Illinois Child Care Bureau News

July – September 2015

Dear Provider:

The Illinois Child Care Bureau has added a **new feature to online training** to better serve you. Providers will now receive their certificate of training as an attachment to an email rather than waiting for it to arrive in the mail. Visit IllinoisChildren.com to select from a variety of training materials for the busy day care home provider. Let us know your thoughts by sending an email to Info@IllinoisChildren.com.

The *Nutrition Facts Label* is an important item to review prior to buying the food item. The label lists the *Percent Daily Value* of fat, cholesterol, sodium, dietary fiber, sugar, protein, vitamin A, vitamin C, calcium, and iron in each package. During a recent staff training at the Illinois Child Care Bureau, a registered dietitian provided a presentation and stated that we should "eat foods that do not have a nutrition facts label". In other words, start with fresh, raw food and cook homemade meals!

Reminder: All child enrollments expire on 9.30.15. FY16 Enrollment Renewal Reports (10.1.15 – 9.30.16) will be mailed to you during the last week of August. Your completed/signed Enrollment Renewal Reports are due in the Illinois Child Care Bureau by September 15, 2015.

The Illinois Child Care Bureau has received feedback from providers regarding their participation in the food program as well as other government-sponsored programs. To clarify, a day care home provider may participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (the food program) regardless of participation in other government-funded programs and/or payments from parents/guardians. All children in your care should be enrolled in the food program regardless of whether or not the child is part of your monthly claim. The provider may be reimbursed for 2 meals and 1 snack or 2 snacks and 1 meal for each enrolled child each day.

ICCB welcomes **Ada Capo** of Addison, **Maria Carrera** of Chicago, **Edith Cazares** of Chicago, **Auvett Coke** of Waukegan, **Rosa Cunalata** of Chicago, **Lanise Favors** of Chicago, **Charita Gates** of Chicago, **Graciela Gonzalez** of Romeoville, **Mary Green-Mitchell** of Chicago, **Svetlana Hirko** of Deerfield, **Ieshia Johnson** of Chicago, **Mia Kim** of Hoffman Estates, **Yivgenia Korzun** of Round Lake Beach, **Maria Lagunas** of Chicago, **Olivia Lares** of Lansing, **Magnolia Londono** of Chicago, **Tanisha Montgomery** of Round Lake Beach, **Jacqua Moore** of Zion, **Danita Murphy** of Chicago, **Laura Myers** of Plainfield, **Celeste Pearson** of Chicago, **Jabriel Scott** of Chicago, **Armelia Sengstacke** of Richton Park, **Cecil Mar Sharma** of Volo, **Rainette Smith** of Chicago, **Cynthia Stuart** of Yorkville, **Racheal Taiwo** of Park Forest, **Taylor Westfall** of Rockford, **Neidra Williams** of Chicago, **Selina Williams** of Chicago, **Dernice Williams-Canty** of Chicago and **Susie Wofford** of DeKalb. ICCB also welcomes back **Bernice Dunmars** of Chicago, **Brittany Hayes** of Chicago, **Leah Kroeger** of Clarendon Hills, and **Diane Reed** of Bellwood.

The Illinois Child Care Bureau office will be closed:

- ✓ Friday, July 3 in observance of Independence Day
- ✓ Monday, September 7 in observance of Labor Day

– Cathy, Kim, Marguerite, Maria, and Mary

A Provider You Should Know

by Kim Klimek, Compliance Supervisor

For the past 17 years, Mrs. Estella Pegues has owned and operated **Home Sweet Home Child Care Services** located on the Southeast Side of Chicago. Prior to opening her home day care, Mrs. Pegues was a secretary for 20 years. Mrs. Pegues and her husband Johnie raised six sons. Mrs. Pegues discovered she enjoyed the frequent visits of their son's friends and that their friends enjoyed being in her home, so she decided to dedicate her home and career to caring for children. Shortly after opening the day care, Johnie quit his job and Estella and Johnie have been a day care home team ever since.

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Celebrate Blueberries

Blueberries are a native North American fruit. According to the Secretary of Agriculture of the United States, July is National Blueberry Month.

Blueberries come in a variety of forms: fresh, frozen, dried, freeze dried, canned, blueberry juice, and blueberry puree. Each of these forms comes with a variety of characteristics.

Fresh blueberries Store fresh blueberries in the refrigerator and eat within 10 days of purchase. Add fresh blueberries to yogurt, cereal, oatmeal, salsa, sauces, and green salads.

Frozen blueberries Frozen blueberries should be stored in the freezer and consumed within 10 months. Frozen blueberries may be added to smoothies, sauces, burgers, French toast, muffins, pancakes, or chutneys.

Dried blueberries Dried blueberries should be stored in a cool, dry place and consumed within 10 months. Add dried blueberries to trail mix, sauces, sandwiches, chicken salad, green salads, or baked apples.

Freeze-dried blueberries Because all the water has been extracted, you can grind freeze-dried blueberries into a fine powder and mix them into spice rubs for meat, chicken, or fish, sprinkle them into yogurt and stir or add them to trail mix or cereal.

Canned blueberries Canned blueberries should be stored in a cool, dry place and consumed within 12 – 18 months. Canned blueberries are perfect for kid-friendly recipes.

Blueberry juice and puree Blueberry juice or puree can be used to make popsicles or slushes – although neither of these items is creditable on the food program.

Nutrition Blueberries contain about 80 calories per 1 cup serving.

Blueberries are a good source of dietary fiber which helps add bulk to the diet and fills a child's tummy.

One serving of blueberries provides you with 25% of you daily requirement of vitamin C. Vitamin C is necessary for growth and development of tissues and promotes wound healing. Blueberries are also high in manganese which helps the body process cholesterol and nutrients such as carbohydrates and protein.

Because blueberries are packed with nutrition and plentiful in the Midwest, the Illinois Child Care Bureau includes the following information on selecting and freezing blueberries which was originally shared in the ILLINOIS CHILD CARE BUREAU NEWS, July 2012 –

How to select select and store fresh blueberries

When purchasing fresh blueberries, look for blueberries that are firm, dry, plump and smooth-skinned, with a silvery surface bloom and no leaves or stems. Size is not an indicator of maturity but color is – berries should be deep purple-blue to blue-black. Reddish berries are not ripe, but you can use them for cooking. Avoid blueberries that look soft or shriveled or have any signs of mold. If you see juice stains in a container of blueberries, it means the fruit is bruised.

Refrigerate fresh blueberries as soon as you can get them home, either in their original plastic pack or in a covered bowl or container. Be sure to wash you berries before you start snacking, and eat them within 10 days of purchase.

How to select and store frozen blueberries

You can find frozen, unsweetened blueberries packed in bags in the frozen food section of the supermarket. When you grab a bag of frozen berries, they should feel loose and not clumped together. They have been individually quick frozen so you can remove a few at a time or use them in larger portions.

Store your frozen blueberries in the freezer. If you do not use the whole bag, return the unused portion to the freezer promptly. Some people like to pop frozen blueberries right into their mouths or onto yogurt with granola. If you choose to thaw berries, cover and refrigerate them and use them within three days.

Freezing your own blueberries

The key is to use fresh blueberries that are completely dry when you pop them in the freezer. Do not worry about rinsing the berries before you freeze them; simply place them, still in their original containers, in re-sealable plastic bags and store them on your freezer shelf. If you prefer to rinse the berries first, dry them well with paper towels, transfer to freezer containers or re-sealable plastic bags and freeze. The berries will freeze individually and you can remove the portion you need. If you did not wash your blueberries before freezing them, you should rinse them just before use. For best results, use your home-frozen blueberries within six months.

Although the domestic harvest ends in October, fresh blueberries are still available in the United States thanks to an abundant supply from South America. Blueberries thrive in the Southern Hemisphere's summer weather from October through March, then the domestic season begins in Florida.

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Home Sweet Home Child Care Services typically cares for children from newborn until 12 years old. The Pegues offer a fun and safe environment for the children to learn and explore. Mrs. Pegues opened Home Sweet Home Child Care Services with four children in her care. The day care home has grown into a group day care home caring for up to 16 children. The children's parents feel that Mrs. Pegues has made a very positive impact on their children's lives. Estella and Johnie utilize parents to market their day care home to future clients and utilize existing clients as references. Mrs. Pegues publishes a parent newsletter to keep the parents informed about program activities. We know that a happy client demonstrates good customer service. It is not unusual for Estella's former day care children to return to visit Home Sweet Home Child Care Services. A former client and recent high school graduate returned for a visit with Mrs. Pegues. The graduate started in Mrs. Pegues' care at the age of 2 years.

Mr. and Mrs. Pegues own a Chicago 2-flat which was converted into a day care home. They added a stairwell in order to dedicate the entire building to day care. The Pegues teach the children science, math, computer, writing, movement, and music. In addition, the Pegues offer manipulative areas for preschoolers and are designed to teach small motor development and control. A manipulative area may include learning how to buckle, how to snap, or how to tie your shoe. The areas are designed to be at the child's height and are also labeled. The Pegues adapted **Baby Can Read©** into their curriculum as well. The children have "rug time" each morning and afternoon. During rug time, Mrs. Pegues reads the children a book which is followed by a book discussion. The day care home has its own library which is available to the children at all times of care. The children are reading and writing before they start kindergarten.

Screen time/TV time is offered on a limited basis. Home Sweet Home Child Care Services provides age-appropriate toys and educational materials which are labeled for specific ages. There is a large, padded, outdoor playground area with sand and water activities. In addition, each year the children plant and water a vegetable garden in the back yard.

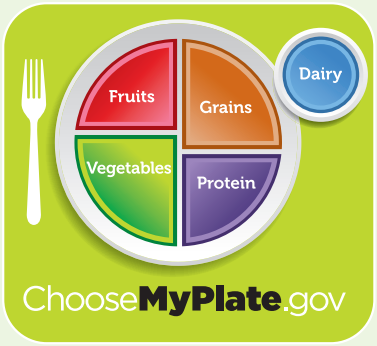
Mrs. Pegues plans menus 5 weeks at a time. She talks with the children and her family to incorporate menu items everyone can enjoy. Her family eats the same menu as the day care children because Mrs. Pegues would not serve the day care children any food items she would not serve her own family. Mrs. Pegues serves family-style for lunch and dinner. The children help set the table before each meal. All of the meals are cooked on the premises. The menu consists of fish, chicken and turkey. They do not serve pork or red meat. The vegetables mostly come from their vegetable garden. The children love Mrs. Pegues' Bite-size Lemon Pepper Chicken recipe. It is a quick, simple recipe that replaces the typical chicken nugget. Simply cut up skinless chicken breast into bite size pieces, season with lemon pepper and sauté in olive oil. Serve over brown rice and green beans. They are healthier, better tasting, and more nutritious than store bought chicken nuggets!

The most rewarding part of Mrs. Pegues career is "seeing the smiles on the faces of happy children". The most challenging for her is dealing with difficult behaviors such as hitting, biting and spitting. Mrs. Pegues stated "As a care giver, I am responsible for making each child feel loved and accepted. Good teacher-child relationships build character and personality which, over time, may change a negative behavior into a positive behavior".

According to the parents/guardians of children in her care, Home Sweet Home Child Care Services is a top-rated day care. The day care offers a well-planned, creative curriculum that Mrs. Pegues posts for the parents/guardians to read. She believes offering the structure of the same daily routine enables the children to easily transition from one activity to another, making each child feel in control.

Mrs. Pegues has CDA accreditation, an associate's degree in early childhood education, and has completed coursework to achieve the *Illinois Quality Counts Quality Rating System*. In order to remain current, Mrs. Pegues networks with other providers, attends continuing education classes, and reads the Illinois Child Care Bureau quarterly newsletters. In addition, Mrs. Pegues mentors new day care home providers to learn best practices and develop business connections/relationships.

Mrs. Pegues maintains her food program responsibilities by using *Daily Meal Worksheet* so that she can enter the data into Minute Menu™ when she has time. She staples together the month's *Daily Meal Worksheets* ensuring she has the proper documentation for home visits. Mrs. Pegues thoroughly enjoys providing care for children and would definitely choose this career again.



Choose My Plate

Need more ideas on how to include fruit on the menu? Visit http://choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/TenTips/DGTipsheet3FocusOnFruits.pdf.

recipes

Waffles With Spiced Blueberry Sauce

Ingredients

1 ½ tsp cornstarch
1/3 cup cold water
2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries, divided*
3 TB sugar
1 tsp ground cinnamon
¼ - ½ tsp ground black pepper
4 (4 ½ inch) frozen waffles, toasted, or freshly made waffles

Instructions

1. In a small saucepan, thoroughly combine cornstarch with 1/3 cup cold water, stir in half of the blueberries, the sugar, cinnamon and black pepper.
2. Over medium heat, bring to a boil.
3. Boil until sauce is clear, about 1 minute.
4. Remove from heat.
5. Stir in remaining blueberries.
6. Cool.
7. Place warm waffles on plates and top with Spiced Blueberry Sauce.

Servings: 4

Blueberry And Spinach Salad With Warm Bacon Dressing

Ingredients

4 slices bacon
2 TB olive oil
1 TB red wine vinegar
1 ½ tsp honey
1 tsp Dijon mustard
½ tsp minced garlic
Pinch of salt and pepper
5 cups baby spinach
½ cup thin sliced red onion
1 ½ cups sliced or cooked chicken, cubed
2 cups fresh blueberries
½ cup feta or blue cheese, crumbled

Instructions

1. In a large skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp; drain on paper towels. Crumble bacon and set aside. Discard all but 1 tablespoon of the fat.
2. In a small bowl, stir the reserved bacon fat, the olive oil, vinegar, honey, mustard, and garlic. Whisk to blend. Add salt and pepper to taste.
3. Place spinach in a bowl and toss with half of the dressing; spread on a platter. Top with onion, chicken, blueberries, cheese, and crumbled bacon; drizzle remaining dressing over salad.

Servings: 4

Special thanks to the US Highbush Blueberry Council.

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