

Food Program Newsletter

Fall Quarter 2009

The Food Program would like to welcome all families to Fall Quarter at the Children's Center. For those of you who are new to the center, we hope you've enjoyed your experience so far and for returning families, welcome

back! We are well into the quarter by now and the fall season is evident all around us; leaves are changing, the air is cooler and college students are roaming Cal Poly's campus once again. Although change is happening outside our window, there is little that has changed within our Food Program. We continue to make it our



daily goal to provide healthy and delicious food for your children. In addition to eating our food, the children also get to experience the process of making it! We make sure classrooms have the opportunity to participate in food-related activities where all the sensory experiences of cooking are explored.

There are many elements to our program we are proud of and want to share with you. Please read on to learn more about what makes the Children's Center Food Program special and unique. We've included some information about us personally, a little about our recipes, and how our program has a hand in educating Cal Poly food science and nutrition students as well as our own multi-majored student staff. Also, check out a special advice column at the end of the newsletter from our own Cal Poly nutrition faculty. They have lots of great insight and information for families on the topics of nutrition and wellness. Thank you to all the nutrition faculty members who contributed to this section; we appreciate you sharing your knowledge with us. Have a great quarter!

Sarah Pool

Sharon Miranda

Food Program Manager

Arriving to work at the Children's Center from the public school food program was a bit of a shock. Children were actually eating and liking vegetarian lasagna? And french toast soufflé? You've got to be kidding! Well, they showed me. The children are excited and eager to eat our homemade food. In turn, their excitement encourages us as kitchen staff to work hard in our jobs. I feel so fortunate to have found the Children's Center.



Sarah Pool

Food Program Assistant Manager

I moved to San Luis Obispo in 2002 to attend Cal Poly as a freshman and have been here ever since! Originally from Woodland, California I feel lucky to have the opportunity to live and work in SLO, a town I've grown to love so much. During my time at Cal Poly I studied nutrition science and psychology. I graduated in the spring of 2007 and was hired as Food Program Assistant for ASI that fall. Cooking has always been a passion of mine; from planning the meal to preparing and serving - I love it all. Growing up, my mom was always involving my sister and me in whatever she was doing in the kitchen. The joy she found in cooking was a wonderful gift she passed on to us and one that I feel lucky to experience and share everyday in my job.

Children's Center Recipes

You might be surprised by some of the things on our menu that the children love to eat. From marinated tilapia and eggplant parmesan to garden chili and stir fry, we have over 25 different lunch entrees on the menu that we rotate every six weeks. Almost all of our entrées are prepared from scratch and contain a variety of fresh vegetables, proteins and whole grains. We make our own soups, marinades, casseroles and baked goods right here in the



Children's Center kitchen everyday. Many of our recipes are oldies but goodies left behind by the previous Food Program manager, Evelyn Ruehr who started the Food Program back in 1979. We also use a number of pre-approved Child Care Recipes developed by the USDA to complete our menu. In

addition to serving lunch daily, we also serve breakfast and snack. Breakfast includes an assortment of seasonal fruit and grains like cereals, fresh baked breads and coffee cakes, waffles, bagels, english muffins, homemade granola and more. The children look forward to snack at the end of the day when we serve a wide variety of treats such as assorted crackers, home-made hummus, frozen yogurt pops, trail mix, bean dip, carrot cake, and peanut butter balls to name a few. All meals are served family style in the classrooms where the children sit and eat in small groups with one modeling adult.

We hope the children will look back on memories of mealtime at the Children's Center with fondness and a longing for the tastes and smells that used to roll in on a squeaky, gray cart. It's so much fun to deliver meals to classrooms where you're often greeted with squeals of joy from hungry children - "hooray lunch is here!"

Classic Children's Center Recipes

Some of the children's favorites! Enjoy



Marinated Tilapia

- 2 Tbsp Soy Sauce
- 1 Tbsp Tomato Paste
- 2 Tbsp Orange Juice
- 1 Tbsp Canola Oil
- 1 Tbsp Parsley Leaves
- ¼ tsp Minced Garlic
- ½ Tbsp Lemon Juice
- ¼ Tbsp Oregano
- ¼ Tbsp Pepper

Marinade recipe is good for one pound of tilapia. Whisk together ingredients in bowl. Cut tilapia into 1 inch pieces and add fish to bowl. Stir to evenly coat and let sit for approx. 30 min in the fridge. Arrange fish pieces on a lined baking sheet and bake in a 375° oven for 15 minutes or until fish is flaky and opaque.

Tomato Pasta Soup

- 1 - 46 oz can Tomato Juice
- 4 cups Low Fat Milk
- 1 tsp Basil
- ¼ cup Tomato Paste
- 2 Tbsp Sugar
- 1 Tbsp Worcestershire Sauce
- ½ tsp Celery Salt
- 1/8 tsp Black Pepper
- 10 oz Elbow Macaroni

The children joyfully call this *Sharon's Special Soup!* It is, hands down, their favorite soup we make. In a large pot, combine tomato juice, milk, basil, tomato paste, sugar, Worcestershire sauce, celery salt and pepper. Bring to a simmer and turn heat to low, cook for 15 minutes. Add macaroni noodles and cook for an additional 10 minutes or until pasta is tender.

Peanut Butter Balls

- 2 cups Peanut Butter
- ¾ cup Quick Rolled Oats
- ¾ cup Instant Dry Milk
- ½ cup Honey
- 1 tsp Vanilla
- ½ cup Cereal or Cracker Crumbs (chex, graham crackers, kix, Nillas)

Combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Stir until well combined, and then scoop with cookie scoop or roll by hand into small, walnut size balls. Chill in the freezer for approx. 2 hours. Eat peanut butter balls directly from the freezer.

The Ultimate College Experience

Cal Poly students look to ASI for the ultimate college experience. The Children's Center helps provide this everyday by making quality childcare available to Cal Poly students and offering ASI student employees working experience in the classroom, at the front desk and in our kitchen. The combination of educating college students and educating children in the same environment makes our center one-of-a-kind and truly a rich experience all around.

Currently in the Food Program, we have a group of eight passionate student staff working with us. The majority of our kitchen staff is nutrition or food science majors; however this is not a requirement to work for the Food Program; we look for students that share an interest in foodservice, nutrition and children. Everyday kitchen assistants are becoming skilled in meal planning, food prep, cooking, serving, dishwashing, sanitation, calculating recipes, properly using kitchen equipment and providing substitutes for children with special dietary needs. In addition to our hired Food Program staff, we also invite nutrition students to volunteer with us for 3 hour blocks during winter and spring quarters as part of a course requirement. We provide on-site quarterly tours to Institutional Foodservice students as well. Although we may be a small kitchen with relatively low production in comparison to other institutional food programs, hopefully our impact on Cal Poly and student education is much greater than our size.



Advice from Cal Poly's Nutrition Faculty

We asked Cal Poly nutrition professors what you should know when it comes to your child's diet and overall health. Here's what they had to say...

If you could offer one piece of advice to parents about their child's nutrition, what would you encourage them to do or avoid doing?

Let children self-regulate their hunger and satiety

Dr. Susan Swadener

Include children in food preparation to enhance their exposure to foods, increase their interests and intake, and ultimately improve their diet and interest in foods for the rest of their lives. It is also a great bonding time, and young children like to contribute as best they can to making the meal. It takes up to 20 exposures of a new food before some children learn to like those foods. Parents give up too easily that their children won't eat many foods. Also, too many convenience and fast foods - parents need to make a good diet with quality foods offered a higher priority.

Dr. Peggy Papathakis

Vitamin D is important for your child's health in several ways. Vitamin D helps calcium build strong bones and without it rickets can develop. Recent studies are showing that vitamin D is also important for a healthy immune system and in preventing diseases such as diabetes and cancer. The American Academy of Pediatrics now recommends that all infants, child and adolescents, have a minimum daily intake of 400 IU / day. Your children can make vitamin D in their skin when they are exposed to the sun, however, exposure needed is difficult to determine for each individual and may increase the risk for skin cancer. Your child can get vitamin D in fortified milk or OJ and in natural sources such as fish or from a multivitamin supplement. A cup of fortified milk / OJ has 100 IU, 3 oz of canned tuna has 200 IU and a children's Flintstones multivitamin has 400 IU.

Dr. Laura Hall



Limit TV watching, encourage cooking with whole ingredients and meal time as family activities, and be active together. Do not overfeed or force children to eat. Limit availability of junk food in the home.

Dr. Aydin Naomi