

UP-CLOSE

A Look At Children Services

Volume 76 FALL 2016

Thanksgiving – A Time for Celebration

In the United States, Thanksgiving is a major fall event and the beginning of what is considered by many to be the “holiday season” which continues through New Year’s Day. The historical reason behind the festivities remains the same – to be thankful for a huge fruitful harvest. Thanksgiving is a time when most families get together to share a meal with relatives and/or friends and to take the time to give thanks. This holiday is a tradition around the world however the major difference in the celebrations may be the date, rituals and customs. Many families now in this nation from other countries incorporate customs from their homeland into a traditional Thanksgiving meal.

As always, Best Wishes for a wonderful holiday from all of the staff at the Department of Family and Support Services (DFSS), Children Services Division (CSD). It is our hope that you have Enjoyment, Peace and Good Health. The Thanksgiving season is a special time to give thanks to all of the people around us – family, co-workers, friends and relatives.

Wishing Everyone a Joyous and Happy Thanksgiving!



Giving Thanks and Giving to Others!

Thanksgiving can present the perfect opportunity for parents and caregivers to remind, emphasize and teach children that it's important to be thankful every day and how to express their thankfulness to other people. A popular tradition at many Thanksgiving family dinners is to go around the table (or stand and form a circle) and let everyone say what they are thankful for – include the children. Experts contend that during the first three years of a child's life, important emotional and behavioral patterns are formed and this stage offers a great opportunity to teach contentment which is an essential ingredient for gratitude in later years.

A Time to Help Those In Need

Very often people use Thanksgiving as an opportunity to help the less fortunate. Some people volunteer to serve food at homeless shelters on Thanksgiving Day while others donate to shelters and/or participate in canned food drives which are on-going this time of year. There may be local activities closer-to-home in your own neighborhood. You can check with social service agencies, churches and community organizations in your area. There are many opportunities to get children of all ages involved in these service activities. Most children love the response of gratitude from adults and other kids when they have served. This is also an opportunity to help them recognize how it feels when other people are grateful.



Use Photos to Preserve Memories of Past/Present Holidays

Be sure to take photos of children and grandparents and/or elderly relatives each year. This is an excellent way to let children see how they have grown from year to year as well as the aging process with older people. Also, document any service projects the family has done e.g. take a photo of the family preparing food baskets for a shelter or a photo of the family on the way to drop off food at a shelter. Almost everyone has a phone camera these days and most likely someone at your thanksgiving table will be happy to take a few snapshots. Get copies and print them out. Make one person responsible for bringing them back the next year for everyone to see and compare. Start this tradition with a simple photo album and/or let the children help select the photos in the album to be shown the next year.

Family Traditions – Old and New

There are lots of different Thanksgiving traditions and many have been passed down through generations in families. The tradition may be a particular family recipe, specific activities after dinner or visiting a special relative's home like grandparents, etc. and the list goes on. On the other hand, many families start new traditions as children arrive and families grow. These traditions may include watching the Thanksgiving Parade together, children playing special games while the meal is prepared or everyone helping in the preparation of the meal and afterward delivering food to relatives and/or friends that are shut-in. Let children make small crafts to give to guests as a gift at your dinner or if you are dining at someone's home let children make and take a small craft gift for the family. Whatever the family tradition, make sure that you incorporate the idea of giving thanks as well as giving and help young children understand these values.



A Meaningful Activity for Young Children

For children aged three and under holidays are about the nurturing and extra attention received from grandparents and other close family and friends. Try to provide time for fun interaction that celebrates the season. Supply toddlers with crayons and coloring books, and invite grandparents and/or other relatives and friends to present the finished art as a gift to the adults.



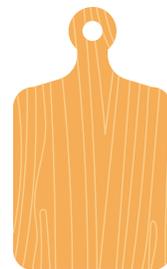
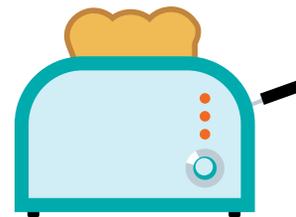
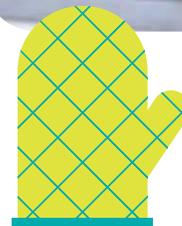
Spending Time in the Kitchen Can Benefit Young Children

In many households the preparation for Thanksgiving dinner includes planning, shopping, prepping, cooking, setting the table and clean-up, etc. Young children may not be able to assist on the actual cooking day (there is normally too much activity going on for a young person's attention span). With younger kids, choose a time when they're well-rested and not easily frustrated to let them help out. It's also a smart idea to have another adult in the kitchen to help you keep an eye on the youngest cook.

Let Young Children Get Involved with Thanksgiving Preparation

On Thanksgiving Day or other special holidays there are often multi-generations in the kitchen and this is a great opportunity for children to bond with family members as well as a great learning experience for children of all ages. All children including the very young can be involved in the shopping, preparing, cooking and serving Thanksgiving dinner.

- **Shopping** — Let young children go to the store with you to shop for the turkey and everything else you need for the meal. As we always emphasize, shopping time can be a learning experience too --- depending on the age of the children. You can talk about comparing prices, reading food labels, picking out produce and more.
- **Cooking** — During the preparation time prior to Thanksgiving, there are many age-appropriate things that even young children can do in the kitchen. Don't give them busy work but make them feel as if they are really helping, even with the smallest task. Parents know their children the best and they know what they can handle.
- **Preparing the Table** — Children can place napkins, placemats and small items on a table as well as any craft items they may have created for the dinner. Let them do this before guests arrive and their attention span may waiver toward many other activities.
- **Clean-Up** — Make clean-up easy by letting everyone help. Young children can remove small items from the table and older children can help clear the dishes. The older children can also package leftovers for guests and let the younger children deliver them to the guest when it's time to leave. With everyone pitching in clean-up can be easy and efficient and leave time to enjoy the rest of the day's activities.



Four Important Ways Cooking Can Benefit Preschoolers

Bringing children into the kitchen can benefit and help them in a number of ways. Specifically, cooking can help:

BUILD BASIC SKILLS. You can help your child hone basic math skills by doing something as simple as counting eggs or pouring water into a measuring cup. You can ask what comes first, second, and third or count together as you spoon dough onto a cookie sheet. When you read a recipe together, you're introducing new words to your child's vocabulary and promoting literacy. Following steps in the recipe can work on a child's listening skills.

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO TRY NEW THINGS. Preschoolers can be extremely picky eaters, and bringing them into the kitchen to cook can sometimes help get them to open up to new tastes. When your three year old plays chef he/she might sample dishes they wouldn't try if you just served them. So encourage children to taste new ingredients you're working with and talk about what they like and how healthy foods make a body grow.

HELP YOUNG KIDS USE THEIR SENSES TO EXPLORE. Kids learn by exploring with their senses and the kitchen is an ideal place to do that. Invite them to listen to the whirring sound of the mixer, pound dough and watch it rise, smell it baking in the oven, and finally taste the warm bread fresh from the oven. If it smells good, looks appealing, and is easy to eat they may just be willing to try it and they will have enjoyed the preparation experience.

HELP BOOST CONFIDENCE. Preschoolers love to show what they can do and working in the kitchen provides opportunities to gain a sense of accomplishment. If they helped assemble any dish, let them know that their help was important. You can name the dish after your child. For example, let family/guests know that this is "Tracey's Salad" as well as acknowledging the contributions of other family members – old and young.

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Adults Can Help Pre-Schoolers Develop a Good Attitude toward Food

Parents and caregivers help supply the what, when and where of children's meals and snacks. Here are some ideas to make ensure that young children eat well and develop a positive relationship with food that will last a lifetime.

- ***Children learn from role models – primarily parents.*** Eat together as a family and set a good example yourself by eating a variety of healthful foods.
- ***Respect your child's food preferences.*** Give kids the freedom to choose and reject foods. Everyone has different tastes, including small children.
- ***Avoid treating any foods as forbidden.*** That may cause your child to want to eat them even more. Explain that there are appropriate times for eating certain foods e.g. a celebration.
- ***Get your child involved in making the meal.*** Even young children can help make salads or shake seasoning on vegetables. Children may be more excited to try something new if they helped prepare it.

It's important to take steps to ensure that children learn the importance of good nutrition from an early age. Parents are the major influence on children's eating habits, so you need to eat right, too!

Make Food Preparation an Entire Family Affair

Children of all ages can benefit from spending time in the kitchen with family and/or extended family and friends:

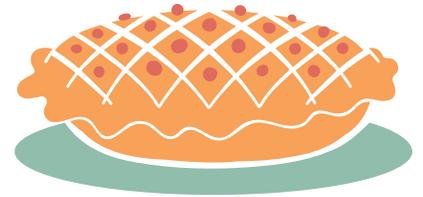
- ***Preschoolers*** see how the dishes they eat are put together — and they get hands-on experience, which is a great way to learn and feel like they are helping out.
- ***School-age kids*** can learn some cooking basics and use their math skills as they help combine ingredients for recipes. You also can use the time to talk about good nutrition and why you chose the ingredients you're using. It can lay the groundwork for healthy eating later on.
- ***Teens*** might appreciate the chance to improve their cooking skills — good preparation for when they'll need to cook for themselves. Teens also might be interested in trying different cuisines from various cultures.

Parents can also get something out of spending time in the kitchen with children. There's the quality time you'll share and then the pleasure of sitting down at the table together to enjoy what everyone has helped to prepare and talking about it.

Timing is Everything!



Choose the right time if you're going to have young children helping you in the kitchen, you don't want to be on a tight time schedule. For example, get them involved in the preparation before a big day like Thanksgiving dinner when things are less hectic.



Take it Slowly!

As children grow, they will develop the skills, attention span, and interest to do larger cooking jobs, like squeezing the juice out of a lemon, measuring ingredients into cups and spoons, and beating eggs or mashing potatoes. Monitor and note their progress doing kitchen tasks.



Turkey Preparation — From Thawing to Cooking

Americans feast on about 535 million pounds of turkey — that's a lot of turkey! The average Thanksgiving turkey weighs 15 pounds. The heaviest turkey ever recorded weighed 86 pounds, which is about what a large dog weighs. Many Thanksgiving traditions have been passed down for years and most of them include preparing a turkey. The size of the turkey may vary according to the number of guests and appetites. Not completely thawing the turkey in time can be a problem even for the most experienced cooks.

Following are three easy ways to properly thaw a turkey and avoid foodborne illness:

1 In the Refrigerator

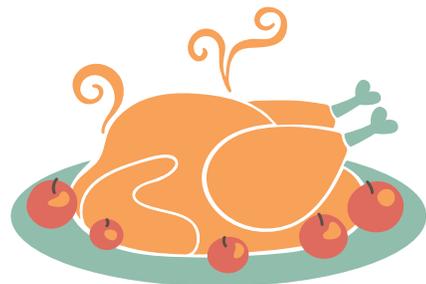
Allow about one day in the refrigerator for every four to five pounds of turkey. For example, a 12-to-16 pound turkey would require three to four days and a 16-to-20 pound turkey would take four to five days to thaw.

2 In the Microwave

Check your owner's manual before buying a turkey for the size that will fit in your microwave oven. Also, check the minutes per pound and power level used for thawing. Remove all outside wrapping from the turkey, including the wire that holds the legs together. Place on a microwave-safe dish to catch any juices. Cook the turkey immediately after thawing it in the microwave. An important thing to keep in mind, do not refreeze or refrigerate a raw turkey after thawing in the microwave.

3 In the Sink

Thaw in cold water for about 30 minutes per pound for the whole turkey. A 12-to-16 pound turkey will take about six to eight hours and a 16-to-20 pound turkey needs eight to 10 hours. Seal the turkey securely in plastic to make sure no water leaks in and use only cold water. Change the water every 30 minutes and cook the turkey immediately after thawing.



Turkey Stuffing/Dressing

To make sure your stuffing is safe and cooked to a proper temperature, putting the stuffing in the turkey **is not** recommended. For more even heating, cook the stuffing separately. If you do stuff your turkey, do it just before roasting and stuff it loosely. Turkey and stuffing are safe to eat when they reach a minimum internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit. The only sure way to know the actual internal temperature of a turkey is to use a meat thermometer.

Foods Must Be Cooked to Proper Temperatures!

Safety rules must be followed when cooking a turkey and dressing but also apply when grilling, smoking or frying a turkey. Meat and poultry cooked on a grill often browns very fast on the outside. Use a meat thermometer to be sure the food has reached a safe minimum internal temperature. Foodborne illness can strike anyone at any time. It's important to know who's sitting at your table because some people are at higher risk for developing foodborne illness, including pregnant women, young children, older adults and people with weakened immune systems.

Keep hot food HOT – Keep cold food COLD! This is important to remember if you are traveling on Thanksgiving Day and transporting food. Keep hot food at or above 140 °F. Wrap well and place in an insulated container. Keep cold food at or below 40 °F. Place in a cooler with a cold source such as ice or frozen gel packs.



Turkey Thermometer Guidelines

A very important part of using any meat thermometer is the proper placement in the turkey. Insert the thermometer 2 1/2 inches into the deepest portion of the turkey breast or into the inner thigh near the breast. Make sure the thermometer does not touch a bone. When inserting the thermometer in the turkey breast, insert it from the side.



Additional Thoughts about Thanksgiving . . .

At Mealtime – Help Children Know When They’ve Had Enough!

Good manners learned and practiced at home by young children can certainly be put to good use when visiting a relative’s home for Thanksgiving dinner or when the dinner is hosted at home. Following are four recommended guidelines:

- 1 **Reinforce positive behavior and good manners at the dinner table.**
- 2 **Children can learn by serving themselves.**
Let children serve themselves at dinner. Teach them to take small amounts at first. Preschoolers can practice serving from small bowls that you hold for them. Tell them they can have more if they are still hungry.
- 3 **Avoid praising a clean plate.**
Children should stop eating when they are full, rather than when the plate is clean. The “Clean Plate Club” which many parents have grown up with is no longer the rule. Put small amounts on the plate that are manageable for young children.
- 4 **Reward children with attention and kind words, not food.**

After the Meal – Proper Clean-Up Is Important!

It’s better to be safe than sorry especially when preparing a big meal like Thanksgiving dinner as well as cleaning up when it’s over. You need to be sure that your kitchen surfaces and your hands are clean to prevent the spread of bacteria.

- Refrigerate any leftovers as soon as possible after cooking. If left to sit at room temperature, bacteria in the food will multiply quickly.
- Consume leftovers within three to four days or throw them out.
- Wash cutting boards – which can become a breeding ground for bacteria if they aren’t cleaned carefully – separately from other dishes and utensils in hot, soapy water. Don’t use old cutting boards with cracks or deep gouges because bacteria may hide in the crevices of the board.
- Always wash your hands if they come in contact with raw meat, poultry, or fish. Don’t use a dish towel to wipe your hands after handling raw meat, poultry, fish or eggs – use paper towels instead. Bacteria can contaminate the cloth towels and can then spread to another person’s hands.
- After preparing food, wipe your kitchen counters and other exposed surfaces with hot soapy water or a commercial or homemade cleaning solution. Consider using paper towels to clean surfaces.
- Sponges stay wet longer and their porous quality attracts bacteria, experts recommend using a thinner dishrag that can dry between uses instead of a sponge.
- Wash dirty dishrags and towels in hot soapy water.
- Regularly sanitize your kitchen sink, drain, and garbage disposal by pouring in a commercial or homemade cleaning solution.

Taking these simple precautions can reduce the chance of foodborne illnesses in your family. In addition, keep breakables and sharp knives out of reach. Avoid working with foods that could be a choking hazard for small children.



Be Creative with Thanksgiving Leftovers!

Five of the most common turkey leftovers include stew, casseroles, soup, as a sandwich and a burger. Refrigerated leftover turkey is only good for three or four days, and stuffing for one to two days. Following are a few tasty recipes to try:

Hearty Stew – start with leftover gravy (fat skimmed away) as the base. Make it hearty with leftover turkey and chopped vegetables. You can thicken the stew with mashed potatoes or sweet potatoes.

Turkey-berry Wrap – wrap sliced turkey, spread with cranberry sauce and shredded greens in whole-wheat tortillas.

Crunchy Turkey Salad – Toss cubed turkey with celery, apples and light mayonnaise with shredded baby spinach or any choice of mixed greens.

Turkey Stock – freeze stock in small amounts to be used at a later date to cook pasta, rice or soup with the stock instead of water.



Get Everyone Up and Moving

Try to resist the urge to watch television after Thanksgiving dinner. Make moving a part of every family event and encourage **all** family members to get involved in some way. Being physically active makes everyone feel good particularly after a large meal. Here are a few activities that family members can do together:



DANCE – Get up and dance. Take the headphones off, turn up the music, and have a family dance contest— try an “old school” versus “new school” contest.

WALK – Take a walk around the block and/or take the dog for a walk.

PLAY – Play outdoor active games like tag or hide-and-seek; or play active indoor games like charades, Twister and hot potato.

BIKE – Go for a family bike ride.

PERFORM – Have an impromptu family talent show, lip synching and dancing to music or original performances.



Upcoming Activities for the Entire Family

Thanksgiving Day Parades

- A Thanksgiving morning tradition for many families is watching the New York City **Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade** together especially while preparing for the day's activities. NBC has been broadcasting the parade since 1952 from New York City. The parade includes marching bands, floats, songs and performances from current Broadway musicals, celebrity performers and 50-foot giant helium-filled balloons. The balloons are the major attraction at this parade for kids of "all ages". This three hour live spectacular starts at 8:00 AM (CST).
- The **Chicago Thanksgiving Parade** sponsored by McDonald's is held on Thanksgiving Day (November 24th this year) from 8:00 to 11:00 AM in Downtown Chicago. The parade is on State Street and begins at Congress and moves northbound to Randolph. The parade route is approximately one mile long and includes giant helium balloons, floats, and award-winning marching bands, performance groups as well as local and national celebrities. You can attend the parade or watch the live broadcast on WGN television. The Parade was created in 1934 to help lift the spirits of residents suffering through the Great Depression and since then, it has developed into a full-scale spectacle that celebrates the holiday season. Millions of people view the parade on television and there are normally close to 500,000 spectators on the parade route depending on the weather.

City of Chicago Events

- The City of Chicago will present the 103rd Annual Christmas **Tree Lighting Ceremony** in Millennium Park on Friday, November 18 before Thanksgiving. This annual event this year will include a musical program featuring STOMP, the international percussion sensation along with a special appearance by Santa Claus. Admission is free.
- **Caroling at Cloud Gate** (the Bean) in Millennium Park, Friday November 25th from 6:00 – 7:00 PM featuring the After School Matters Music Program. You can bundle the family up and go to the park to sing holiday classics at this festive event. This activity is part concert and part sing-along as local Chicago choral groups lead hundreds of attendees in song. There will be additional dates in December on the 2nd, 9th and 16th.



Free Days at Several Exciting Chicago Attractions

Many of Chicago's museums, parks and zoos are offering a variety of free days and other discounts that families can take advantage of in November. This is an excellent time to visit some of these attractions during the long Thanksgiving holiday weekend or to entertain family and friends from out-of-town as well as in-town. This is also a perfect opportunity to incorporate physical activity for the entire family with a visit to any of these attractions (walking is involved). Call each venue for specific information about hours, directions, parking, etc.

DuSable Museum of African American History

773/947-0600

Sundays are free and on school days there is free admission for all CPS and CPD program students. Children five and under, as well as active and retired military are always free.

National Museum of Mexican Art

312/738-1503

Always – free to all.

Lincoln Park Zoo

312/742-2000

Always – free to all.

Lincoln Park Conservatory

312/742-7736

Garfield Park Conservatory

312/746-5100

Admission is always free at both of these locations.

Brookfield Zoo

708/688-8000

Tuesdays and Thursdays are free from October 1st – December 31st.

Chicago Children's Museum

312/527-1000

The first Sunday of every month is free for children 15 and younger. Also Kraft Family Nights are Thursday evenings from 5:00-8:00 PM.

NOVEMBER MILESTONES

Program Governance

- Support parents in convening their monthly parent committee and policy committee meetings and maintain record keeping systems for securing meeting materials
- Present and provide written monthly reports to the Policy Committee and Board: Meals/Snacks/Enrollment/Attendance/Fiscal/PIR Summaries
- Present PY 2013-14 PIR to the policy committee and the board
- Submit/Upload October's Certification of Personnel Actions
- Self-Assessment Timeline and Implementation Plan developed in partnership with the policy committee and board
- Submit approved Scope of Services, PAIB, Parent Activity Calendar, and Budget to DFSS
- Submit Letter-of-Certification and Policy Committee Membership List to DFSS
- Submit Parent/Policy Committee Tracking
- Present and provide agency's annual report to the board and the policy committee
- Conduct parent committee elections for site officers and policy committee members for the program year
- Conduct Policy Committee elections for officers, CPPC Representatives, and Community Representatives
- Seat newly elected/re-elected policy committee
- Provide Policy Committee Orientation and Leadership Training Session(s) This training should include providing the policy committee an overview of the program governance policies and procedures that will govern them throughout the program year; HSPS, Fiscal Training, understanding their roles in Head Start Governance, Meeting Decorum - Meeting Best Practices, Personnel Training inclusive of Interviewing Best Practices

Family & Community Partnerships

- 50% of families should have received at least one referral/service and must be documented in COPA.
- Enter and/or follow-up on documentation in COPA (goals, referrals/services and case notes). All documentation must support families' priorities
- Review and update monthly COPA reports of family progress toward goals, referrals/services and case notes (review COPA reports 1008, 1009, 1010 and PIR).
- Complete documentation of parent volunteerism and enter in COPA
- Complete analysis of first quarter PIR data
- Complete list of parent and community volunteers and distribute to agency staff
- FCP: Inform parents of monthly parent meetings and election of officers for parent

- committee and policy council. Conduct election of officers for parent committee during Sept – Nov
- FCP: Conduct monthly parent meetings
- FCP: Ensure two home visits and parent teacher conferences are conducted during the program year. Visits are to be conducted by classroom teachers. Family service workers will conduct visits as needed
- FCP: Submit Delegate Agency Health/FCP monthly report to CSD
- FCP: Develop and/or follow the transition plans of children transitioning to HS and/or Kindergarten

Health/Developmental Screening Services

Medical/Dental:

- Complete analysis of PIR first quarter reports
 - Ensure all physical/dental exams and vision/hearing screenings are completed by the 45th day/schedule treatment/follow-up appointments.
 - Monitor health services screening (including hearing and vision) reports in COPA and update COPA health case notes
 - Complete referral and follow-up for children with identified needs and enter into COPA
 - Replenish first aid kit supplies
 - Complete Monthly Health Report and forward to assigned Health/FCP SSC by the 5th of the month
 - Provide health requirements overview to enrolling parents
- #### Developmental Screenings:
- Ensure developmental screenings are completed by 45th day
 - Children who scored within the referred categories must be sent to disabilities coordinator within five days



Nutrition Services

- Documentation IMIL implementation
- Monitor Nutrition services reports in COPA
- Complete annual nutrition food experience plan for children. Identify supplies and budget needed and submit to governing bodies/management
- Document Nutrition education weekly
- Document Food experience
- Complete referral and follow-up for children with identified needs and document into COPA
- Plan for parent nutrition workshops (at least two per year)

Safe Environments

- Conduct monthly fire drill
- Conduct playground equipment safety check
- Submit facility improvement plans as needed
- Conduct tornado drill* (only completed twice a year)
- Complete daily, weekly and monthly checklist
- Replenish First Aid Kit supplies

UP-CLOSE

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Lisa Morrison
Butler
Commissioner of the
Chicago Department
of Family and
Support Services

Vanessa Rich
Managing Editor
(2009-2015)
Julie A. Ellis
Writer
Xenia Demo
Designer

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