



CHEROKEE NATION

Child Care & Development
2026 Summer Edition



HEALTHY SUMMERTIME SNACKS

**CDA® COUNCIL FOR
PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION**

**JULY, AUGUST, AND SEPTEMBER
TRAINING SESSIONS**

STEAM IS ALL AROUND US

PLAY-BASED LEARNING AT HOME

OKLAHOMA WARMLINE

**PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR
TEACHERS**

RESOURCE PAGE



SUMMER SMOOTHIES

Ingredients Needed:

- 2 cups diced mango, frozen
- 1 cup crushed canned pineapple
- 1 cup Greek vanilla yogurt (or you can use any tropical blend of 100% juice)
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1/4 cup chia seeds (optional)

Directions:

-In a blender, combine frozen diced mango, crushed pineapple, Greek vanilla yogurt (or 100% juice), vanilla, and chia seeds (optional). Mix on high until smooth.

Side Note: If smoothie is too thick, add more Greek vanilla yogurt. If smoothies are not thick enough, add more frozen mango.

-Serve in cups with straws.

HEALTHY SUMMERTIME SNACKS

Summers can be very hectic for Child Care Centers and Homes alike. With the extra children, daily routines being disrupted by vacations and family get-togethers, and rising temperatures which could rival that of Death Valley, you have the perfect recipe for some cranky and hangry people. Thankfully, there are also recipes to combat cranky and keep the hangry at bay.

Due to the rising temperatures, it is easy for little bodies to become dehydrated, causing headaches, stomachaches, muscle cramps, and fewer bowel movements. But never fear; snack time is here! Snack time offers Providers the perfect opportunity to give the little bodies in their care more of the vitamins, minerals, and hydration they need. In the summertime, it is important to focus on snacks that are high in hydration and fiber and have natural electrolytes. As Providers, we also need snacks to be cost effective, easy to assemble, and tasty. Here are some tested and approved easy snack recipes to try with your kiddos. Packed with flavor, low on cost.

VEGGIE STICKS WITH RANCH

Ingredients Needed:

- 2 Cucumbers
- 4 Carrot Sticks
- 6 Celery Sticks
- 2-3 Bell Peppers, color of your choosing
- 16 oz Cottage Cheese
- 1 packet of Ranch Seasoning mix, or 3 Tbsp dry ranch mix

Directions:

- Gently wash cucumbers, carrots, celery, and bell peppers under cool, running water. Set aside.
- Using a potatoes peeler, remove the peel from the cucumber and the outer layer of skin from the carrots. Halve cucumbers and carrots lengthwise. Cut again lengthwise into 1/4ths or 1/8ths. Then cut crosswise so that cucumber/carrot spears are 3-4 inches long. Set on serving tray.
- Cut celery stalks crosswise into 3-4-inch-long segments (may need to cut some of them lengthwise if too thick). Set on serving tray with cucumbers and carrots.
- Cut approximately 1/2 inch around the bell pepper stem to remove seeds and core. Cut bell pepper in half, lengthwise and remove all remaining seeds and core. Place bell pepper halves on the cutting board, skin side down, cut the bell peppers into strips

about 1/4-1/2 inch wide. Set on serving tray with cucumbers, carrots, and celery.

-Using a food processor or blender, combine cottage cheese and ranch seasoning until smooth. Place in serving bowl.

-Side Note, if mixture is too thick, add 1 tsp of milk at a time until desired thickness has been met.

-Serve on plates with dip cups (optional)

MELON MADNESS

Ingredients Needed:

- 1 Large Watermelon
- 1 Cantaloupe
- 1 Honeydew
- The juice of 1 lemon (optional)
- 1/4 Cup honey (optional)

Directions:

- Wash the outside of the watermelon, cantaloupe, and honeydew in cool running water.
- Cut the three melons into small biteable cubes and remove the husks.
- In a large bowl, combine all three melon cubes and gently mix. Set aside.
- (Optional) In a small mixing bowl, whisk together the lemon juice and honey, then drizzle over the mixed melon cubes. Stir gently to incorporate well.
- Serve in bowls with spoons.



CDA® COUNCIL FOR PROFESSIONAL RECOGNITION

JULY 6, 2026 – APRIL 26, 2027

The Council is pleased to announce the return of the CDA® Renewal Amnesty initiative. CDA Renewal Amnesty is a limited-time opportunity for past credential holders (whose CDA expired as far back as January 1, 2016) to renew their CDA and return with confidence to their profession.

The initiative reflects the Council's commitment to reducing barriers and building clear pathways for seasoned educators to reenter the early learning field, advance their careers and make a lasting impact on children. If you're a former CDA, the field needs your experience and expertise.

Why renew your CDA?

- Build on your experience with no need to start over
- Stay aligned with current research and professional standards in early childhood education
 - Demonstrate your continued commitment to professional excellence
- Restore your credential—at the same renewal cost of \$250 and with no additional fees—so you can continue making a difference.

Stay tuned for details on requirements and how to apply.
More information at www.cdacouncil.org

JULY, AUGUST, AND SEPTEMBER TRAINING SESSIONS

You must register to attend any of these training sessions. There must be at least five participants registered for the class to be held, or the training session will be cancelled. You will receive two hours of Formal training credit for each training session you attend. You will be notified if the class is cancelled due to weather, lack of participation, or unforeseen circumstances. If you have questions please call 918-453-5300.

Once Upon a Number:

A Magical Approach to Teaching Preschool Math Through Fairytale

Step into the magical world of fairytales to unlock the power of early math learning! This engaging and interactive training is designed to equip educators with creative strategies to teach foundational math skills to preschoolers using beloved fairytale themes. From counting the seven dwarfs to measuring Rapunzel's tower, participants will explore imaginative ways to weave math concepts into storytelling, play, and hands-on activities.

Vinita, Ok

Cherokee Nation Vinita Health Center
27371 S. 4410 Rd.

August 25, 2026 • 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

Registration Link: <https://webapps.cherokee.org/Forms/Home/ChildcareDevelopment/143>

Claremore, Ok

Will Rogers Library

August 10, 2026 • 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

1515 N. Florance Ave.

Registration Link: <https://webapps.cherokee.org/Forms/Home/ChildcareDevelopment/144>

Tulsa, Ok

Tulsa County Extension Center

September 24, 2026 • 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

4116 E. 15th St.

Registration Link: <https://webapps.cherokee.org/Forms/Home/ChildcareDevelopment/145>

Registration Link: <https://webapps.cherokee.org/Forms/Home/ChildcareDevelopment/121>

Book Buddies & Brain Builders:

Stretching Stories and Young Imaginations One Page at a Time

The training will help early childhood educators transform books into hands-on learning experiences that support all areas of learning/development.

Pryor, Ok

Cherokee Nation Pryor One Stop

July 09, 2026 • 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

6789 US 69 S. Pryor

Registration Link: <https://webapps.cherokee.org/Forms/Home/ChildcareDevelopment/149>

Jay, Ok

Jay Community Building

July 14, 2026 • 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

429 S. 9th Street. Jay

Registration Link: <https://webapps.cherokee.org/Forms/Home/ChildcareDevelopment/150>

Stilwell, Ok

Cherokee Nation Stilwell Child Development Center

September 15, 2026 • 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

308 N 8th St. Stilwell

Registration Link: <https://webapps.cherokee.org/Forms/Home/ChildcareDevelopment/151>

Play for Today, Learn for Tomorrow:

This training focuses on the importance of children learning through different types of play: free play, guided play, and structured play. It addresses adults' roles in play and suggestions to set up a learning environment that allows for all types of play.

Coweta, Ok

Coweta Public Library

August 4, 2026 • 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

120 E. Sycamore Street, Coweta

Registration Link: <https://webapps.cherokee.org/Forms/Home/ChildcareDevelopment/152>

Understanding Self-Care and Managing Stress:

Participants will learn how to take an active role in preserving and protecting their health and mental wellbeing while taking care of others.

Sallisaw, Ok

Sequoyah County Fairgrounds

July 16, 2026 • 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

464101 East 1070 Road, Sallisaw

Registration Link: <https://webapps.cherokee.org/Forms/Home/ChildcareDevelopment/146>

Vinita, Ok

Cherokee Nation Vinita Health Center

August 18, 2026 • 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.

27371 S 4410 Rd, Vinita

Registration Link: <https://webapps.cherokee.org/Forms/Home/ChildcareDevelopment/147>

Stilwell, Ok

Cherokee Nation Stilwell Child Development Center

September 08, 2026 • 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

308 N 8th St, Stilwell

Registration Link: <https://webapps.cherokee.org/Forms/Home/ChildcareDevelopment/148>



STEAM IS ALL AROUND US

Nature provides one of the best environments for spontaneous exploration, play, and learning. A park, a field, the sidewalk outside your building — any outdoor space works! Unstructured playtime in the natural world contributes to STEAM learning in many ways. Direct experience with the natural world provides opportunities for problem solving and observation. The outdoors provides a wide variety of sensory experiences. This encourages informal learning as children explore and make discoveries.

- Observe different textures, smells, and sounds.
- Compare living and non-living things.
- The diverse materials found outdoors can facilitate imaginative play. Gardening indoors or outdoors helps children learn about the natural world, and lets children practice math, science, and engineering in a hands-on way.
- Bringing natural materials inside allows for continued exploration and discovery.
- Plants, stones, and sticks can be used to count, build, and create.
- Nature provides opportunities for STEAM learning
- Investigate shadows, the wind, weather.
- Observe plants, insects, birds, and other animals.
- Feel the wind and watch how it moves objects like leaves or paper.
- See changes created by sunlight on surfaces.
- Experiment with shadows and reflections.
- Listen for sounds in an “outdoor concert”; determine if the noises are from nature or from the city.
- On a neighborhood walk, children can answer the question “What lives in our neighborhood?” and create maps of the area when they return.
- Describe and draw or count the kinds of clouds they see.
- Draw pictures of what seeds will look like when they grow.
- Choose what and where to plant something.
- Ask how many beans, clouds, flowers they see.
- Ask children to point to the bigger or smaller plant.
- Ask them to compare, classify, make predictions, and form theories.



Researchers have found a positive relationship between outdoor nature experiences and outcomes in preschool.
From National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching and Learning

For Child Care Providers

OKLAHOMA WARMLINE

1-888-574-KIDS (5437)



.....because kids don't come with instructions

Telephone consultation for child care providers
8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday - Friday

Consultants can help:



- Clarify a problem and help generate ideas related to behavior, development, health or safety.
- Offer guidance on developmentally appropriate practices.
- Provide community referrals, resources and follow-up, when needed.



OKLAHOMA

Allied Health

PLAY-BASED LEARNING AT HOME:

SIMPLE WAYS PARENTS CAN SUPPORT LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

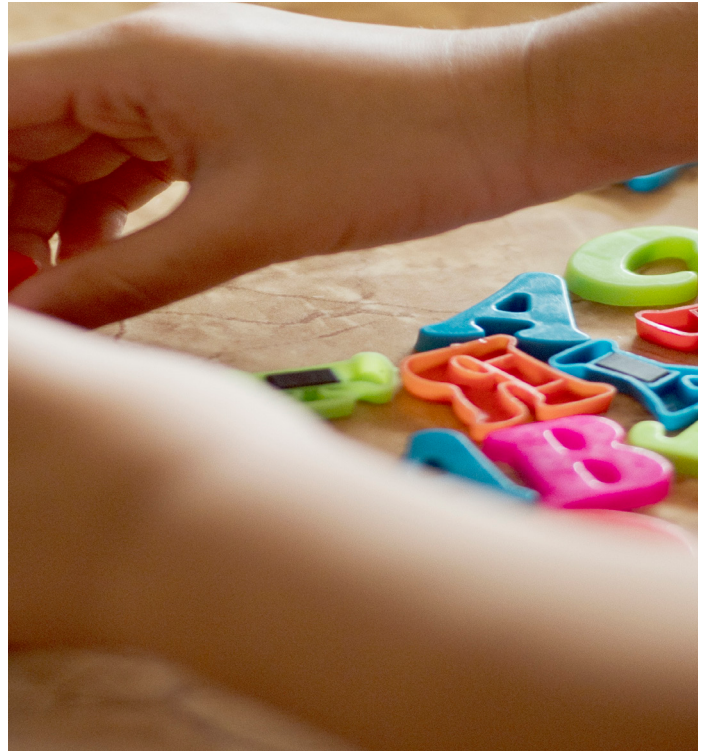
Play is one of the most important ways young children learn. Through play, children develop language, problem-solving skills, creativity, self-control, social skills, and physical coordination. Parents do not need expensive toys or complicated activities to support learning. Everyday experiences can become meaningful opportunities for growth and discovery.

Why Play Matters

When children play, they are actively exploring how the world works. They make decisions, test ideas, solve problems, and practice new skills. Play helps children build confidence and develop a love of learning that can last a lifetime.

Research shows that play supports development in all areas:

- Language and communication
- Social and emotional skills
- Cognitive development
- Physical development
- Creativity and imagination



Easy Ways to Encourage Play-Based Learning at Home

Read and Play

Reading together is one of the best ways to support learning. After reading a story, encourage children to:

- Retell the story in their own words
- Act out favorite scenes
- Draw pictures of characters
- Create a different ending

These activities strengthen language, comprehension, and creativity.

Turn Household Tasks into Learning Opportunities

Everyday chores provide valuable learning experiences. Children can:

- Sort laundry by color or size
- Count utensils while setting the table
- Match socks
- Help measure ingredients while cooking

These simple activities build math and problem-solving skills.

Encourage Pretend Play

Pretend play allows children to explore ideas and practice social skills. Provide simple materials such as:

- Empty boxes
- Dress-up clothes

- Toy food
- Stuffed animals

Children can create restaurants, doctor's offices, grocery stores, or other imaginative settings.

Explore Outdoors

Nature offers endless opportunities for learning.

Encourage children to:

- Collect leaves, rocks, or flowers
- Observe insects and birds
- Draw what they see
- Compare sizes, shapes, and colors

Outdoor exploration promotes curiosity and scientific thinking.

Create with Open-Ended Materials

Children learn best when there is more than one right answer. Offer materials such as:

- Blocks
- Cardboard tubes
- Recycled containers
- Crayons and paper
- Play dough

These materials encourage creativity, experimentation, and problem-solving.

Sing, Dance, and Move

Music and movement support language, memory, and physical development. Families can:

- Sing favorite songs
- Create movement games
- Dance together
- Make simple musical instruments

These activities help children learn while having fun.

Follow Your Child's Interests

Children learn best when they are interested in what they are doing. Observe what captures your child's attention and build activities around those interests.

A child who loves dinosaurs may enjoy counting dinosaur toys, reading dinosaur books, or creating dinosaur habitats. A child who loves vehicles may enjoy building roads, sorting toy cars, or drawing transportation pictures.

Keep Play Simple

Parents do not need expensive materials or elaborate plans. Some of the best learning experiences happen through conversations, imaginative play, outdoor exploration, and everyday family activities.

By making time for play each day, families can help children develop important skills while building strong relationships and creating joyful learning experiences together. Remember, play is not a break from learning. For young children, play is learning.

From the Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning (CSEFEL)

Practical Strategies for Teachers

Tools that Encourage Young Children's Social-Emotional Development

All of the materials listed here, in addition to many others, are available for FREE from the CSEFEL website at www.vanderbilt.edu/csefel/

Scripted Stories for Social Situations



are short Power-Point presentations consisting of a mixture of words and pictures that provide specific information to a

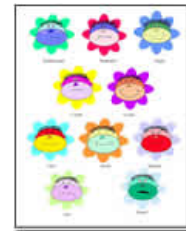
child about social situations such as going to preschool, sitting in circle time, staying safe and using words. When children are given information that helps them understand expectations, their problem behavior within that situation is reduced or minimized. These stories can help children to understand social interactions, situations, expectations, social cues, the script of unfamiliar activities, and social rules. Parents, teachers and caregivers can use these simple stories as a tool to prepare the child for a new situation, to address challenging behavior within a setting or situation, or to teach new skills.

Children's Book List : Using Books to Support Social Emotional Development

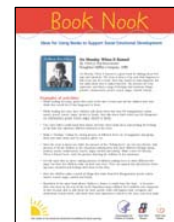
This extensive compilation of books that can help young children understand their emotions is organized under multiple topics such as "Being a Friend" or "Sad Feelings".

Teaching Social Emotional Skills

These tools include a variety of activities and materials to help children promote self-regulation or problem solving. Examples are handouts that feature emotion faces, the "turtle technique" and feeling charts as well as solution kits to help children come up with solutions around problems such as learning how to share, trade, and ask nicely.



Book Nooks These easy-to-use guides were created especially for teachers to provide hands-on ways to embed social emotional skill



building activities into everyday routines such as art, singing and circle time. Each Book Nook is comprised of ideas and activities designed around a popular children's book such as *Big Al*, *Glad Monster Sad Monster*, *Hands Are Not for Hitting*, and *On Monday When it Rained*. Examples of suggested activities include using rhymes to talk about being friends, making masks to help children talk about and identify different feelings, playing a game of what to with hands instead of hitting, and creating art and music using a concept of the day such as sharing.



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RESOURCES

Center for Early Childhood Professional Development (CECPD)
1-888-446-7608
www.cecpd.org

Child Care Aware Of America
1-800-424-2246
www.childcareaware.org

OKDHS Office of Background Investigations
1-800-347-2276
405-521-2355

Oklahoma Child Care Resource & Referral (OCCRRA)
1-888-962-2772
www.oklahomachildcare.org

Oklahoma Partnership for School Readiness (OPSR)
405-429-4219
www.okschoolreadiness.org

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