



A nutrition newsletter for carers of children under five

ISSUE 11

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Learning about diversity through food and culture

By Christa Schlosstein, Diversity Directions Inc.

Young children learn from their daily life experience. From an early age children observe and acknowledge that there are similarities as well as differences in the way friends and neighbours live. Australia's multicultural richness offers many opportunities for exploring differences and similarities through food and eating.

Food not only provides a source of nourishment for children's physical growth and development, but reinforces the cultural patterns and beliefs in family life. In children's services, providing food from diverse cultural backgrounds recognises and respects children of various cultures. Introducing children to new food types, textures, aromas and

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Welcome

Or *Kalosorisetse* (Greek), *Hoan nghênh* (Vietnamese), *Hos geldiniz* (Turkish), *Selamat datang* (Malay), *Benvenuti* (Italian)!

In this issue we embrace multiculturalism and all the wonderful flavours, sounds and traditions that it holds.

Christa Schlosstein from Diversity Directions describes the benefits for children experiencing different cultures and provides practical ideas for introducing multicultural food and learning into child care programs. Read how an Adelaide child care centre and a Family Day carer both introduced food from different cultures to young children in care in fun and yummy ways. Tempt children in care with the tantalising Indian and Vietnamese recipes inside and find out about multicultural food workshops coming up.

We hope this issue of Food Matters tempts you to experiment with food and traditions from different cultures together with children in your care.

*Nadia Masterson,
Editor & Senior Nutritionist,
Women's & Children's Hospital.*

For more information...

For more information about Food Matters phone (08) 8161 7777. For general information about children's health and nutrition contact Women's & Children's Hospital Health Information Centre, phone (08) 8161 6875.

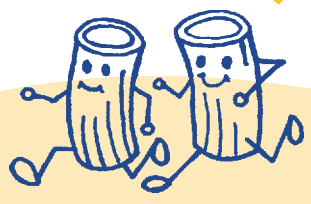
We are on line...

Visit www.chdf.org.au/childcarenutrition to download copies of Food Matters.



Family insert included to copy and distribute.

Summer 2002



Every day is multicultural day

By Cassandra Hood, Nutritionist, Southern Vales CHS

In Family Day Care (FDC), a care provider looks after no more than 5 - 7 children in their own home. Hai Ha is a qualified Family Day Care care provider and one of about 30 Vietnamese care providers in the west of Adelaide. She established her FDC centre as part of the FDC Multicultural Scheme a few years ago and now operates in the Westside Scheme, one of three in the West Group of Districts in FDC.

Hai Ha was born in Vietnam and has spent 8 years in Denmark working in a childcare centre. Since 1994, she has provided Family Day Care in her own home. Hai Ha currently cares for 4 children during the day ranging in age from 20 months to four and a half years. All children have one or both parents of Vietnamese origin. She also looks after some older children after school and occasionally on weekends.

Multiculturalism is an integral part of the children's day, with children speaking both Vietnamese and English. Vietnamese is spoken in care, which helps the children to keep up and develop their language skills at this crucial age. Food and its preparation are also very important and ingredients for meals and snacks are bought fresh each day. The children will often accompany Hai Ha to the market in the morning to buy vegetables and fruit and are considered highly in the choice of foods prepared and served.

Meals involve mainly traditional dishes such as Vietnamese meat and carrot casserole, beef noodles and Vietnamese fried chicken and steamed vegetables. A hot meal is served at lunchtime three times a week. Food is very important to



the children's families and a lot of time is spent talking with families about food before the children come into care. Meal times are very relaxed and enjoyable and the children have plenty of time to sit and talk and eat together. They are also often involved in making their own meals or snacks, like preparing cold rolls with their own choice of vegetable and meat fillings.

Traditional days are always celebrated with the children such as New Year Celebrations and Trung Thu - an autumn festival. For Trung Thu, the children make lanterns and a special type of Vietnamese cake to share.

The carrying through of traditional culture in language, customs and cuisine is very important to many parents of different cultural origins. Talking about food allows carers to share their stories and culture with other workers and parents. Parents are often surprised by the amount and variety of food eaten by their children at FDC. The strong involvement of the children in many different aspects of food provision and preparation and the ongoing observance of Vietnamese tradition means every day is multicultural day at Hai Ha's place!

See the tasty Vietnamese soup recipe in Cooks Connection on page 5.

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colours through food preparation, cooking activities and mealtimes enables children to learn about food and customs of other cultures as well as providing opportunities to learn new skills and interact with other cultures.

Encouraging multiculturalism helps children to develop a positive identity and attitude toward their own and other cultures. They learn that there are many ways to do things with no one way being more valuable or better than the other. Children can also learn to acknowledge and respect other cultures increase their opportunities to interact with people of diverse backgrounds.

There are many customs of diverse cultures to be celebrated. The various ethnic origins of children attending a children's service, the local neighbourhood and the wider community could be explored. In the following articles, read about stories from services that share their recipes, activities and experiences in promoting and celebrating various cultures and customs.

'Kids in the Kitchen' cookbook



Over 60 recipes with easy to follow steps and colour photographs. Recipes developed with upper primary school children. Ideal for holiday activities. Cost: \$7.65 plus \$3.30 postage. Contact the Children's Health Development Foundation. Phone: (08) 8161 7777 Fax: (08) 8161 7778

A trip to India

By Emma Donaghey, Nutritionist, Inner Southern Community Health Service

Children attending Wanslea Child Care Centre in Kingswood were recently treated to an exciting and educational trip to India! The children were delighted with a day of food and activities all cleverly developed by Minya Lynch, Wanslea CCC's Cook, to encourage the children to learn about Indian culture in a fun and interactive way.

Wanslea CCC is licensed for 90 children aged 0-5 years each day and has recently been successful in achieving the "Start Right, Eat Right" Award. Providing cultural foods has been an important part of receiving this award, and Minya encourages parents to provide cultural recipes to include in their menu.

Minya also says that "providing ethnic food tasting is a good first cross-cultural experience for the children" that can then be built on with other cultural activities using props, songs, music or different eating utensils.

Staff at Wanslea CCC are invited to organise a special day of activities for their children over 2 years of age. Whilst the cook has not previously been required to do this, Minya saw it as an excellent opportunity to extend the link between the food and activities and organise an "India Day".



After months of planning, India Day finally arrived. Children started the day by making their passports and were then taken to India on an imaginary "plane trip" via a darkened cupboard. Upon arriving in India, children were greeted to the sound of Indian music with many exciting workshops over the day, receiving a stamp on their passport at each "stop over".

Workshops included a demonstration of traditional Indian musical instruments, puppets, magic carpet story telling about an Indian man, and a demonstration by some Indian dancers!

A delicious Indian Curry was served for the children. Parents were also invited to attend and were served a more traditional Indian Curry with lamb pieces.

After a fun and exciting day for all, Wanslea CCC has decided to make "trips overseas" a yearly event. Try Wanslea CCC's yummy Chicken and Banana Curry recipe in Cook's Connection and perhaps start planning 'a trip overseas' at your centre.

Teething

By Kerry Clifford, TeethSmart SA

Teeth usually start to appear when a child is about six months of age. Timing will vary, but twenty baby teeth normally arrive by the time the child is 2½ to 3 years old. At about 6 years of age the first permanent molars and lower permanent incisors begin to appear.

Some babies and toddlers may experience teething problems such as:

- Red swollen gums
 - Irritability and restlessness
 - Flushed cheeks and fever
 - Drooling
 - Finger and fist sucking
- Teething should not cause severe illness. If the child has fever or diarrhoea, medical advice should be sought.

Teething problems may be eased by the baby chewing on:

- Crusts of bread
 - Teething rings or rusks
- Rubbing your child's gums with your finger or a cold spoon may also help.

Healthy teeth are important so your child can:

- Eat a nutritious diet
- Speak properly
- Have a healthy smile

Brushing

Toothbrushing should start when the first tooth appears. Fluoride toothpaste is not recommended for children under 2 years. Low-fluoride toothpaste is recommended for children from 2-6 years.



Resources

Compiled by Simone Lee, The Cancer Council South Australia

Multicultural Finger Foods and Snacks

Filled with all sorts of recipes from around the world, the booklet is well laid out and easy to use. Available from Diversity Directions Inc, ph (08) 8346 1762. Cost: \$11.00



Food: Culture, Custom and Presentation

This book provides an excellent introduction to food customs and dining experiences from a variety of cultures. Topics include chopstick etiquette, food and religion, and a number of multicultural food pyramids. Available from Diversity Directions Inc, ph (08) 8346 1762. Cost: \$11.00



Cultural Packages for Vietnam, India, China, Thailand

These four cultural packages include cultural information, stories, experiences and activities and recipes of each culture, relevant to programs in children's services. Available from Diversity Directions Inc, ph (08) 8346 1762. Cost: \$11.00 each

Cultural Calendar

This one-page, double-sided flier contains a comprehensive list of important cultural dates for Sept-Dec 2002. Great for planning theme days in child care. Available from Diversity Directions Inc, ph (08) 8346 1762, or download directly from their website at www.divdir.asn.au Cost: free

Multicultural Snacks

Produced in the United States, this cookbook provides over 70 simple multicultural recipes. Each chapter features a common food with examples of how it is prepared in different cultures. Available from Lady Gowrie Child Centre Bookshop, ph (08) 8352 5246. Cost: \$19.70



Cultures, Cuisines and Child Care - More Than Just Nutrition A Multicultural Resource for Child Care Centres

Produced by Liverpool Health Service, NSW, this book. It covers information on Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Italian, Latin-American and Vietnamese cultures. Also provides multi-cultural food activities, age appropriate food handling skill common ingredients, how food is served and religious occasions. Available from the Lady Gowrie Child Centre Bookshop, ph (08) 8352 524. Cost: \$15.40

NSW multicultural health info website

www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au
The website provides information and services to assist health professionals to communicate with non-English speaking communities. The NSW Department of Health funds the service, and endorses the multilingual health information published on the website. There are over 300 publications on health in a wide range of languages and a new publication is produced each month.

How can children's services incorporate learning about food and customs of diverse cultures into their programs?

By Christa Schlosstein, Diversity Directions Inc.

- Parents and staff in children's services can share information about children's cultural background and discuss how these can be incorporated into the service menu.
- Staff can find out about historical and contemporary aspects of different cultures and explore that culture's agriculture, climate and foods with the children.
- Staff and parents can brainstorm the cultural background of children in the centre. Display these cultures on a poster, map or display. Add photographs of foods commonly eaten in these countries to create a colourful display for learning.
- Plan and provide meals that help children to become familiar with a variety of foods, including foods from diverse cultures. Holidays and festivals provide good opportunities for cultural experiences involving food.
- Plan food celebration activities of diverse cultures and religions, particularly those represented at your centre. These are ideal opportunities to involve the family and/or community to share ideas, ingredients and utensils for specific celebration food.
- Use different crockery and table settings from various cultures when serving multicultural foods, eg Asian food may be served on Asian tablecloth with an appropriate centrepiece and in Asian bowls with chopsticks or authentic spoons.

Pho Vietnamese beef noodle soup

(Serves 20)



Soup can be served any time of the day in Vietnam. This is a very simple but tasty soup, that children will enjoy. Traditionally the soup is served with Hoisin sauce and fresh chilli. Try this modified recipe with young children.

Ingredients

- 1 package of flat rice noodles (375g)
- 200g lean beef fillet
- 2 onions
- 1 piece of ginger (50g)
- 1 pack of Vietnamese beef stock 'Pho' Noodle Soup (available from Asian groceries)
- 4 tbsp fish sauce
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 200g bean sprouts
- Chopped spring onions and fresh basil to garnish
- Fresh lemon juice and Hoisin sauce (optional for garnish)

Method

1. Roast ginger and whole onions until they turn a golden colour.
2. Place 3 to 4 litres of water into a saucepan, add ginger, onions, Vietnamese beef stock 'Pho' Noodle Soup and beef fillet, bring to the boil.
3. Turn heat down and simmer, then add fish sauce and sugar.
4. Take fillet beef out and slice finely.
5. Boil 3 litres of water in a saucepan. Once boiling, add flat rice noodles and cook for 5-10 minutes until tender. Drain noodles into a colander.

6. Divide a small amount of noodles into each bowl, place a few slices of beef then top with the soup.
7. Garnish with chopped spring onions, beansprouts and basil.
8. Lemon juice and hoisin sauce can be added if desired.

Recipe kindly provided by Huynh T from Diversity Directions.

Corn and rice fritters

(Serves approximately 12)

Ingredients

- 1 can sweet corn
- 1/2 cup self raising flour
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup rice flour
- 1/4 tsp baking powder
- small amount of oil for frying

Spices (optional)

- 1/2 tsp ground coriander
- 1/4 tsp ground cumin
- 1/4 tsp chilli powder

Method

1. Blend corn and egg in a bowl.
2. Add self raising flour, rice flour and baking powder.
3. Drop dessert spoon sized amounts of batter onto a hot non-stick pan.
4. Fry and turn to the other side.
5. Serve when both sides are golden brown.

Recipe from "Multicultural Finger Foods" Diversity Directions.



Indian chicken and banana curry with rice

(Makes 60 serves for young children)

Ingredients

- 2.5kg roasted chicken pieces (skinless)
- 500g sliced banana
- 400g chopped onion
- 2kg frozen mixed vegetables
- 500g diced red capsicum
- 100g sultanas
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp ground ginger
- 120g chicken sweetcorn soup
- 1 tsp curry powder
- corn flour (as required to thicken)
- 5 cups dry rice

Method

1. In large stockpot, cook the onion for 5 minutes. Add curry powder, ginger and soy sauce. Cook for further 2 minutes and add chicken.
2. Boil frozen vegetables for 8 minutes. Drain well. Add to the stockpot and stir through.
3. Stir fry capsicum. Add to the stockpot and stir through.
4. Mix soup powder with 3 litres of boiling water. Add to the stockpot and bring to boil. Simmer slowly for 10 minutes.
5. Thicken with cornflour to the right consistency. Add bananas and sultanas, stir through.
6. In the meantime, boil rice for 15-20 minutes. Rinse under cold running water. Drain well.
7. Line four large Pyrex dishes with the drained rice. Spread the vegetable and chicken curry mixture over rice. Cover with foil and keep warm in oven until serving.

Recipe kindly provided by Wanslea Child Care Centre, Kingswood.

What's Happening?

Diversity Directions offer a range of workshops. To register for any of the workshops or for more information telephone (08) 8346 1762.

- Multicultural Mystery Tour, 14 December 2002, 10am-2.30pm starting at Diversity Directions training room and including a bus tour to diverse shops and stops. Cost: \$48.
- Multicultural Market Walk, 19 October and 7 December 2002, 9.30am-12noon at Adelaide's Central Market. Cost: \$35.
- Food preparation in the Asian Tradition, 15 November, 2002. 9.30am-1pm. Cooking at the Croydon TAFE campus kitchen. Cost is \$45.
- Food, Culture, Customs and Presentation, 22 November 2002, 9.30am-12.30pm at Diversity Directions training room. Cost: \$35.

The Women's and Children's Hospital are presenting a Free Public Health Seminar titled "Food Allergies" on Weds 20th Nov 2002 at 7.15-8.45pm. Phone (08) 8161 6875 to book.

Regency Institute of TAFE offer a range of courses on food hygiene, food legislation and HACCP. To register for any of the following courses phone Annie on (08) 8348 4502 or email jeffria@regency.tafe.sa.edu.au.

- Principles of Hazard Analysis & Critical Control Points (HACCP). On 15-16 October, 2002. 9.00am-4.30pm.
- Application of HACCP. On 26-27 November 2002, 9.00am-4.30pm.

Both courses are \$100.00 for two days and are held at the Regency Institute of TAFE.

Certificate II and II Community Services Food Services

The Certificates in Community Food Services provide graduates with a sound knowledge and practical skill development in food preparation and service.

Certificate II competencies include:

- Basic Cooking Skills
- Food preparation and presentation
- Safe Food Handling & Hygiene

Certificate III competencies include:

- Menu Planning
- Nutrition
- Developing Food Safety Plans
- Special Diets
- Catering
- Advanced Cooking Skills

Students are encouraged to apply for recognition of their learning acquired through work, life experience, or training. This can save time, money and effort.

Contact Regency Institute of TAFE for further details on (08) 8207 9770.

Nutrition information for families

This edition of Food Matters contains a black and white copy of the insert for families. If you would like multiple copies of the insert for your centre, contact TeethSmart Resource Centre.
Ph: 8295 2311
Fax: 8294 6103
Email:

teethsmart@dhs.sa.gov.au



The SA Child Care Nutrition Partnership aims to promote good nutrition for all South Australian children in early childhood services.

Partners include representatives from Association of Child Care Centres of SA; Children's Health Development Foundation; Department of Human Services; Douglas Mawson Institute of TAFE; Eat Well SA; Flinders University; Inner Southern Community Health Service; Lady Gowrie Child Centre Inc; Noarlunga Health Service; Regency Institute of TAFE; SA Association of Community Based Child Care Centres Inc; TeethSmart SA; The Cancer Council of South Australia; Women's & Children's Hospital, Department of Nutrition & Food Services.

Editorial Policy

Food Matters aims to promote good nutrition in early childhood by providing nutrition information, advice and support to carers of young children and showcasing child care food and nutrition initiatives. While every effort is made to include articles which meet these objectives, inclusion does not necessarily imply endorsement by the SA Child Care Nutrition Partnership. This newsletter may be copied for educational and non-profit purposes with acknowledgment.

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