



Provider Appreciation Day is May 9, 2025



CHILD CARE PROVIDERS play a vital role in supporting working parents while creating safe, nurturing environments where children can learn and grow. Their dedication not only enriches young lives but also strengthens families and drives our economy forward.

Let's take a moment to celebrate the child care programs in our communities and show our appreciation for their invaluable contributions. By recognizing their positive impact on children, families, and society as a whole, we can inspire and encourage these dedicated educators to continue their essential work.

Ways to Lift Up Child Care Providers:

- Send a heartfelt thank you email or card to your child care provider.
- Offer to volunteer at your child care site.
- Drop off a gift or treat for your child care provider.
- Bring flowers or a gift card to your child care provider.
- Organize an afternoon off for your child care provider. Each family agrees to pick up their child at a designated (early) time.
- Share a favorite memory or story of your child care provider on social media.
- Arrange for lunch(es) to be delivered to your child care site.
- Purchase a "wish list" item for the child care site.

DID YOU KNOW?

- **The first Mother's Day** was organized on May 10, 1908, in West Virginia and Philadelphia.
- On May 9, 1914, President Woodrow Wilson designated Mother's Day an official national holiday.
- Mother's Day is the busiest day of the year for the restaurant industry, with 62% of Americans dining out.
- **National Provider Appreciation Day**, celebrated the Friday before Mother's Day, recognizes the vital role of childcare providers, teachers, and educators.
- National Provider Appreciation Day began in 1996 by volunteers in New Jersey.
- While **Cinco de Mayo** is celebrated in Mexico, especially in the state of Puebla, it's not a federal holiday.
- **Drowning** is fast and silent and can happen in as little as 20–60 seconds.
- Bathtubs, toilets and even buckets pose a danger for very young children.
- Drowning is the single leading cause of death for children ages 1-4 and it's the second leading cause of death for children ages 5-14.

INSIDE:

- Promoting the Wellness of Child Care Providers
- Recipes
- Learn-to-Swim Programs Can Save Lives
- Preserving Herbs & Ginger

Promoting the Wellness of Child Care Providers

CHILD CARE PROVIDERS play an essential role in the development and well-being of young children. However, the demanding nature of the job coupled with low wages may negatively affect their physical health, emotional well-being and overall quality of life. It is important for child care providers to prioritize self-care and wellness to ensure they are able to provide the best care possible for the children and families they serve. Child Care Resource and Referral agencies (CCR&Rs) and local associations may offer support to providers to help them care for themselves while they care for everyone else.

Try these tips for staying healthy and promoting personal wellness.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-CARE

Physical

- Take care of one's body by eating nutritious meals, exercising, drinking water, getting adequate sleep and receiving routine general medical care.
- Promote and model healthy eating by including plenty of fruits, vegetables and lean protein (fish, poultry and beans).
- Limit sugar intake and foods high in saturated fat.
- Move every day – when possible, get outside to walk, exercise or play.
- Limit sedentary time.
- Be ready to be active with children, i.e. wear appropriate shoes and clothing to join them and lead activities.
- Hydrate with water instead of juice, soda, sports drinks or other sugary beverages.
- Be sure to get enough sleep.
- Have regular check-ups and follow any doctor's advice.

Psychological/Emotional

- Take time to sit with one's feelings and process thoughts with a trusted person.
- Acquire healthy habits such as healthy eating, physical activity and adequate sleep to help manage stress. Take breaks, even a minute or two can make a big difference.



- Practice mindfulness when possible.
- Create a space for reflection through journaling.
- Identify, process and communicate feelings and emotions in a healthy way.

Spiritual

- Connect to one's faith by participating in activities that allow one to think outside of themselves.
- Spend time in nature.
- Attend a place of worship that is supportive.

Relational

- Foster intentional, meaningful relationships with other people.
- Join a social group such as a book club or hiking group.
- Call up some old friends to rekindle relationships.

Professional

- Maintain a work life balance that reduces stress.
- Take classes to boost confidence and support challenging areas.
- Follow a parent/provider contract that is fair to both parties.
- Nurture a relationship with a friend or mentor in the early care and education field.

— Adapted from *Childcareaware.org*

KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

Learn-to-Swim Programs Can Save Lives

THE CENTER FOR DISEASE CONTROL (CDC) reports that drowning is the single leading cause of death for children ages 1–4 and it's the second leading cause of death for children ages 5–14. In addition, boys younger than 15 die from drowning at twice the rate as girls.

Each year from 2020–2022, over 4,500 people died due to drowning. This is 500 more per year compared to 2019. With drowning deaths on the rise in the United States, CDC released a *Vital Signs* report in May of 2024, to raise awareness on the need for more access to swimming lessons and water safety skills training. Data also shows that over half (55%) of U.S. adults have never taken a swimming lesson; only 28% of Hispanic people and 37% of Black people have taken swimming lessons in their lives. By race and ethnicity, the highest drowning rates were among non-Hispanic American Indian, Alaska Natives, and non-Hispanic Black persons.

As the summer approaches, it is vital for childcare providers, parents and guardians to first assess and evaluate their own skills and knowledge; and secondly to take steps to prevent drowning in daycares, at home, or any other place where there is access to bodies of water.

Everyone can help prevent drowning

- Learn basic swimming and water safety skills.
- Provide children with constant supervision when in or around water. Even children who have had swimming lessons need constant supervision.
- Find local learn-to-swim programs, some cities have affordable programs for all ages. Contact the nearest YMCA for swimming lessons, or a local American Red Cross chapter for a list of resources and programs.



- Learn how to perform CPR on children and adults. Performing CPR can save a life in the time it takes for paramedics to arrive.
- Empty tubs, buckets, containers and kids' pools immediately after use. Store them upside down and out of children's reach.
- Close lids and doors. Keep toilet lids and doors to bathrooms and laundry rooms closed when not in use.
- Build fences that fully enclose and separate the pool from the house. Fences should be at least four feet high with self-closing and self-latching gates.
- People of all ages and swimming abilities should wear a life jacket while boating.
- Do not drink alcohol before or during swimming, boating, or other water activities. Alcohol impairs judgment, balance, and coordination. Do not drink alcohol while supervising children.
- Write down a water safety plan or take a pledge to take action; visit www.poolsafely.gov/pledge to fill out a pledge form and receive invaluable water safety resources.

— Adapted from *NSC.org*, *SafeKids.org*, *CDC.gov*

Chicken Tacos with Strawberry Salsa

Chicken breasts, boneless & skinless 4	Red bell pepper, finely diced 1
Olive oil ¼ cup	Jalapeño, seeded & minced 1
Chili powder 1 Tbsp	Cilantro, chopped ½ bunch
Cumin 1 tsp	Corn tortillas, small 16
Limes, divided use 2	Crumbled queso fresco, for serving 1 cup
Strawberries, diced 4 cups	
Red onion, finely diced 1 medium	

1. Combine chicken, olive oil, chili powder, cumin, the zest of both limes and salt and pepper in a Ziploc bag or bowl. Marinate in the fridge for at least 30 minutes or up to 2 hours.
2. To make the salsa, place strawberries, onion, bell pepper, jalapeno, and most of the cilantro in a bowl. Add salt and the juice of one lime. Mix, cover and refrigerate.
3. Heat a large pan over medium high heat. Grill the chicken until it's browned and cooked through, about 5 to 6 minutes per side. Remove from the pan and when cool enough to handle, shred the chicken with a fork.
4. Heat the tortillas over a flame and keep warm. Fill each tortilla with some of the shredded chicken and top with salsa, and cheese. Squeeze lime juice over top if desired.

Yield: 8 servings

Meets requirement for meat/meat alternate, grains/breads and fruit

— Adapted from foodnetwork.com

Corn & Black Bean Salad

Black beans, drained & rinsed (canned) 2 15-ounces	Cilantro, chopped ½ cup
Corn 1½ cups	Olive oil ½ cup
Red bell pepper, chopped ... 1	Fresh lime juice ⅓ cup
Avocado, diced 1	Garlic, minced 2 cloves
Green onions, thinly sliced .. 6	Salt to taste
	Pepper to taste

1. Combine beans, corn, bell pepper, avocado, green onions and cilantro in a large bowl.
2. Place olive oil, lime juice, garlic, salt and pepper in a jar with a lid and shake until well combined.
3. Pour dressing evenly over salad and toss to coat.

Yield: 12 servings

Meets requirement for vegetable

— Adapted from allrecipes.com



**Kickin' it
in the Kitchen**

Preserving Herbs & Ginger

Herbs



Looking for a better way to keep herbs fresh longer? Cooking with herbs can make food even more delicious, but if they don't get used right away, they can go bad and end up in the compost bin.

To use them at the peak of flavor and avoid throwing them away, rinse, pat dry and snip into small pieces. Then put them in ice cube trays with olive oil and place them in the freezer. This preserves their taste, and the cubes can be used as a base for almost any dish. This method works best with thyme, sage, rosemary or oregano.

Ginger



Fresh ginger has many uses, from cold remedies to DIY acne care but mainly it is used in a variety of recipes from different cultures. The best way to keep your fresh ginger fresh is in the freezer.

Not only will keeping ginger in the freezer make it last longer, but it will also make it easier to grate. To easily peel ginger, scrape the skin with the side of a spoon. Some ginger parts will be harder to peel because of its odd shape, but frozen ginger doesn't need to be peeled completely because it grates and minces so finely.

— Adapted from *Simply Recipes* / Alison Bickel



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Food Funny **Q.** Why did the orange stop when it was halfway across the street?
A. Because it ran out of juice!