

Chef Combo's™

ISSUE 12

C O N N E C T I O N S

A Newsletter for Teachers Using
Chef Combo's Fantastic Adventures in Tasting and Nutrition



On the road with Chef Combo

Even when Chef Combo leaves the classroom to explore art, he finds nutritious foods! Here's the Chef smiling in front of The Spoon Bridge and Cherry Sculpture in the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden at the Walker Art Center. This photo, also featuring the Minneapolis skyline, was taken during the National Head Start Association conference, April 14-17.

TEACHER-TO-TEACHER

Chef Combo always says "Yes" to "Let's do lunch," as long as it's a nutritious one! Christy Tanner, Education Coordinator for Southeast Nebraska Community Action Head Start in Humboldt, NE, used Chef Combo to announce "what's for lunch" each day when she was teaching. Now she oversees several classrooms that bring the magic of Chef Combo to lunch.



This addition makes the **Chef Combo Likes Lunch** activity (page 170) even more fun, and links talking about lunchtime foods to what the children will actually eat. Tanner explains, "When this activity is done daily, the children no longer ask what's for lunch each day!"




MATERIALS

- Food photos of menu items being served for lunch on the day(s) of the activity (Use *Food Models** or pictures cut from magazines and mounted on cardboard)
- Bulletin board



WHAT TO DO

- Follow Steps 1-5 of the **Chef Combo Likes Lunch** activity (page 170)
- Put the menu items in Chef Combo's pocket
- Announce to the children today's lunch menu will be discussed.
- Explain that the Chef has today's lunch menu items hidden in his pocket and ask them to guess the nutritious foods that might be on the menu
- Choose as many students to be "Chef Combo Helpers" as there are menu items and have each helper take one menu item from Chef Combo's pocket
- Discuss how the food items make up a delicious, nutritious lunch
- Have each helper place their food photo on the bulletin board for display
- Optional: Use Chef Combo to introduce lunch in this manner as part of the every-day morning routine 




BRIEFS




Begin the new school year with fantastic adventures

Jump-start the new school year with the **Chef Combo's™ Fantastic Adventures in Tasting and Nutrition** program. The **Tasting Passports** activity (page 29) in the **Magic Carpet** Unit is the perfect place to begin. Have the children create **Tasting Passports** as their first activity after meeting Chef Combo. The Passports will be ready to stamp each time the children join Chef Combo on one of his tasting adventures. Using the Passports helps make the food tasting adventures "come alive" and also offers many other benefits:

- The Passport concept appeals to children's imagination and creativity
- The stamps are an extra incentive to encourage children to become food tasters (Remember, just a little taste will do.)
- When used consistently, the Passport can become a fond keepsake of children's nutritional experiences
- Teachers can share the Passports with parents/caregivers as an assessment tool showing a child's willingness to try new foods


Teachers, are you having a problem with your Chef Combo stamp running dry? Try moistening the ink pad with a little bit of water. 

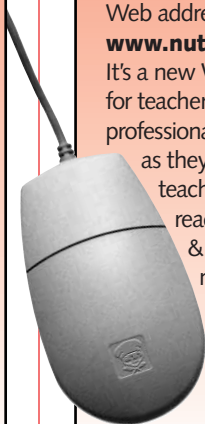
Chef Combo on tour!

National Dairy Council® will be exhibiting at the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) 1999 annual conference in New Orleans, LA on November 10-13. Chef Combo will be posing for instant photos with the attendees, so be sure to stop by the booth and "click" with the Chef. Previous NAEYC attendees report that their students are delighted to see the photos of Chef Combo with their teachers. Bringing back a photo is a wonderful way to introduce the next Chef Combo activity that is planned. 

Visit the Chef at his new cyber address... beginning September 1! **Chef Combo's Fantastic Adventures** will have a new Web address:

www.nutritionexplorations.org. It's a new Web site designed for teachers and school foodservice professionals. Look for new topics as they are added, including teacher-to-teacher ideas, reading lists, a question & answer section, nutritional tips and more.

For great ideas, make it a practice to visit the Chef often at his new cyberspace home! 



**Food Models* are colorful, life-size photographs of 185 common foods, available through your local Dairy Council.

Beverage consumption by young children deserves close attention

One might think that the beverages young children drink would be quite nutritious. However, a review of current statistics reveals quite a different picture.

According to the *Journal of The American Dietetic Association*, 12% of preschool-aged children drink an average of nine ounces of soft drinks or more a day. Children who drink more soda consume less milk and fruit juice and take in more total calories than children with lower soft drink intakes. Those extra calories, consisting mostly of refined sugar and water, contribute few if any nutrients.

Soft drink consumption may be undermining children's overall nutritional status. For example, USDA figures show that 44% of children ages three to five do not get enough calcium in their diets. The National Academy of Sciences recommends that four- and five-year-old children get 800mg of calcium each day, or three servings of milk or Milk Group foods. Of course milk is an excellent source of calcium which helps build and maintain strong bones and teeth. It is also an important source of eight other nutrients including vitamin D, riboflavin, phosphorus and protein.


School is an ideal place for children to learn about and consume nutritious beverages.


















The **Chef Combo's Fantastic Adventures** program offers many activities that expose children to nutritious beverages. Here are some general guidelines regarding preschool children and beverages:

- Serve milk with meals. Try flavored milk for added appeal. More than 77% of

children report they like chocolate milk and 39% say they would drink more milk if it was chocolate. The nutrients in chocolate milk are the same as those found in white milk.

- A four-ounce serving of citrus juice provides the recommended amount of vitamin C that children need daily and counts as one fruit serving from the USDA Food Guide Pyramid. Too much juice may lead to excess calories and reduced mealtime appetite.
- Water is an essential part of a healthy diet and children should drink it throughout the day. Jazz it up with a twist of lemon or a slice of orange or serve it in fun plastic bottles or crazy cups.

As always, teachers are excellent role models and can set a good example by drinking nutritious beverages. Check the chart for the number of servings of milk or Milk Group foods you should be getting! 

CALCIUM RECOMMENDATIONS		
Age (Years)	Calcium Needed (mg) Per Day	Number of Milk Group Foods Per Day
1-3*	500	  
4-8	800	  
9-18	1,300	   
19-50	1,000	  
51+	1,200	   

*Serving sizes for children ages 1-3 are 2/3 of adult sizes. Source: National Academy of Sciences

\$25 FOR IDEAS...

National Dairy Council® welcomes suggestions from newsletter readers for extensions of the current Chef Combo activities.

We are looking for ideas for manipulations, books, songs, finger plays, etc. that will enhance children's learning by building on one of the existing activities in **Chef Combo's Fantastic Adventures in Tasting and Nutrition**.

Contributors will receive \$25 for each idea published. Be sure to include your name, school, full address, phone number, and current position. All submissions become the property of National Dairy Council.

Send your idea, as well as the name of the specific Chef Combo activity associated with it, to:

Chef Combo's Connections Newsletter

c/o Nutrition Education
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FROM CHEF COMBO'S BOOKSHELF



Chef Combo's two new picks for the Related Literature lists in your **Chef Combo's Fantastic Adventures** Teacher Guide are sure to add a lot of flavor to nutrition education:

Gonzales Bertrand, Diane. *Sip, Slurp, Soup, Soup/Caldo, Caldo, Caldo*. Houston: Piñata Books, 1997. Written in English and Spanish, this story offers a bit of culture in addition to education on nutrition. Teachers and children alike will enter into the adventure of a family making soup and taking a trip to a tortilla store. Teachers can also make soup with their students—actual recipes are included!



Tofts, Hannah. *I Eat Fruit!* New York: Zero to Ten, Ltd., 1998. Delightful, colorful photos in this book help children classify fruits according to shape, color and other attributes. The fold-out flaps allow children to guess each fruit's characteristics before the pages unfold.

