

The Edible Editorial

December 2024

December—A Month of Multicultural Celebrations

December is an opportune time to emphasize diversity and inclusion by embracing multicultural celebrations. From Hanukkah to Christmas to Kwanzaa, the month is filled with diverse celebrations. Acknowledging and celebrating these festivities promotes a sense of belonging and shared purpose among cultural differences. There may be additional cultural holidays not listed here.

Hanukkah, December 25th—January 2nd

Hanukkah, also known as the Festival of Lights, is a Jewish festival that typically lasts for eight nights and days. It commemorates the miracle of a small quantity of oil that miraculously lasted for eight days, symbolizing the endurance of the Jewish faith. Celebrated with the nightly lighting of the menorah, a nine-branched candelabrum, Hanukkah is a time for reflection, gratitude, and the sharing of traditional foods.

Christmas, December 25th

Christmas is a Christian holiday that commemorates the birth of Jesus Christ. Christmas is a time of joy and giving marked by the exchange of gifts, festive decorations and the gathering of friends and family for special meals and celebrations. Many cultures around the world, regardless of religious affiliation, embrace Christmas as a season of goodwill and generosity.

Kwanzaa, December 26th—January 1st

Kwanzaa celebrates African heritage and identity. The name, Kwanzaa, comes from the Swahili phrase meaning “first fruits (of the harvest).” During the seven-day celebration, families light the Kinara, a

candle holder with seven candles representing the seven principals of Kwanzaa including: unity, self-determination, collective work and responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity, and faith. Other festive traditions include the exchange of handmade gifts, music, dance and feasting.

Also keep in mind that there are different groups of people that choose not to celebrate any holidays such as Jehovah Witnesses.

It is important to discuss with parents about how they may or may not celebrate holidays. Be sure to include all children’s traditions as much as possible.

Tips for Celebrating Multicultural Festivities:

When decorating, incorporate decorations that are inclusive of various cultural and religious traditions. Avoid overemphasizing a specific holiday, making an effort to represent a variety of celebrations.

Consider meals that include traditional dishes from different cultures. Such as Latkes, Challah, Jollof rice, and collard greens.



Cranberry Applesauce – Recipe for Homes

CACFP Crediting Information: Serving size 1/4 cup. Serves 16. One serving provides 3/8 cup fruit.

Ingredients:

- 1 (12 oz.) package fresh cranberries
- 4 cups unsweetened applesauce
- 1 orange, juiced and zested
- 2 cinnamon sticks or 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1-2 Tbsp. maple syrup (optional)



Directions:

1. Place all ingredients in a medium saucepan, including the orange zest.
2. Cook all ingredients over medium heat—if it starts to boil, lower the heat. Stir frequently until cranberries are soft and have broken down.
3. Serve fresh off the stovetop, or it can also be served chilled or cooled to room temperature. Optionally, you can also place the applesauce in a blender and puree it to your desired consistency.



December is National Pear Month! Here are five ways to serve pears as a snack:

- Baked pear with granola topping
- Pear and grilled cheese sandwich
- Pear, banana and yogurt smoothie
- Pear wedges with peanut butter
- Cottage cheese on top of diced pears

Holiday Notes

If children are attending day care on the following holidays, a signed note from the parent, stating that their child was in care, on the specific day, must be sent in with the appropriate claim.

Thanksgiving Day

Christmas Day

New Year's Eve

Easter Sunday

Memorial Day

Forth of July

Labor Day

Holidays can only be claimed for a day care situation. If the parent is present and celebrating the holiday with you, this is not considered day care and the meals cannot be claimed.

If you are going to close your home or center any day during the upcoming holiday season, please call our office in advance to notify us at 1-800-742-3663.

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1. **mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
 2. **fax:** (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
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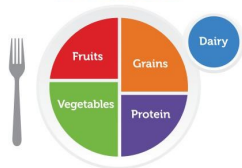
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DECEMBER

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>sort toys: 1 LARGE medium & small</p>	<p>pass, catch and kick a FOOTBALL!</p>	<p>close your eyes, what do you hear?</p>	<p>practice ballet moves</p>	<p>use your favorite veges to make a salad</p>	<p>mix equal parts of liquid starch and glue, play with</p>	<p>color a picture for someone special</p>
<p>dance of exercise to music</p>	<p>LOOK for letters that you know</p>	<p>check out books from the library</p>	<p>describe the taste of different apples</p>	<p>touch your toes ten times</p>	<p>cut different shapes, glue into a collage</p>	<p>cut a sandwich into 4 pieces... share</p>
<p>count all the steps at your house</p>	<p>READ a book about WINTER</p>	<p>can you name animals that live in water?</p>	<p>make Smoothies with fruit and yogurt</p>	<p>sing HOLIDAY songs</p>	<p>make animal sounds</p>	<p>FIRST day of WINTER</p>
<p>LOOK for tracks in the SNOW</p>	<p>HELP clean the house</p>	<p>CHRISTMAS EVE HANUKKAH STARTS & CHRISTMAS</p>	<p>KWANZAA begins</p>	<p>MAKE HOLIDAY CARDS</p>	<p>fill glasses with water, tap to make music</p>	
<p>TALK about things you did in the year</p> <p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	<p>NEW YEARS EVE!</p> <p>31</p>				<p>2024!</p>

Start *simple*
with **MyPlate**



Cut Back on Added Sugars

Healthy eating is important at every age. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding what to eat or drink, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



Think about your drinks

Balance your meal by drinking water instead of sugary drinks like soda, lemonade, or sports drinks. Try some sparkling water with a lemon wedge or a small piece of fresh fruit.



Enjoy a sprinkle or two

Skip the sugar and top your coffee with a dash of cinnamon, nutmeg, or cocoa powder instead. This adds a little variety to the flavor of your coffee.



Satisfy your sweet tooth

Indulge in a naturally sweet dessert—fruit! Enjoy a fresh fruit salad, baked apples with cinnamon, or a piece of fruit right out of the fridge.



Split the sweets

Share dessert with a friend. Half a pastry or slice of cake means only half the added sugars (and calories) for each of you.



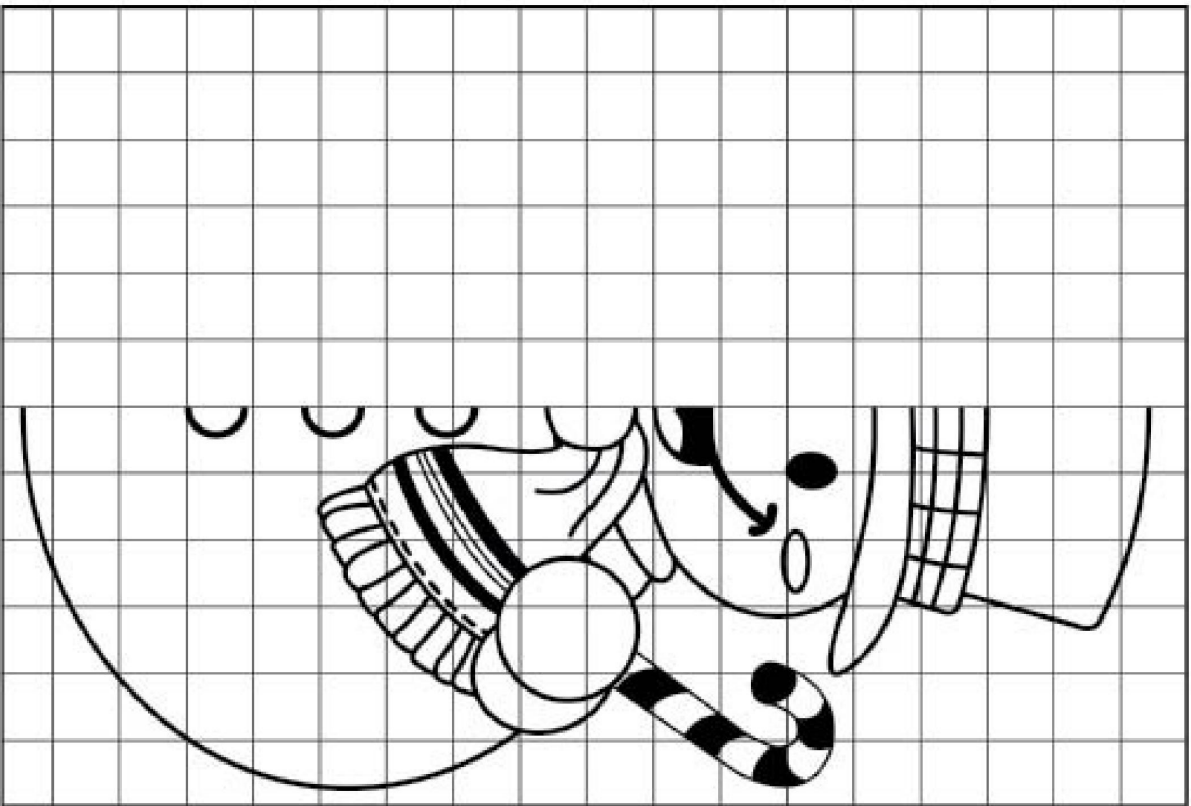
Pick lower sugar options

Choose packaged foods that have less or no added sugars such as plain low-fat or fat-free yogurt, unsweetened applesauce, or canned fruit packed in its own juice or water.

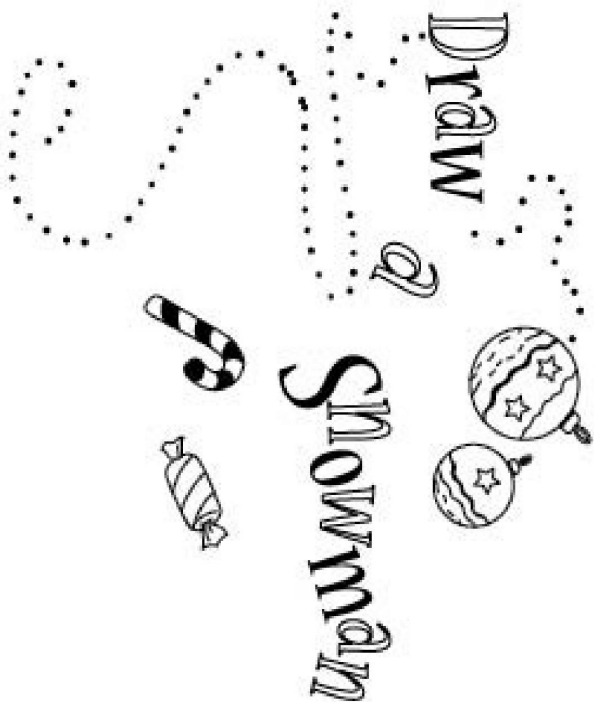


Check the label

Added sugars are now prominently displayed on the [Nutrition Facts label](#) of packaged foods. Use this information to compare added sugars on similar products. Keep in mind that there are many names for added sugars, such as fructose, dextrose, maple syrup, and cane juice.



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Try to finish this Snowman by drawing the other half. Use the graph to help you. Draw the mirror image!