

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

2009 is off to a great start at Calvin Hill! Fun food activities continue to fill the classrooms with delicious tastes and new learning experiences, some of which are highlighted in this issue. You'll also see some new recipes (successfully tested by Calvin Hill classrooms) and a short history about Calvin Hill's Food Program. Hope you enjoy!

FOOD NEWS

Three's Room: Celebrates Chinese New Year

In January, the Three's room made dumplings with Samantha's mother to celebrate the Chinese New Year. The children helped roll the dough, and Samantha's mother stuffed them with chicken and vegetables. The dumplings signify reunion, and are traditionally eaten on New Year's Eve, a time for families to be reunited. The dumplings were very popular with both the children and the teachers!



Veggie Tasting Survey Results are in:

Cucumbers and Red Peppers Tied for First Place in the Three's Room!



Which vegetable do you like best?
We found out that most people in our class like cucumbers or red peppers.

Ashlynn	Zara		
Isaac	Madilynn		
Matthew	Kai		
Kian	Kurt		Samantha
Elia	Dylan		Megan
Charlie	Lauren	Garretson	Finn
6	6	1	3
red pepper	cucumber	grape tomatoes	None

Preschool: Gone Bananas!

The Preschool recently celebrated Eli's 4th birthday with a new recipe of frozen banana treats. The children dipped chunks of bananas into vanilla yogurt, and then rolled them in graham cracker crumbs. Then the bananas were placed in the freezer, and the class enjoyed the frozen treats for afternoon snack on Eli's birthday. The frozen bananas were a big hit, with several children reporting that they tasted like ice cream!



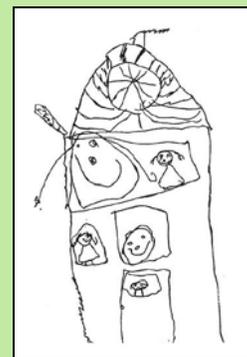
Frozen Banana Treats

Ingredients:

- 1 banana
- ¼ cup vanilla low-fat yogurt
- 2-4 tablespoons of graham cracker crumbs

Directions:

Cut banana into 2-inch thick slices. Roll slices in vanilla yogurt, then in graham cracker crumbs. Place them on wax paper in the freezer.



Last month, the Preschool children brought in vegetables from home, and together the class made vegetable soup for lunch!



Kindergarten: New Food Discoveries

The Kindergarten class has been busy experimenting with fruits and vegetables. The children have been drying various fruits and observing what happens to them. So far, the children have dried apples, pomegranates, and grapes. They found out that the grapes turned into raisins!



Carrots have also been the subjects of observation in the Kindergarten. One day during lunch, the children started discussing the carrots they were eating, and decided to measure their length. They recorded the lengths of the carrots, and found that most of the carrots were 2 inches long. Some of the carrots were 1 inch or 2 ½ inches, but none were 3 inches.

Stay tuned for more research findings from the Kindergarten food scientists!



Celebrate with Healthy Cake!

Cake often takes a starring role in birthdays, holidays, and other celebrations all year long. While we all have our favorite cake traditions, there are times when healthier alternatives work just as well. The idea is to keep the treat, but to add a healthy twist. As an example, the Preschool enjoyed Applesauce Oatmeal Bread for Leo's birthday in December, a recipe brought in (and generously shared!) by his mother Thea. The children enjoyed this recipe so much that they ate it for dessert at lunch, and again at afternoon snack!



Applesauce Oatmeal Bread (Cake!)

For 9"x5" pan

1 1/2 cups rolled oats	1/2 tsp nutmeg
1 1/4 cups flour	2/3 tsp salt
2/3 cup raisins	2 eggs
1 tsp baking powder	1/2 cup packed brown sugar
3/4 tsp baking soda	1/4 cup vegetable oil
1/2 tsp cinnamon	1 cup applesauce

Directions:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter and flour 9"x5" loaf pan.
In large bowl, combine: oats, flour, raisins, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, and salt.
In another bowl, beat the eggs. Beat in sugar, oil and applesauce.
Pour into oat/flour mixture and stir until evenly mixed.
Bake 50 minutes (or until knife in center comes out dry). Let stand 5 minutes and then cool on a rack.

From "*Vegetarian Pleasures*" cookbook.



Chronicles of the Calvin Hill Food Program

Calvin Hill participates in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), a Federal Nutrition Program designed to reimburse facilities for nutritious meals served to children in a day care environment. These guidelines are intended to promote child nutrition. Each kitchen in the three Calvin Hill classrooms is certified and licensed by the New Haven Health Department for simple meal preparation and light cooking activities. Several staff are also certified food service personnel. With the current food program, each teacher spends considerable time each week cooking, serving, and cleaning up lunch meals and snacks. Teachers and staff also organize, distribute, and store food on each floor when it is delivered. Lunch meals are prepared in conjunction with a Yale dietitian who considers nutritional requirements, as well as input from professional staff who have experience feeding children successfully for many years.

So, how did the Calvin Hill food program come to be? Here is a brief synopsis of the past 38 years, and the changes that have occurred over time.

1970: Calvin Hill opened its doors to children of Yale union employees, and began offering lunch and snacks throughout the day. The Yale Dining Halls cooked the food and CH teachers picked it up at the Divinity School kitchen, transporting the food each day back to the school. The lunch menus at that time reflected Yale's menus more directly – dishes like green bean and ground beef casserole, macaroni and cheese, hamburgers, spaghetti and sauce, American cheese, sloppy Joes and more.

1983: Calvin Hill added the Kindergarten, increasing the number of children to be fed to approximately 40+ children each day.

1980's: During several employee strikes at Yale, Calvin Hill obtained food from the Yale Psychiatric Institute and Yale Health Plan, where there were no picket lines. At that time, milk and bread began being delivered, which helped simplify the food service process. At this time CH also began to streamline food and teachers picked it up about three times a week, alternating cold lunches (e.g., sandwiches) rather than hot food every day. This change was instituted in consultation with staff, parents and nutrition consultants.



Early 1990's: CH began working directly with Yale's food supplier for all foods brought into the school, including stocks of dry goods like cereal, rice, pasta, and crackers. The Yale supplier made food deliveries directly to Calvin Hill. This is when the teachers began cooking the lunch meals themselves. A food committee of CH parents was created to help with this transition. Menus were created by Yale dietitians, to allow for nutritious but fast and simple meals to be prepared.

1991: Calvin Hill expanded to include the Toddler (now Three's) Program, increasing the number of children to be fed to approximately 60 each day.

Throughout the past two decades, lunch menus have been created on a 3-week cycle, and have included foods like chicken nuggets, hot dogs, turkey sandwiches, rice and cheese, pasta and cheese (low fat mozzarella and cheddar) with and without sauce, pizza, American cheese, cream cheese, soy butter, and yogurt. Vegetables and fruits served included carrots, peas, corn, green beans, broccoli, apples, oranges, bananas, canned fruit, and applesauce.

2000-present: Over the past decade, the food has been delivered every two weeks, which means that food items ordered must be selected that do not perish quickly. On delivery days, Calvin Hill staff must put away and refrigerate the frozen and fresh foods quickly. This can pose considerable challenges, given the inconvenient times of delivery during the day and the physical labor required to transport large quantities of food.

Recent changes: In the last few years, new items have been added to the menus, including grapes, pears, cantaloupe, strawberries, cucumbers, peppers, low fat cheddar and mozzarella shredded cheese, and low-fat organic yogurt.

As the focus on food and healthy eating is now much more front and center in people's minds, Calvin Hill continues to take positive steps to improve the nutrition of snacks and meals provided to children. For example, many food items are now whole grain, such as bread and crackers. More fresh fruits and vegetables are being offered, with the aim of providing fresh produce at meal and snack times. Stay tuned as healthier changes continue to be implemented into the Calvin Hill Food Program!

