

UP-CLOSE

A Look At Children Services

Volume 88 FALL 2017

*Wishing You a Joyous and
Happy Thanksgiving!*

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 Joy, Happiness, 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. This special edition of *Up-Close* is completely dedicated to Thanksgiving including some helpful hints and tips, practical information, traditions, past favorites and particularly how to include children in every aspect of this holiday. Thanksgiving is a time of giving thanks for all that we have. Enjoy these Happy Thanksgiving wishes.

“Give thanks for unknown blessings already on their way.”

– Anonymous Native American Saying

The Celebration of THANKSGIVING



Thanksgiving is a tradition around the world. In this country, Thanksgiving is a major fall event and the start of what is considered by many to be the holiday season continuing until New Year's Day. Thanksgiving is a time when most families get together to share a meal and take time to be thankful for everyone in their lives. Many families from other countries incorporate customs from their homeland into a traditional Thanksgiving meal in this country. In the United States, there are a lot of different Thanksgiving traditions and many have been passed down through generations in families. The traditions may be family recipes, preparing the meal together, specific activities after dinner or visiting a special relative's home like grandparents, etc. Now, many families start new traditions as children arrive and families grow.

Once again, this issue of *Up-Close* is dedicated to Thanksgiving and the holiday season. Holiday time is family time and this Thanksgiving we encourage everyone to get children involved in all aspects of this special holiday. 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 kids of all ages. All children including the very young can be involved in the shopping, preparing, cooking and serving of Thanksgiving dinner.

Planning & Shopping

Plan Ahead - Make a List(s)

- Plan what you're going to buy before you go to the grocery store. Review recipes for what ingredients are needed. Get young children involved when you check to see what foods you already have and make a list of what you need to buy. It's important to know, that when you shop with a list, you will be less likely to buy extra items that are not on the list. Also, try not to shop when you're hungry.
- Check sales and coupons, as well as any loyalty or membership grocery store card programs. If you will be shopping at several stores, make a list for each specific store, not one list for all.
- Plan in advance to give yourself time to shop so you can compare costs and make informed decisions.
- 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, colors and shapes, picking out produce and more.



Accept Help from Others

Guests often volunteer to bring a dish, dessert, and/or beverages. If you have more than enough food planned, ask your guests to help with one of the following:

- Assist with the children to keep them active and moving
- Bring an activity that everyone (every age) can participate in
- Pick up an elderly relative or friend
- Help with the clean up

Traveling with Food

If you are traveling on Thanksgiving Day and transporting food remember this food safety rule: **Keep hot food HOT --- Keep cold food COLD!**

- 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.
- When food is reheated it must be hot and steamy for serving. Just "warmed up" is not good enough. Use the stove, oven, or microwave to reheat food to 165 °F. Bring sauces, soups, and gravy to a boil.

Food for Thought

At Thanksgiving, Americans feast on about 535 million pounds of turkey. A 15 pound turkey usually has about 30% dark meat and 70% white meat. Turkey has more protein than either beef or chicken. It's a fact that five of the most common turkey leftovers include stew, casseroles, soup, as a sandwich and a burger.



Thanksgiving Around the World

The major difference in the celebrations may be the date, rituals and customs but the historical reason behind the festivities remains the same – to be thankful for a huge fruitful harvest.





Cooking & Prepping

Thawing a Thanksgiving Turkey

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 (most people have a story to tell). Following are three easy ways to properly thaw a turkey and avoid foodborne illness:



1. Refrigerator

Allow about one day 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. 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 and most importantly, do not refreeze or refrigerate a raw turkey after thawing in the microwave.

3. 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

Note: To make sure your stuffing/dressing is safe and cooked to a proper temperature, stuffing a 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— use a meat thermometer.

Fruit and Vegetable Safety at Home

Wash

- Wash your hands before and after preparing fruits and vegetables.
- Wash or scrub all fruits and vegetables under running water before eating, cutting, or cooking.
- Fruits and vegetables labeled “prewashed” should not need to be washed again at home.

Keep Cold

- Refrigerate cut, peeled, or cooked fruits and vegetables as soon as possible, or within two hours.
- Use a refrigerator thermometer to make sure the temperature stays at 40°F or below.

Separate

- Store fruits and vegetables away from, and not next to or below, raw meat, poultry, and seafood. These items can drip juices that may have germs.
- Use a separate cutting board for fruits and vegetables that is never used for cutting or preparing raw meats, poultry, or seafood.
- Wash cutting boards, counter tops, and utensils with hot, soapy water before and after preparing fruits and vegetables.



Preparing the Thanksgiving 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 as their attention span may waiver once guests arrive and there are many other activities.



> Continued on page 4

> Continued from page 3



Thanksgiving Kitchen Activities for Young Children

During the preparation time prior to Thanksgiving, there are many age-appropriate things that even young children can do in the kitchen. Kids feel good about doing something “grownup.” Give them small jobs to do and praise their efforts. 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. As preschoolers grow, they are able to help out with different tasks in the kitchen. While the following suggestions are typical, children may develop these skills at different ages.

At Two Years:

- Wipe tables
- Hand items to an adult to put away (such as after grocery shopping)
- Place things in trash
- Tear lettuce or greens
- Help “read” a cookbook by turning the pages
- Rinse vegetables or fruits
- Snap green beans

At Three Years: (All that a two-year-old can do, plus)

- Add ingredients
- Talk about cooking
- Scoop or mash potatoes
- Squeeze citrus fruits
- Name and count foods

At Four Years: (All that a three-year-old can do, plus)

- Peel eggs and some fruits, such as oranges and bananas
- Set the table
- Crack eggs
- Help measure dry ingredients

At Five Years: (All that a four-year-old can do, plus)

- Measure liquids
- Cut soft fruits with a dull knife
- Use an egg beater

According to experts, children learn so much from cooking. Spending time in the kitchen and cooking with children has many benefits from laying the foundation for basic math concepts to instilling healthy eating habits. Plan ahead so that children can

help in the kitchen without creating a stressful situation. Talk to them in advance about what they will and will not be able to do.

Benefits for children:

- Children strengthen their fine motor skills through cutting, pouring and scooping. They develop a basic understanding of math concepts like understanding volume through measuring different ingredients.
- Children learn the concept of sequencing through reading recipes and discussing what comes first, second, and third in the cooking process.
- Children expand their vocabulary as they are exposed to new words and terms.

“One of the greatest benefits to cooking with children is helping them develop an adventurous and diverse taste palette.”

Young Children at the Holiday Table

Holiday time and special events can provide great learning experiences for young children. This can also be a perfect time to talk about table etiquette during the preparation. Experts conclude, “It takes time for children to master new skills, which includes table manners. Adults need to lay out clear expectations for meal time behaviors and reinforce appropriate behaviors.” Parents should be role models for children because young children do not automatically know how to eat like adults. They learn how to eat and how to behave at the table by watching their parents and that’s also how they can develop lifelong, healthy eating habits. Additionally, children learn to eat new foods by watching other people eat and enjoy them. For example, if you want a child to eat green vegetables, you have to eat green vegetables and talk about how good they taste and how they make you strong and smart.

Model table manners for children and let them practice at home.

Appropriate Manners at Mealtimes for Preschoolers:

- Chew with a closed mouth.
- Say please, thank you, you’re welcome, and excuse me.
- Where a napkin goes and how to use it.
- Ask for and pass food politely.
- Pick up food with a spoon or a fork.
- Cut food using a fork and knife.
- Keep elbows off the table.
- Sit in a chair while eating at a table.

Watch your children while they eat which includes watching older brothers and sisters who may offer foods that younger children can’t handle yet or they may encourage poor behavior at the table.



Celebrating & Moving Around

Encourage Children to Make Thanksgiving Crafts

Prior to Thanksgiving Day let children make crafts for decoration and/or gifts. Construction paper placements are easy to make and can be personalized for each guest. A handmade card or a place card can be made for each guest to take home. Kids can gather fall colorful leaves to contribute to a centerpiece with candles, flowers, etc. or to decorate the house. Most children enjoy coloring in traditional Thanksgiving coloring books to show to family and friends at dinner. It's a fact that any homemade craft made by the smallest child will be greatly appreciated by adults. Let the children present the items.



Help Children Know When They've Had Enough!

Manners learned and practiced at home by young children can certainly be put to good use when visiting a relative's home for dinner or when the dinner is hosted at home.

- **Let children learn by serving themselves.** Let your kids serve themselves at dinner. Teach them to take small amounts at first. At home, preschoolers can practice serving from small bowls that you hold for them. Tell them they can have more if they are still hungry.
- **Avoid praising a clean plate.** Your child should stop eating when he or she is full, rather than when the plate is clean. The "Clean Plate Club" which many parents have grown up with is no longer the rule.
- **Reward children with attention and kind words, not food.**
- **Reinforce positive behavior and good manners at the dinner table.**

Get Everyone Up and Moving!

Make Physical Activity—A Family Affair! 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.

Perform

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

Walk

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

Over the long Thanksgiving weekend think about family exercise activities such as walking, biking, running, raking leaves, skating or stair climbing. Aim for at least 30 minutes of exercise each day.

Popular Family Thanksgiving Traditions:

Giving Thanks and Giving to Others!

This merits repeating. 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.

Help Those In Need

Quite 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. 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.

Thanksgiving Day Parades

It's a tradition for many families to watch 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 1948 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 biggest attraction for kids of all ages. This three hour live spectacular starts at 8:00 AM (CST).

The **Chicago Thanksgiving Parade** is held on Thanksgiving Day from 8:00 to 11:00 AM in Downtown Chicago. The parade route is approximately one mile and includes giant helium balloons, floats, award-winning marching bands, performance groups and local and

national celebrities that go north on State Street from Congress to Randolph. You can attend the parade or watch the live broadcast on WGN television. The Parade 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.

Preserve Memories of Past/ Present Holidays with Photos

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 shots. 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.

Thanksgiving – A Meaningful Time 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 color along. Encourage children to present the finished art as a gift to the adults.



Activities for the Entire Family

Free Days at Several 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**
Tuesdays are FREE for everyone. Children five and under and active and retired military are always FREE.
- **National Museum of Mexican Art: (312) 738-1503**
Always FREE to all, the museum is open Tuesday through Sunday.
- **Lincoln Park Zoo: (312) 742-2000**
Lincoln Park Zoo is FREE and open 365 days a year.
- **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**
Zoo admission is FREE for all on Tuesdays and Thursdays.



Cleaning & Storing

Group 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 guests 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.

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.



Properly Storing Leftovers

Most people make too much food for Thanksgiving dinner? Normally that's not a problem because leftovers can make a great lunch or dinner for the next few days. Everyone enjoys leftovers and it is important to always follow the proper leftover safety steps to avoid getting food poisoning. Reheating is one option — for safety's sake, reheat to 165°F internal temperature. Following are some tips to keep food safe:

- Keep your refrigerator set to 40°F or below. Don't pack your refrigerator with food, freeze some leftovers if necessary.
- Make sure you refrigerate leftovers within two hours. If food has been sitting at room temperature for more than two hours or so — **toss it!**
- You cannot really rely on sight and smell alone to know if the leftovers are spoiled. Place an "eat-by-date" label on leftovers and toss after that date. Let children help with the labelling.



Thanksgiving Leftovers – No Problem!

Five of the most common turkey leftovers include casseroles, stews and soup, casseroles, as a sandwich and a burger. You can certainly freeze leftovers but remember that refrigerated leftover turkey is only good for three or four days, and stuffing for one to two days. Talk to children about the value of using leftover food. Following are easy recipes to try:

Turkey Salad

Use the same ingredients that you would use for chicken or tuna salad with leftover turkey. Make it crunchy with celery and/or apples.



Tasty Soup/Stew

Start with leftover gravy (fat skimmed away) as the base. Make it hearty with leftover turkey and chopped vegetables. You can thicken the soup/stew with mashed potatoes or sweet potatoes (pureed). Look for a good turkey chili recipe.



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 2016-17 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
- 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

- Conduct monthly parent meetings
- 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
- Submit Delegate Agency Health/FCP monthly report to CSD
- 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

A Look At Children Services

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

Up-Close, A Look At Children Services is published by the Chicago Department of Family and Support Services in conjunction with The Chicago Coalition of Site Administered Child Care Programs. Funding for this publication is provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

