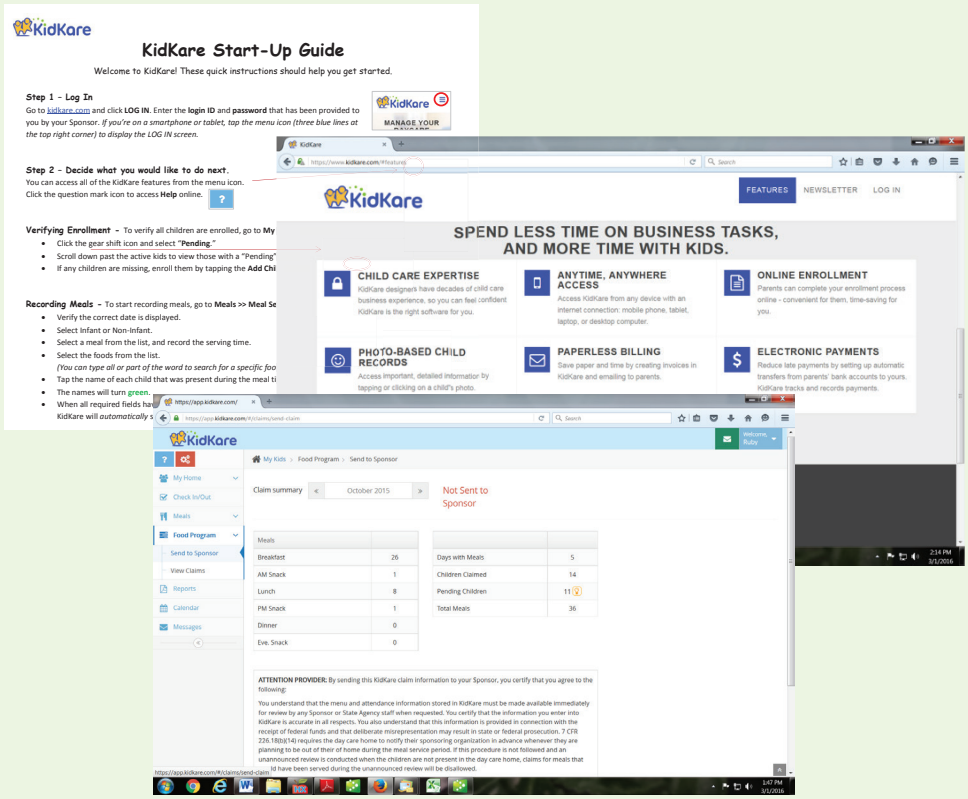
Illinois Child Care Bureau News

April - June 2016

Dear Provider:

KidKare.com STARTS on June 1, 2016



Are you currently using the online claiming method? If yes, then you need to know the following:

- KidKare is your **new online claiming method** beginning **June 1, 2016**.
- It's free and user-friendly.
- **Submit May menus/attendance on June 1** via Minute Menu™ to receive a timely payment. Payments for May menus received after June 1 may be delayed.
- Change where you record June menus and attendance from Minute Menu™(an icon on your desktop or Internet Explorer) to **KidKare.com**.
- Know your current online claiming login and password? These two items are needed to get you started on KidKare on June 1.
- Need your password or login? Please call the Illinois Child Care Bureau office.
- Want to learn more about KidKare? Visit help.kidkare.com/help today.

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A Provider You Should Know

by Kim Klimek, Compliance Supervisor

For the past 17 years, Ms. Elma Greathouse has owned and operated **Marie's Little Angels** day care located in North Chicago. Prior to opening her day care home, Ms. Greathouse was a director at a local day care center. Ms. Greathouse was also the program director for the Lake County Head Start and is credited with starting the Head Start program known as Wee World**.** Ms. Greathouse realized she wanted to work in the human services field while she was enrolled in college, so she selected a career that enabled her to help people. She chose to work with and to help children.

Marie's Little Angels day care is a group day care and typically cares for children between the ages of 2-12 years. The day care focuses on teaching and the growth and development of the children. Ms. Greathouse and her assistants teach the children computer skills, science, math, shapes, letters, and numbers. When the children begin school, many of them can already read. The children are

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Celebrate Tomatoes

In 1893 the US Supreme Court decided a case about whether or not tomatoes were a fruit or a vegetable. Science says that tomatoes are a fruit, however, most people consider tomatoes a vegetable. After some deliberation, the US Supreme Court agreed – tomatoes are a vegetable.

Tomatoes are a favorite of nutritionists because they are packed with vitamin C, potassium, fiber, and beta-carotene which your body converts to vitamin A. Tomatoes are fat-free, gluten-free, and delicious.

Fresh Tomatoes

Growing tomatoes in a vegetable garden can provide a large number of fresh tomatoes. Tomatoes can be grown in containers (or buckets) as well. There are several dozen tomato varieties available from seed. Select the variety you enjoy and engage the children in the growing process including the weeding and watering of the plants.

Fresh tomatoes (grown in your vegetable garden or purchased at the store) should be washed prior to eating. It is best not to store fresh tomatoes in the refrigerator because the cold air takes away the flavor and may make the tomato mushy. Store the tomatoes at room temperature for 2 – 3 days. It is best to store tomatoes away from direct sunlight because the sun will continue to ripen the tomato.

To ripen a tomato, place them in a paper bag, stem end up. Punch several air holes in the bag. Warm air (above 80 degrees) may cause the tomato to spoil. The paper bag keeps some of the natural ethylene gas in place which aids in the ripening process.

Use plum tomatoes for sauce making, canning, and pizza. Small cherry tomatoes are perfect for a salad. Tomatoes can be eaten raw, or sautéed, grilled or stewed. Tomatoes work well as an ingredient in main dishes, side dishes, on a sandwich, or on their own. Use a serrated knife to slice the tomatoes. Cut the

tomato lengthwise from stem to blossom to retain more juice in each slice.

Peeling tomatoes is made easy by blanching them first. Drop the tomato in a pot with boiling water for about 30 seconds, then plunge the tomato in a bowl of ice water until cool to the touch. Cut an X on the stem end and use a paring knife to pull skin away. The skin of the tomato will pull away easily if it is blanched enough.

Canned Tomatoes

Read the Nutrition Facts label to be sure the canned tomatoes have little to no added salt/sodium. A 15 ½ ounce can of tomatoes will yield about 3.5 servings of ½ cup each.

Add flavor to canned tomatoes by seasoning with garlic, pepper, herbs such as dried basil or rosemary, or Parmesan cheese.

Canned tomatoes are ready to use in a variety of soups, casseroles, stews, vegetable side dishes, rice dishes, and main dishes.

Combine canned tomatoes with garlic and cooked chopped green pepper for an easy sauce for pasta.

Farm To Preschool

According to the USDA, “the term “farm to preschool” encompasses efforts to serve local or regionally produced foods in early child care and education settings; provide hands-on learning activities such as gardening, farm visits, and culinary activities; and integrate food-related education into the curriculum”. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention also recognizes the Farm to Preschool program as a means of increasing the preschooler’s knowledge to effect healthier eating habits in the future. Obtain farm fresh food if you can. Start small. Locate one item in your area that is farm fresh and use it once per month. Talk to the children about the importance of fresh food. Highlight the item in the information you share with parents.

Dear Provider
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The Illinois Child Care Bureau marks all children out of school from Memorial Day through Labor Day. Please check with your local school district for the actual last day of school, then go into your Minute Menu™ account and make the appropriate changes. If you need assistance with this issue, please call the Illinois Child Care Bureau office. If you use paper (scannable) menu forms, please include the child number and the date the child will be out of school on the *Claim Information Form* (CIF).

ICCB welcomes **Geeta Bhatia** of Buffalo Grove, **Shirley Brandon** of Plainfield, **Deborah Dismuke** of Rockford, **Jasmine Dixon** of Chicago, **Theresa Dobbins** of Rockford, **Latasha Dobbs** of Aurora, **Tierra Donegan** of Bolingbrook, **Michelle Dunbar** of Chicago, **Patricia Evans** of Chicago, **Lakeysha Fells** of Chicago, **Patricia Ford** of Chicago, **Carolyn Gerald** of Chicago, **Josephine Halliburton** of Calumet City, **Bianey Lara-Ramierez** of Waukegan, **Genrietta Dungarwalla** and **Nina Lemhen** of Skokie, **Gilma Londono** of Chicago, **Carrie Miller** of Belvidere, **Brandy Muldrow** of Dolton, **Vera Oliver** of Berkeley**, Angela Williams** of Belvidere, and **Muriel Williams** of Dixmoor.

ICCB welcomes back **Renieca Dabbs** of Chicago, **Akilah King** of Evergreen Park, **Tiquita Dubose** of Chicago, **Angernick Smith** of Chicago, and **Tia Smith** of Chicago.

ICCB's office will be closed:

- ✓ Monday, May 30 in observance of Memorial Day

– Cathy, Kim, Marguerite, and Mary

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also taught basic conversational Spanish. Glenda Webb, Ms. Greathouse's sister, worked at Marie's Little Angels for many years. Ms. Webb was a licensed teacher and was hired to assist the school-aged children with homework. After Ms. Webb passed on, Ms. Greathouse hired a retired school teacher to continue the role of assisting children with their homework. Marie's Little Angels day care also teaches the children to live by the morals and values she lives by – be respectful to each other, be a caring person, and be capable of being independent.

Marie's Little Angels publishes a monthly calendar to keep the parents informed of the daily activities and future field trips. Ms. Greathouse encourages parental involvement. When a new child comes to Marie's Little Angels, Ms. Greathouse invites the parents to spend the day with her to allow the parent to observe the day care in operation.

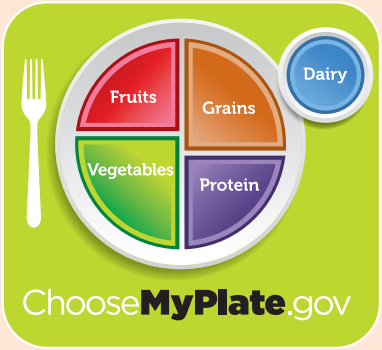
Ms. Greathouse actively participates in her community and works closely with the schools in her neighborhood. She likes to be current on the topics being taught in order to provide direction to her assistant with the responsibility of helping the children with homework each day after school. The goal is for all the children to be successful in school as well as in life. Ms. Greathouse mentors new day care providers by being available to share her deep knowledge of the industry. Ms. Greathouse gives back to her community by holding toy drives and giving away food baskets during the holidays. She believes it is necessary to help and support those less fortunate.

The most rewarding part of Ms. Greathouse's career is "seeing the children blossom, watching the growth and development of both the children and parents." Currently, Ms. Greathouse cares for the children of those whom she cared for when they were children themselves. This brings great joy to Ms. Greathouse and further solidifies her career choice. She knows she is doing what she was meant to do. The most challenging part of her career is dealing with the different personalities.

Ms. Greathouse keeps up with her food program responsibilities by recording her menus and attendance daily. She uses paper menus (scannable/bubble menus) and generally records the meals at the time of service. If not, she records the meals as soon as the children leave for the day.

Ms. Greathouse tries to cook what the children like, however, she introduces them to new foods too. The importance of the nutritional value of the food is discussed with the children along with how it relates to their bodies. For example, Ms. Greathouse recently told a child the importance of eating vegetables so that her hair would be strong and healthy. Ms. Greathouse is pleased that most of the children in her care are "good eaters" not "picky eaters".

Ms. Greathouse finds the benefit of continuing education and frequently takes the classes offered at her local YWCA. In addition, she finds the networking opportunities at the YWCA beneficial for discussing current issues facing day care homes. Ms. Greathouse would choose the same career again, although she would like to work with the elderly as well.



Choose My Plate

Visit http://www.choosemyplate.gov/vegetables to learn more about the benefits of eating fresh vegetables such as tomatoes.

Grow It, Try It, Like It. Preschool Fun With Fruits and Vegetables

Try a food tasting activity to introduce the children to a new fruit or vegetable. Engage the children in the tasting as a new adventure or as an opportunity to explore new tastes. Show the children how to taste food and to politely remove unwanted food from their mouths. Sometimes it takes several attempts before the child will eat it. If you know that one of the children is the "adventurous eater", then have them try it first. Sometimes the other children will follow a child that enjoys new food. Children should always eat while seated. Offer small bites – not a full portion size. Sometimes the child is overwhelmed by needing to eat the whole portion, therefore, they will not even taste it. Fruits and vegetables taste best when in season, so do the taste test when they are their freshest.

For the complete **Grow It, Try It, Like It** guide, visit http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/grow-it-try-it-it.

recipes

Fresh Tomato Sauce

Ingredients

8 ripe tomatoes
1 TB vegetable oil
½ cup onion, chopped
½ cup green pepper, chopped
¼ carrot, thinly sliced, or shredded
½ tsp dried oregano
1 tsp dried basil
2 tsp garlic (minced or ½ tsp garlic powder)
6 cups cooked pasta
6 TB grated Parmesan cheese (optional)
Pinch of pepper (to taste)

Instructions

1. Wash the ripe tomatoes. Cut out stem ends. Chop into small pieces and set aside in a large bowl.
2. In a large pan, heat the oil over medium high heat. Add onion, green pepper, carrots and garlic. Stir-fry until tender, about three minutes.
3. Add seasonings and tomatoes. Bring to a gentle boil.
4. Lower heat and simmer gently, uncovered, until tomatoes turn to a sauce, about 40 minutes.
5. Serve over fresh cooked pasta.
6. Add Parmesan cheese on top (optional).

Servings: 6

Zucchini and Tomatoes

Ingredients

2 TB butter (or margarine)
¼ cup onion, chopped
1 garlic clove, chopped
1 lb zucchini, chopped
2 tomoatoes, peeled and diced (or one 16 oz can of diced tomatoes, drained)
¼ tsp salt
black pepper to taste
1 tsp sugar

Instructions

1. Melt butter in saucepan over medium heat.
2. Add onion and garlic.
3. Cook until tender, about 5 – 7 minutes.
4. Add zucchini, tomatoes, and seasonings.
5. Cover pan, reduce heat, cook until vegetables are tender, about 20 minutes.

Servings: 4

Special thanks to University of Illinois Extension Program.

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