

The Edible Editorial

September 2026

Welcome to September! New school year, new routines, and often a few new faces in your program. This is the month when consistent schedules, familiar mealtime rituals, and a warm welcome make all the difference for children adjusting to change. September is also Better Breakfast Month — a perfect reminder that a good morning meal sets the tone for the whole day. Thank you for the steady, caring work you do as families settle into fall!

SEPTEMBER MONTHLY THEMES

- Better Breakfast Month
- National Fruits & Veggies Month
- Whole Grains Month
- National Chicken Month
- National Literacy Month

SEPTEMBER HOLIDAYS & SPECIAL DAYS

September 7 — Labor Day

Talk about the jobs people do in our community. Set up dramatic play stations — doctor, mail carrier, cook, builder — and let children try on different roles.

September 8 — International Literacy Day

Read a favorite story twice in one day and let children "read" it back to you the second time using the pictures. Simple, powerful, and a big confidence builder.

September 13 — Grandparents Day

Invite children to draw pictures or dictate short letters to a grandparent or special older friend. If you have willing families, a grandparent visit or video call is always a hit.

September 15 – October 15 — Hispanic Heritage Month

Introduce children to music, books, and foods from Latin American cultures. Bean and cheese quesadillas, black beans and rice, and fresh mango are all creditable and kid-friendly places to start.

September 22 — First Day of Fall

Welcome the new season! Take a walk to look for signs of fall, collect colorful leaves, and talk about how the weather is changing.

September 26 — Johnny Appleseed Day

A classic. Read the story, then hold an apple taste test with a few different varieties. Ask children which is sweetest, crunchiest, and their favorite.

SEPTEMBER CRAFT CORNER

- **APPLE STAMP PAINTING:** Cut an apple in half, dip in red, green, or yellow paint, and stamp onto paper. Look at the star shape inside the apple before you start!

- **LEAF RUBBING ART:** Place a leaf under paper and rub the side of a crayon over it. Children love watching the veins appear like magic.



- **HANDPRINT FALL TREES:** Trace a child's hand and forearm in brown for the trunk and branches, then add fingerprint leaves in red, orange, and yellow.

SEPTEMBER MEAL & SNACK IDEAS

All ideas below are designed to fit CACFP meal pattern requirements. Always verify current guidelines with your sponsor.

1. BETTER BREAKFAST BOWL

Whole grain oatmeal (grain) + diced apples with cinnamon (fruit) + milk. Let children stir in their own apples — participation increases acceptance!

2. APPLE "DONUT" SNACK

Apple rounds with the core removed (fruit) + a thin spread of sunflower seed butter and a sprinkle of whole grain cereal (grain). Fun for Johnny Appleseed Day.

3. QUESADILLA TRIANGLES LUNCH

Whole wheat tortilla (grain) + shredded cheese (meat/meat alternate) + black beans and peppers (vegetable) + mango or orange slices (fruit) + milk. A great Hispanic Heritage Month meal.

Updated Reimbursement Rates

How Much Will I Receive?

A child care provider serving breakfast, lunch and a snack to five children would be reimbursed between \$150 and \$300 per month, depending on the reimbursement rates. The amount you receive is based on a two-tier reimbursement scale (not dependent upon DHHS tier status).

These reimbursement rates are in effect from July 1, 2026 through June 30, 2027. Rates payable for each meal *may be* adjusted by USDA each July.

DAY CARE HOME REIMBURSEMENT RATES

Whether you will qualify for Tier I or Tier II rates will depend on a number of factors, such as the location of your child care home, your household income or the income of the families enrolled in the program. In addition, if your household income falls within USDA income guidelines, you may be eligible for reimbursement for your own children ages 12 and younger. For more information on the two-tier system, income guidelines or anything regarding reimbursement call us at 1-800-742-3663, or email rachel@midmichigancc.com.

Daycare Homes	Tier I	Tier II
Breakfast	\$1.74	\$0.62
Lunch/Supper	\$3.31	\$1.99
Snacks	\$0.98	\$0.27

DAY CARE CENTER REIMBURSEMENT RATES

An additional \$0.32 cents cash-in-lieu of commodities is paid for each lunch and supper served.

Mid Michigan Child Care Centers, Inc. will automatically deduct an administrative fee of 15% from the monthly meal reimbursement for centers.

Daycare Centers	Free (A)	Reduced (B)	Paid (C)
Breakfast	\$2.54	\$2.24	\$0.42
Lunch/Supper	\$4.76	\$4.36	\$0.45
Snacks	\$1.30	\$0.65	\$0.12

Tomato Soup –Recipe for Homes

CACFP Crediting Information: 1 cup soup provides 5/8 cup vegetable.

Ingredients:

- 1 1/3 cup or 6 oz. Fresh onions, diced
- 1 1/2 tsp Garlic powder
- 2 cups or 1 lb. 4 oz. Canned plum tomatoes, undrained
- 3 1/4 cup Water
- 1/2 tsp Low-sodium chicken base
- 2 1/4 tsp Dried basil
- 1/4 tsp Ground black pepper
- 1 tsp Sugar
- 1/4 cup or 2 oz. Canned no-salt-added tomato paste
- 2 Tbsp. or 1 oz. Margarine, trans fat-free



Directions:

1. In a medium saucepan, add onion, garlic powder, tomatoes, water, chicken base, basil, black pepper, and sugar.
2. Add tomato paste. Simmer uncovered over medium heat for 7 minutes. Do not over cook.
3. Remove from heat and transfer all ingredients from saucepan to a high-speed blender and blend at high speed for 60 seconds or until mixture has a smooth consistency.
4. Return the mixture to the saucepan.
5. Add margarine, Simmer uncovered over medium heat for 2-3 minutes. Stir well.
6. Serve 1 cup.

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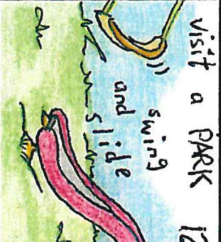
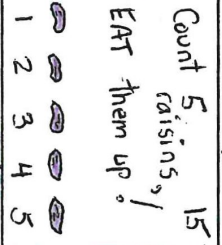
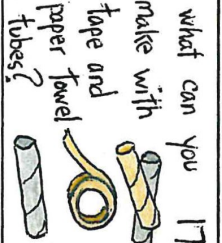
To file a program discrimination complaint, a Complainant should complete a Form AD-3027, USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form which can be obtained online at: <https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/USDA-OASCR%20P-Complaint-Form-0508-0002-508-11-28-17Fax2Mail.pdf>, from any USDA office, by calling (866) 632-9992, or by writing a letter addressed to USDA. The letter must contain the complainant's name, address, telephone number, and a written description of the alleged discriminatory action in sufficient detail to inform the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights (ASCR) about the nature and date of an alleged civil rights violation. The completed AD-3027 form or letter must be submitted to USDA by:

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
- email:** program.intake@usda.gov

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

September

ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
take a walk 6 	CELEBRATE "LABOR DAY!" 7 	work on a puzzle together 1 	draw a person, name, baby parts 2 	what did you do yesterday? 3 	Sip milk through a straw, where does milk come from? 4 	find something blue in each room of your house 5 
celebrate 13 	call up socks, try to JUGGLE 14 	write your name and draw a self-portrait 8 	MARCH, SKIP or HOP to music 9 	READ a book about LEAVES 10 	bounce a ball, try to catch it! 11 	visit a PARK "swinging and sliding" 12 
Grandparents' Day 	visit a grocery store, name fruits and vegetables 21 	Count 5 raisins, EAT them up. 15 	visit the LIBRARY 16 	what can you make with tape and paper towel tubes? 17 	imitate animal sounds (GROK) 18 	count the people living in your house 19 
help a neighbor with a chore 20 	FIRST DAY of FALL 22 	put stuff in a bag, guess what it is by how it feels 29 	eat ANTS on a log: celery, raisins, peanut butter 23 	touch your toes TEN times! 24 	Look in a book, find the letters in your name 25 	RUN as fast as you can 26 
talk about STRANGER DANGER! 27 	HELP clean your house 28 		tear paper scraps, glue into a collage 30 			

Small Hands Crafting

Cut the sides of a paper plates in an inward curve. Paint the pieces cut off green. Glue them to the top of the plate, sandwiching your green pieces to make leaves. Then have your kids paint their plates like an apple core. They can each choose how many seeds that they would like to paint.

Encourage them to paint different numbers.

You can then use the seeds in the apples as a visual to count 1-10 and also compare

greater than,
less than,
and equal.



Happy Autumn!

Did you know that the USDA has strengthened nutrition standards for food and beverages served to young children and others in day care settings?

Young children and adults in child care homes and centers who participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) will now receive meals with more whole grains, a greater variety of vegetables and fruits, and less added sugars and solid fats. The science-based standards introduced in this final rule will elevate the nutritional quality of meals and snacks provided under the CACFP to better align with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and to be consistent with the meals children receive as part of the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP).

When your child care provider is a participant of the CACFP, you can be assured that your child is receiving the best nutrition to help them grow.

Apple Relay & Circle Time

Fall is a great time to get outside and apples are the perfect fruit to inspire talks about nutrition while incorporating physical activity. Have an apple relay! Divide the children into teams and establish a finish line. The children will take turns holding an apple and individually running around the finish line and back to their team. The next child in line will be passed the apple and take their turn. Change each round by skipping, hopping, or balancing the apple on a head or hand. Can't get outside? Try this indoor activity. Everyone knows the chant "Who Took the Cookie from the Cookie Jar?" Change it to "Who Took the Apple from the Apple Tree?" As the children sing the chant, they can pass an apple around the circle. If you can take a field trip to the grocery store in the fall, your kids will be excited to see the many varieties of apples! Which one is the sweetest, most tart? Do they all look the same inside? How many seeds do they have and are they the same color? Investigate together to promote curiosity and interest in healthy foods.

Peanut Butter & Apple Wraps

- 1 whole wheat tortilla (8 inch)
- 1/4 cup peanut butter, reduced-fat
- 2 tablespoons granola cereal
- 1/2 apple, sliced (suggest Red Delicious apple, but could use any variety of apple)

Lay tortilla flat and spread peanut butter over 2/3 of the tortilla leaving edges at sides. Sprinkle 2 Tablespoons granola over peanut butter. Cut apple slices into small chunks and place them on top of the granola. Fold over the edges of the tortilla and roll up "burrito style."

Recipe from USDA Mixing Bowl



CACFP is an indicator of quality child care.

www.cacfp.org

