

FEBRUARY

Let's Move It!

Recipes

Baked Apple French Toast Squares

5 large eggs
¾ cup skim milk
1½ tsp. ground cinnamon, divided into ½ tsp. and 1 tsp.
1 tsp. vanilla extract
10 slices whole wheat bread
5 apples, medium to large
5 Tbsp. pure maple syrup

Preheat oven to 350°F and line 9-by-13-inch baking pan with parchment. In large bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, ½ teaspoon cinnamon, and vanilla. Cut or tear bread into small cubes and add to egg mixture. Mix gently until all bread pieces are coated. Spread this mixture evenly in baking pan and set aside. Peel and cut apples into bite-sized pieces. Pour maple syrup into large microwaveable bowl and microwave for 20 seconds. Add 1 teaspoon cinnamon and mix well. Add apples to syrup and toss until all pieces are coated. Spread apple mixture evenly over bread. Bake 35 minutes or until apples are softened and bread pieces are firm. Cool slightly and serve. **Yield: 10 servings**

Meal Component: 1 serving (¼ recipe) = 1 grains/bread
Nutrition Information: 180 calories, 8 g protein, 31 g carbohydrates, 5 g dietary fiber, 15% calories from fat, 3 g total fat, .5 g saturated fat, 90 mg cholesterol, 17 g sugars, and 180 mg sodium

Carrot-Oatmeal Cookies

½ cup canola or vegetable oil
½ cup sugar
2 large eggs
2 cups (6 oz.) shredded carrots, about 3 medium to large carrots
2 cups white whole wheat flour
1 cup rolled oats
1 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt
Nonstick cooking spray

Guidelines for the proper credit of food may vary in some states. Please check with the CACFP in your state for more information.

Menu of the Month

Breakfast

Baked Apple French Toast Squares*
Milk

Lunch

Whole-Grain Spaghetti with Sauce
Orange Slices
Milk

Morning Snack

Carrot Sticks
Broccoli Heads
Ranch Dip

Afternoon Snack

Carrot-Oatmeal Cookies*
Milk

*Indicates recipes of the month.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Spray cookie sheet with nonstick cooking spray. In medium bowl, use fork to beat oil and sugar together until well combined. In small bowl, beat egg using fork. Add it to oil mixture. Add carrots. In large bowl, combine flour, oats, cinnamon, baking powder, and salt. Stir until evenly combined. Create an indentation in the middle of the dry ingredients. Slowly add oil mixture. Stir until wet and dry ingredients are evenly combined. Using large dinner spoon, drop batter onto cookie sheet, leaving a 2-inch space between cookies. Bake 15–18 minutes or until golden brown. Allow cookies to cool before serving. **Yield: 12 cookies**

Meal Component: 1 serving (2 cookies) = 1 grains/bread
Nutrition Information: 120 calories, 16 g carbohydrates, 2 g dietary fiber, 38% calories from fat, 5 g total fat, 1 g saturated fat, 15 mg cholesterol, 4 g sugars, and 76 mg sodium

Nutrition Notes

The Importance of Mealtime

In their book *Rethinking Nutrition: Connecting Science and Practice in Early Childhood Settings*, Susan Nitzke, Dave Riley, Ann Ramminger, and Georgine Jacobs observe the following about children and mealtime: “Meals are important for nutrition, but what happens during meals around the table is also important. . . . Mealtimes seem perfectly designed for many kinds of children’s learning, in large part because they are a consistently structured time that recurs every day. Children can experience the benefits of a group mealtime in their early childhood program regardless of whether they have this experience at home. Mealtimes can have an impact on children learning social skills (such as sharing, impulse control, and self-responsibility); intellectual skills (such as language and preliteracy abilities); and knowledge of the natural world (science).”

The Experienced Provider

In her book *Ants in Their Pants: Teaching Children Who Must Move to Learn*, Aerial Cross suggests using sign language as a way to promote sensory learning, enhance children’s attention skills, and develop an understanding of others with special needs. When teaching sign language in your program, remember that consistency is key. Always speak the word while signing to children, and try to integrate signing at every age. Most importantly, keep it fun!

Activities for Children

This month’s theme—Let’s Move It!—is reflected in these activities that allow children to explore their creativity.

Freeze Dance

Have the children spread out in the room, making sure there’s enough space for each child to move freely. Tell the children that they are going to dance to the music, but when the music stops they must freeze in their position. Start the music, and let the children dance! After a few moments of dancing, pause the music and observe how still they are. Start the music again, and then stop it again. Have the children freeze for longer and longer periods of time.

Painting to Music

Give each child a piece of paper and painting materials. Next, play music and instruct children to paint along with the music. Guide them through the activity, telling them to paint how they feel when they hear the music. For variation, play different types of music and note the differences in their paintings.

Resources

Asch, Frank, and Devin Asch. 2002. *Like a Windy Day*. San Diego: Harcourt. In this imaginative book, a little girl wants to move like the wind. She zooms down hillsides, races through streets of a town, and scatters seeds. The book provides lots of opportunities for children to improvise movement based on the story.

Dow, Connie Bergstein. 2011. *One, Two, What Can I Do? Dance and Music for the Whole Day*. St. Paul: Redleaf Press. Connie Bergstein Dow, a dance and movement specialist for young children, provides exciting movement activities that help with transitions; develop motor skills; and explore literacy, math, science, and social studies. The book includes two CDs featuring the music of Debbie Clement.