

# The Edible Editorial

April 2023

## Best Practices for Menu Planning

Thoughtful menu planning will ensure healthy, balanced and nutritious meals. The USDA has outlined the five basic steps of careful menu planning.

### Strive for Balance

- *Balance flavors:* Too much of any one flavor will make the plate unappealing for children.
- *Balance unhealthy fats:* Serve high saturated fat foods with vegetables and fruits.



**Contrast on the Plate** to make meals more appealing. Consider the following:

- Texture
- Taste
- Appearance
- Size and Shape of the Food

### Think about Color

- *Avoid all the same color.* Add at least two colors to your plate each meal.
- *Fruits and vegetables* are great for adding colors from the rainbow.
- *Add color to colorless foods,* pair mashed potatoes with broccoli.
- *Add spices to foods* with little color. Paprika or green herbs provide color to white potatoes.

### Emphasize Variety

- *Food Choices:* Serve a variety of different meat/

meat alternates throughout the week. Try for hamburger one day and chicken the next. The same applies to side dishes. Provide several options throughout the week.

- *Serving Style:* There are many different ways to serve healthy foods: casseroles, soups, sandwiches and salads.
- *Food Form:* Try out different ways of serving meats and vegetables. Prepare vegetables in various ways to include raw, steamed, roasted or in a salad. Vary your spices and seasonings.
- *Include a Surprise:* Make meal time adventure time. Offer new foods with other foods that children are familiar with.

### Consider Eye Appeal

- *Presentation is Key:* If a plate does not look good visually, it is more difficult for a child to want to eat it.
- Consider how food is presented and placed on the table.

National CACFP Sponsors Association

# Maple Baked French Toast Squares—USDA Recipe for Child Care Centers

CACFP Crediting Information (25 servings):

1 piece provides 1 oz. equivalent meat/meat alternate and 1 oz. equivalent grains.

Ingredients:	Weight	Measure
Frozen whole eggs, thawed (boxed whole eggs)	1 lb. 7 1/2 oz.	2 2/3 cup
Low-fat (1%) milk		3 cups
Sugar	5 oz.	1/2 cup 2 Tbsp.
Salt		1/8 tsp.
Vanilla extract		2 tsp.
Ground cinnamon		1 tsp.
Whole-grain bread, sliced	1 lb. 10 oz.	17 1/3 slices
Maple syrup	6 oz.	3/4 cup

## Directions:

1. Combine eggs, milk, sugar, salt, vanilla, and cinnamon in a large bowl. Stir well.
2. Break bread slices into small pieces and add to egg mixture. Stir well.
3. Allow to set for 30 minutes to 1 hour. Bread should be soft and broken up completely.
4. Pour mixture into steam table pan (large baking dish) (12"x 20"x 2 1/2") lightly coated with pan release spray. Spread evenly.
5. Pour 3/4 cup (about 6 oz.) maple syrup over pan in a swirling motion.
6. Bake at 400 degrees F or 25 to 35 minutes.
7. Heat to 165 degrees F or higher for at least 15 seconds.
8. Allow to rest for 20 minutes before cutting.
9. Cut pan 5 x 5. (25 pieces).
10. Serve 1 piece (2 3/8" x 4")



## Home & Center Based Day Care—Training

As part of the Keep Kids Fed Act, each meal and snack will be paid with an extra \$0.10 in addition to the reimbursement rate for the period of July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023.

Also, as part of the Keep Kids Fed Act for the time period of July 1, 2022 through June 20, 2023 Tier II providers will be reimbursed at the Tier I rate.

As of right now, the additional reimbursement funds that were allowed due to the Covid-19 Pandemic are set to expire on June 30, 2023.

Our condolences to the family of Kristi Smith (provider) in Ottawa County who recently passed away.



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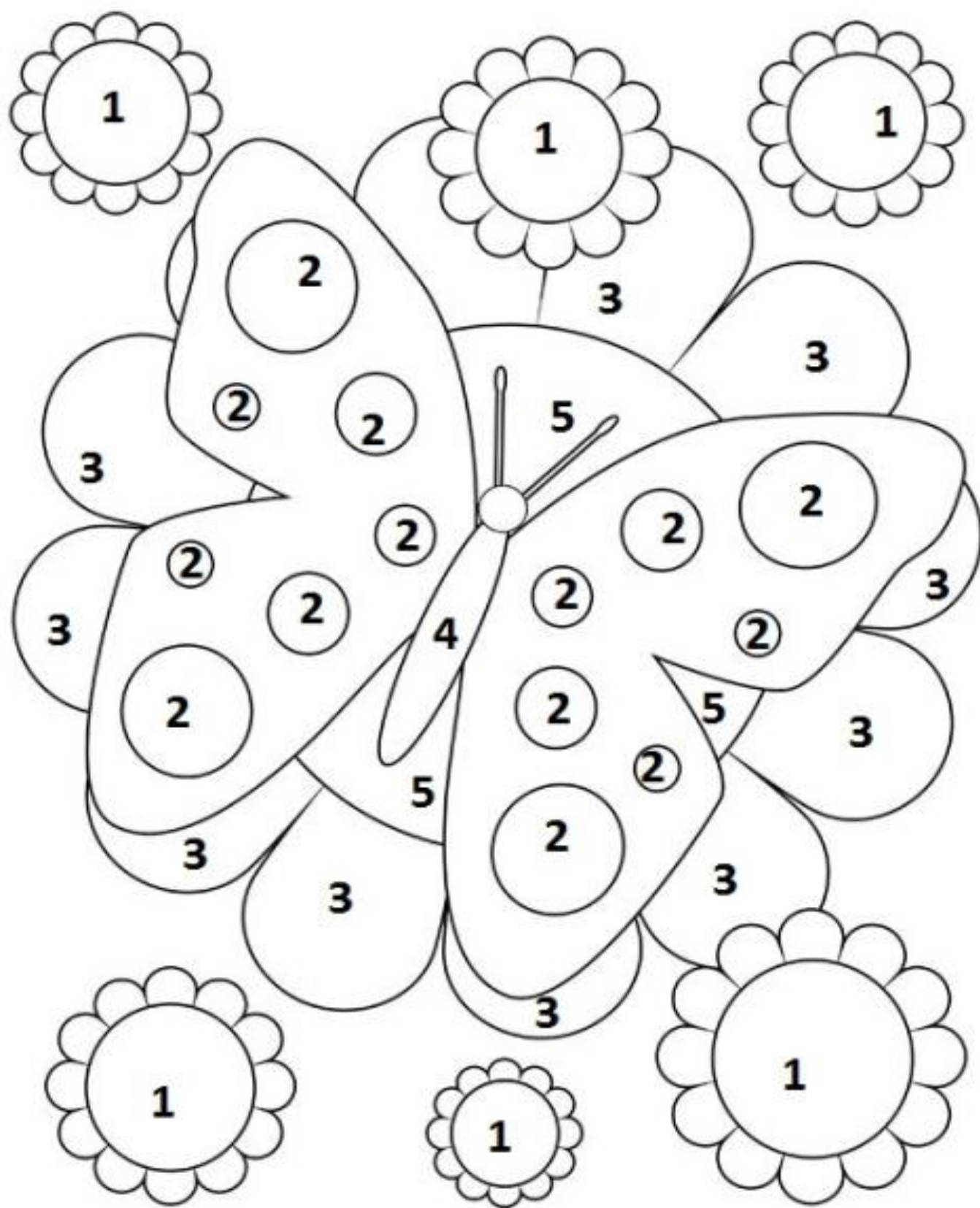
1. **mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
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- email:** [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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ACTIVITY CALENDAR

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>What is behind 2 and in front of 2 your house?</p>	<p>Talk about 3 over and under</p>	<p>draw a 4 bug... make up a bug story</p>	<p>Home and eat foods that come from plants</p>	<p>READ a 6 book about... Guess!</p>	<p>make playdough: 7 1 cup flour 2 spoons salt a little water</p>	<p>APRIL Fool's day - give a hug!</p>
<p>HAPPY EASTER! 9</p>	<p>Talk about 10 plant parts: flower leaf stem</p>	<p>make someone 11 smile</p>	<p>How does rain help plants?</p>	<p>count to 13 three in SPANISH! uno dos tres</p>	<p>practice 14 writing and drawing</p>	<p>go 15 fly a kite!</p>
<p>Turn over 16 a rock - what's under it?</p>	<p>make sets of 17 5 with jelly beans</p>	<p>walk through 18 your neighborhood, pick up litter</p>	<p>draw a 19 circle and cut it out</p>	<p>go on a 20 "Big Hunt"</p>	<p>wash your 21 toes and count them ALL</p>	<p>EARTH DAY! 22</p> <p>reduce, reuse, recycle</p>
<p>23 Have a family sing-a-long</p>	<p>plant 24 a tree, hug a tree</p>	<p>find some 25 rectangles in your house</p>	<p>visit the 26 LIBRARY</p>	<p>See what 27 shapes clouds can make</p>	<p>blow 28 bubbles OUTSIDE</p>	<p>Count all 29 family shoes!</p>



**1-yellow    2-red    3-green    4-gray    5-blue**