, shredded

Lightly mash beans by squeezing in bowl. Heat in microwave for 1 minute. Place half of the tortillas on a baking sheet. Spread ¾ cup of spinach on each tortilla. Top each with ¼ cup of bean mixture and ¾ cup cheese. Place remaining tortillas on top. Bake for 15 minutes at 350° F. Cut each quesadilla into 6 wedges and serve 2 wedges.

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### Easy Whole Grain-Rich

Incorporating WGR items into your menu can be as simple as a quick substitution. Use a whole-corn tortilla instead of one made of enriched, white flour or choose whole-wheat cereals. Pasta is also easy to incorporate WGR in your menu and might not be as noticeable to our picky eaters when served with a sauce, protein, veggies and toppings.

### Dinnertime, Mr. Fox

One child will be Mr. Fox and stand a chosen distance apart from the other children. Children in the line will take turns calling out "What time is it Mr. Fox?" Mr. Fox will answer with a time and the other children will take that many steps towards him. Then when Mr. Fox is ready, he will say, "dinnertime!" and try to tag another player. That player will become Mr. Fox.

### Foxy Fashion

Ask the children to cut out and paint fox ears using the template from [cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org). Have them glue the ears to a construction paper head band. Then, using one cup of an egg carton, have children paint and create a fox nose. Assist as needed to punch holes and attach string so they can wear it for pretend play.



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## 7 Pandas

### Playful Pandas

Did you know pandas love to play and hide things? Print the panda template from [cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org) and hide them all over your center or outside in your play area. You can write numbers on the pandas for number practice. Tell the children how many they need to find and set them off on their own hunt!

### Panda Mosaic

Have kids tear black tissue paper into small pieces and glue them onto the craft-by-number panda template from [cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org), as instructed.

### Panda Pockets

Thinly sliced apples  
Banana slices  
Pita pockets  
Nut butter

Toast the pita pockets and then slice into halves. Fill each half with 1 tbsp nut butter spread and add  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup bananas and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup apples to fill the pocket. Serve one pita half.

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### Fruit Hydration

Fruits help hydrate the body, which is especially needed during warm summer months. Choose juicy fruits such as watermelon, pineapple, apples, strawberries, melons and oranges to aid in hydration. Not only will you have added water, but also the important vitamins and minerals that fruit provides to keep the body healthy.



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# Parent Provider Connections - August 2023



## 8 Cows



### Cut a Rug

Create two movement dice with medium cube boxes. Label one die with body parts such as elbow and leg. Label the other with movements such as twist and wiggle. Turn on the music and let the children take turns rolling the dice to choose a body part and how to make it dance.

### Cow Cup

Ask the children to cut out small circles from black felt and one medium oval from pink felt. Glue the pink oval in the center of a medium white Styrofoam cup. Glue the black circles all over. Add googly eyes above the pink oval. Finish the pink nose by adding nostrils with a black marker. Create ears with white and black construction paper to finish your cow.

### Mooving Macaroni

2 cups fresh cauliflower florets  
1 ¼ cups whole-grain elbow macaroni  
½ cup of low-fat milk  
2 cups of cheddar cheese, shredded

Cook cauliflower uncovered in boiling water for 4 minutes until soft. Drain. Mash cauliflower until smooth. Cook macaroni according to package directions. Drain. Combine cauliflower mash, macaroni, milk, cheese, and seasonings to taste. Serve 1 cup.

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### Milk Notes

Cow's milk not only contains calcium and protein, but also many vital vitamins and minerals. If you have a written parent request to serve a non-dairy substitute in place of milk, make sure to check the nutrient profile to ensure it is nutritionally equivalent. If it is not, a doctor's note is required to be eligible for reimbursement.



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## 9 Dogs

### Dog Detectives

You will need a toy puppy. Tell the children you have lost it and need help finding it. Where could it be? The children will have fun trying to find the toy and practice object words and directional words as you give clues. Once they find the puppy, they can take turns hiding and giving clues.

### Puppy Puppet

Ask the children to paint a white paper plate. They can choose solid or spotted for their puppy. Once the paint has dried, assist by cutting out two holes for eyes. Attach a black construction paper circle for the nose and finish the mouth with a black marker. Cut two large tear drop shapes from construction paper and glue for ears. Add a craft stick to the bottom and you have created a puppy puppet.

### Pup-peroni Pizza

13.8 oz canned pizza crust dough, whole grain-rich  
1/3 cup tomato paste  
10 oz mozzarella cheese, shredded  
1 6 oz pkg pepperoni slices

Spread pizza crust onto a pan in rectangle shape. Spread tomato paste onto crust and cover with cheese. Add pepperoni slices evenly across pan. Bake at 450° F for 9-12 minutes. Cut pizza into 6 slices and serve 1 slice per child.

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### Healthy Herbs

Using herbs in meals adds yummy flavor without adding extra sodium and fat. Ask the children to help you start your own indoor herb garden planting seeds in small pots. They can also help you choose the right location and watch them grow.



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## 10 Deer

### Ladder Leap

Using pool noodles or sticks, place them parallel to each other to create the rungs of your ladder. Ask the children to leap like a deer from one rung to the next. Mix things up - hop on one foot or move the ladder rungs farther apart. You can even ask the children to stand on one rung and see what the next rung is they can reach.

### Dear Deer

Help the children trace and cut out their two hand prints from brown construction paper. Ask them to paint a 6" plate brown. Glue googly eyes and black triangle to make the deer's face. Finish by gluing the hands to the back of the plate to create antlers.

### Deer Mix

Wheat cereal squares  
Roasted whole pumpkin seeds

Give each child a ½ oz equivalent serving of cereal and ½ oz roasted whole pumpkin seeds. Add in your favorite mix-ins, such as cranberries, raisins, or slivered almonds.

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### Anytime Cereal

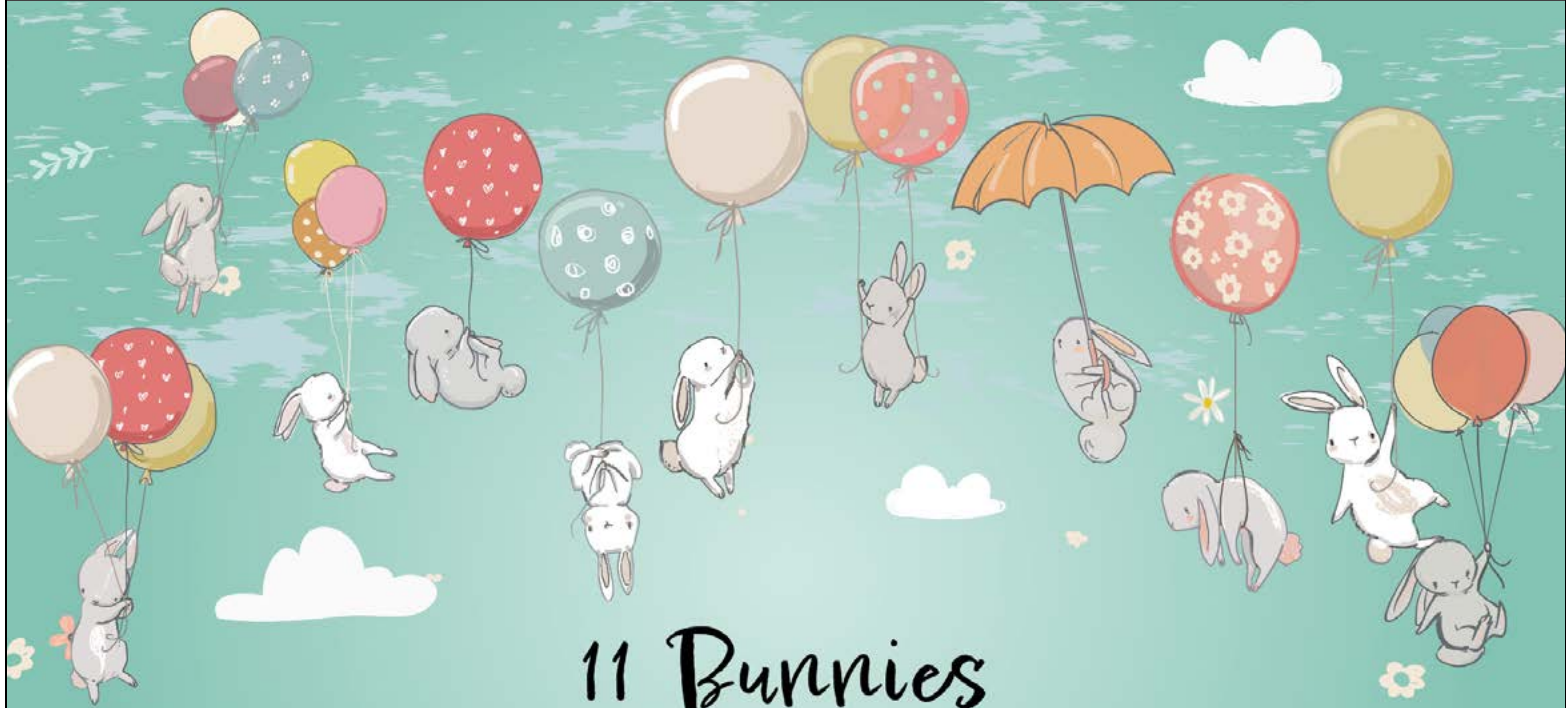
Traditionally, cereals are thought of as only breakfast food. However, they can be served as an anytime snack or complement to a meal. Cereal is also a great choice to meet your once-per-day WGR serving requirement. Be sure to choose a cereal that meets the sugar limits of no more than six grams per dry ounce.



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# Parent Provider Connections - November 2023



## 11 Bunnies

### Hop to It

Using the Bunny Says cards at [cacfp.org](http://cacfp.org), ask one child to be the bunny and to reach into a container and pull out an action card. Have them say, "Bunny says," and read out the action (like touch your elbow), and everyone should follow their direction. Children can take turns being the bunny and will have fun developing their listening skills.

### Stamping Bunnies

Have children dip the end of a cardboard tube in paint and stamp a circle on piece of construction paper for a cute bunny face. They can slightly squeeze the tube to stamp two oval ears. Use different paint colors to create a rainbow of bunnies or let the paint dry and have them decorate.

### Bunny Bites

18 medium carrots  
2 tbsp olive oil  
½ tsp dried basil

Peel and chop carrots into 3-inch-long strips. Toss in olive oil and seasonings. Spread on a baking sheet and bake at 400° F for 15 minutes or until tender. Salt and pepper to taste. Serve ¼ cup.

### What's in a Name?

When working with picky palates, we must get creative. Sometimes a little renaming or fun creative names can cause enough interest to warrant a taste. This can be as easy as calling broccoli little trees. Try using favorite characters for inspiration or tie everything to your theme for the month. Who could pass up Bunny Bites?

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## 12 Geese

### Flying Fiesta Quinoa

1 cup quinoa, dry  
2 cups chicken broth  
1 ½ cups red and yellow bell peppers, diced  
1 tbsp parsley

Combine quinoa and chicken broth in a small pot. Cover and bring to a boil. Simmer until broth is completely absorbed, about 10-15 minutes. Add bell peppers and parsley. Serve ¾ cup.

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### Grains for the Ages

Ancient grains are plants that have been cultivated for centuries and are virtually unchanged. Quinoa, rye and barley are all in this group and are a terrific way to change your WGR routine. Try adding these grains to soups or salads, as pilafs, or paired with a chili or vegetable stir fry.

### Wild Goose Chase

Create safe bases with various items such as a hula hoop, cardboard box, toys or play equipment. Choose one person to start as the goose keeper. When they call out the name of the base and say go, the other children will try to make it to that base. If someone gets tagged, they will become the goose keeper.

### Gorgeous Geese

Using the template from [cacf.org](https://cacf.org), have the children create their own gorgeous geese by gluing on colorful craft feathers and coloring in their beaks.

