



FAMILY
DAY

FOCUS

WELCOME
ISSUE 2016



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Family Day focuses on healthy, local and enjoyable eats

It is probably fair to say we are paying more attention to what we put on our plates these days. In an ever-increasing desire to be healthy, we are always on the lookout for food that is fresh, local and nutritious.

We also know the importance of getting children to eat well. Several studies have shown that healthy eating has a positive effect on kids' brain development and energy levels.

At Family Day, we are committed to providing our children with a balanced diet comprised of fresh, wholesome foods that will help set the stage for healthy eating later in life.

"The menus have changed over the years," says Mollie Zebedee, Program Manager at Family Day. "But we have always focused on good, nutritious meals and snacks for all of our kids."

New Menu on Tap

Just last fall, Family Day changed up the menu in its child care centres in an effort to bring further choice to centres with kitchens. The agency worked with a registered dietician and gave training to cooking staff.

The dietician went over the guidelines outlined in the Canada Food Guide (and reinforced in the Child Care and Early Years Act), discussed how to read labels, and reviewed sugar and sodium levels.

Menus were standardized, but cooks were invited to share their own recipes. In addition, the menus were left open to allow for cultural diversity.

Now one year old, the menu is well integrated in the centres. The focus is on homemade, nut-free, locally grown, non-processed foods. The menus are posted in all programs where the food is served.

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A Warm Welcome...

*Are you new to Family Day?
If so, we would like to extend a
very warm welcome to you and
your family!*

At Family Day, we value your input and involvement. As such, we hold various family-focused events each year. This fall, we are planning several events, including a curriculum centre night, which provides an opportunity to learn more about Family Day's program philosophy and approach to curriculum.

Please check the parent bulletin board in your program for further information on the curriculum night, our Parent Advisory Meetings and other events.

Relax and settle in. And please let your child's teacher or caregiver know if you have any questions. We want this to be a positive experience for everyone!

Exploring Different Tastes

Dionne Andrews, RECE, Centre Supervisor at St. Herbert and Ellengale Child Care Centres says the food has been well received by the children.

"We have always had a nutritious menu," says Andrews. "However, with our new menu we have introduced more variety and more combinations in the foods."

She says newly offered foods such as quinoa, couscous, various types of fish and new food groupings by centre cook Desiree Dumlao are great for expanding children's palates. In addition to traditional North American fare, Dumlao cooks Indian, Chinese and Middle Eastern dishes to reflect the diversity of the children.

Elly Morshedi, RECE, Centre Supervisor at Thornhill Early Learning and Family Centre, says the children in her centre really enjoy the food served up by cook Rose Barter, who has been with Family Day for 20 years.



"Parents come to us and ask for recipes, because they are trying to make similar things for their children who request the dishes at home," says Morshedi. She says favourites include pasta, pizzas, rice dishes – and Rose's famous soups and sandwiches.

Organic Catering and Home Cooking

Children in centres without cooking capabilities receive meals from Organic Kids catering. The company is dedicated to providing healthy, nutritious meals with organic, high-quality and local ingredients. Foods include farm-fresh vegetables, delicious fruits and organic milk; menus can be tailored for gluten-free, vegan and Halal diets.

Of course, children in home child care locations get freshly prepared food every day. When children are registered with the agency, caregivers meet with parents to ensure the nutritional needs of their children are being met.

Each caregiver follows the Canada Food Guide, receives safe food handling training, and serves food that reflects the cultures of the children in her program.

Whether cooked in a centre, catered or prepared in a home, all of the food served to children is nutritious, wholesome and culturally diverse. Says Zebedee: "We focus on healthy, balanced meals for kids – on building healthy lives."

FAMILY DAY RECIPE: CHICKEN NOODLE STIR-FRY

Quick and easy to prepare, a stir-fry is a healthy meal that can contain whatever fresh vegetables you have on hand. Add oodles of noodles and the kids will surely get on board.

Ingredients:

2-3 chicken breasts
2 tbsp. vegetable/canola oil
1/2 head of bok choy, chopped
1 head of broccoli florets
1 large carrot, sliced
1 sweet red pepper, sliced
1/2 small red onion, chopped
2 cloves of garlic, minced
1 tbsp. fresh ginger root, grated
1 pkg. chow-mein noodles
Hoisin sauce and
General Tao sauce
to taste

Servings: 5

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes



Directions:

1. Cut chicken breasts into cubes.
2. Heat oil in a large pan or wok and sauté the garlic and ginger. Add chicken and cook until done.
3. Add vegetables. Cook and cover for five minutes. Set aside.
4. Boil the noodles.
5. Add the noodles to the vegetables and chicken.
6. Add the sauces and mix.
7. Enjoy!

Source:
Natalie Pallas-Bradley,
Family Day

ATTEND OUR PARENT MEETINGS

Mark your calendars! The fall sessions of our Parent Advisory meetings have been scheduled for November. These free meetings bring together parents to talk about curriculum, general updates and news related to specific regions. Child care and a light dinner are offered at each meeting. The fall meetings will run from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. as follows:

Brampton	November 16 at Esker Lake
Mississauga	November 17 at Nahani Way
Markham	November 22 at Armadale
Thornhill	November 29 at Thornhill
Toronto	November 17 at Mary Ward
Toronto	November 23 at Flemingdon Park

Fall into good habits

There's nothing like autumn in Canada, with its beautiful colours and crisp breezes. To make sure this season is a safe and healthy one for your family, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP) offers the following suggestions:



Be active

As the weather cools, resist the urge to hibernate! Make fall yard work fun by having kids come up with different ways to pick up leaves or pine cones. Provide kids with rakes and other tools that are kid-sized for comfort and safety. For indoor fun, play board games that encourage physical activity; draw, colour and explore with health in mind.



Stay healthy

The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year. Free vaccinations are available through medical offices, various clinics and pharmacies. And don't forget to practice good health habits: cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze; wash your hands with soap and water; and try to stay home if you get sick.



Be prepared for cold weather

Know how to prevent cold weather related health problems and what to do if a cold weather health emergency arises. Remember that using space heaters and fireplaces can increase the risk of household fires and carbon monoxide poisoning. Take time to test and replace batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.



Have a safe and healthy Halloween

Halloween is an opportunity to dress up and have fun, but it's important to focus on safety. Make sure kids stay safe by wearing well-fitting masks, costumes and shoes to help avoid blocked vision and falls. Adults should examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before children eat them.

For more information, visit the CDC at [cdc.gov/family](https://www.cdc.gov/family)

Family Day turns 165

This year marks an important milestone for Family Day: 165 years of caring for children and their families. And this year, to help celebrate our milestone anniversary, we are holding an event called **Family Day @ 165 Years** that will focus on “transformation and innovation.” The event, which will take place on September 22 at the Toronto Reference Library, will bring together staff, colleagues and sector partners. A video of the event will be available later this fall on the Family Day website at familydaycare.com



Look Mom, we're on Facebook!

Family Day's Facebook page is now in full swing. The page, which acts as a “meeting place” for parents and staff, is full of agency news and events, in addition to a variety of articles, blogs and photos. Come join other parents in our community and keep track of the goings-on at our child care centres, home child care programs and Ontario Early Years Centres (OEYCs).

Follow us at facebook.com/FamilyDayCareServices



Gearing up for our United Way campaign

Family Day will once again participate in the annual United Way Campaign in 2016. The campaign raises funds within the agency for the charity in a variety of ways. Thanks to your generous donations, Family Day's 2015 campaign was a great success; we hope 2016 will be just as positive. In keeping with tradition, each of our centres will host a “dance-a-thon” this year. Stay tuned for details.



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Member Agency

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facebook.com/FamilyDayCareServices



[@FamilyDayGTA](https://twitter.com/FamilyDayGTA)

Our Programs

- Licensed Home Child Care
- Child Care Centres
- School Age Programs
- Resource Programs
- Ontario Early Years Centres in Toronto East, York Region and the Region of Peel

FOCUS Newsletter

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For countless families, Family Day is the only way!