



# The Creative Pre-School Cookbook

Favorite Recipes  
from Dr. Pam





# *Food, Fun & Family Style Meals*

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Human beings come together and share food in every celebration: weddings, birthdays, and even in times of loss, such as funerals. We gather for coffee. We meet after church, mosque, or synagogue for covered dish luncheons and dinners. We invite friends for dinner and meet at restaurants for all manner of reasons. Because sharing food is a vital and important part of our humanness, young children should be invited and expected to participate. Routines and rituals help families to bond and build life-long relationships.

Children are never too young to join in the family meal. Your children were with you at the table before they were born and they should continue to be a vital part of the ritual after their birth.

Research shows that eating at least two meals a week as a family and sitting in pleasant conversation helps bond families together and supports children's success in school.

In today's busy world, planning together time as a family can be difficult to accomplish. Start when your children are very young; if you haven't had children yet, start before they are born. Sit at the table and make sure everyone has a special place that belongs to them. The table should be set and there should never be a television anywhere near the dining area. As children get older, telephones and other electronic devices should be left in another area - this should apply to the parents, too. It always bothers me to watch a family in a restaurant where mom or dad is busy talking away

on the cell phone while the family eats alone, waiting.

Family meals should be a time of shared community. Everyone should get a time to talk; subjects that cause disagreements should be avoided. The recipes that you will find in this book are provided to help families serve good, healthy food their children can help prepare, serve, and enjoy eating. Colors, textures, and how food is presented have a huge effect on whether children are either eager participants at the family table or a distraction, causing turmoil over what and how much is eaten.

Food games begin early in many families; cajoling and bribing can set the tone for life-long eating habits. Children with food in front of them do not starve. Parents often worry that their children are not eating enough and begin bribing and begging them to eat. Toddlers in particular are funny eaters; they will gobble everything in sight today and want to nibble tomorrow. We should put healthy foods in front of them and eat as a family - what they eat and when they eat it needs a "Let it Go" mentality. As long as they are drinking enough water, are healthy, and not losing weight DO NOT BUY INTO FOOD GAMES.

Children all want to be in charge - regardless of their age - and power games with food begin early. The eight-month old who turns his head when you try to offer him a spoonful of green beans is trying to communicate with you about his food needs. Creative begins offering infants finger foods as



early as eight months so that they have some control over their food intake while continuing to offer spoonful's of nutritious food. This allows them some power with the finger items available on their highchair tray.

## PREPARING THE TABLE

- Be sure the meal table is placed away from distractions and set so that it is attractive; a small vase or bowl of flowers and a candle or two will help. Set the ambience so that it is calming and welcoming. Children love color so interesting placemats, plates, and glasses can add to the experience. It is easy to purchase inexpensive glass plates and glasses that will make the meal festive.
- Children love all holidays and themes can make setting the table more fun - let them help choose these. Children also need to help set and arrange the table. Much can be learned while setting the table for the right number of guests and the kind of food being served; as soon as a child can walk safely they can help bring items to be placed on the table.
- Everyone and everything should have a special place. If you have forgotten where the silver goes around the plate, look online.



Children love small knives and spoons; these items can be purchased from a variety of online retailers.

- Good behavior at the table should also be a part of this event. Elbows off the table, using silverware as soon as they are developmentally ready, and learning to chew with their mouths closed start around age four. Model polite language and expect it from your child (please, thank you, no thank you, I would like...).

Table meals need to have a special order of service - a ritual, if you please. At Creative, we follow the same routine for each meal:

1. The food is introduced.
2. The food is passed around the table and each person helps themselves to the amount they can eat. Children are taught to take only a little and ask for seconds.

People in America eat far too much and the portions served in restaurants are usually enough for two people. When children serve themselves they learn to pay attention to the amount that their body needs. It will mean more dishes, but this really helps with food games when children can serve themselves rather than have food placed on their plate that they do not want. At Creative we expect children to try a tiny taste of everything - this can mean half of a green bean. Research has shown that our tastes change over time and that children need to be introduced to something over and over before they develop a taste for it.

3. Once everyone is served we check to see that everyone is ready. We all begin to eat together. This allows children to practice self-regulation skills and appreciation for the needs of others. If a child has difficulty keeping their hands off their food, pull their plate into the middle of the table until you are ready to eat. Do not scold, just explain that we will wait until everyone is ready. Ignore as much as you can - the less



attention given to misbehavior the faster it will disappear.

4. When everyone is ready, we sing our "Friends, Friends, Friends" song to designate the beginning of the meal. If you have a blessing, use it at this time. No one should be allowed to leave the table until everyone is finished. Once anyone leaves the meal, their meal is over. Sitting after the meal and continuing to share is a great habit to get into and it will stay with you well into your children's teenage years.

When children refuse to eat, ignore their behavior as much as possible - meals can easily turn into battlegrounds that destroy everyone's digestion. Children often want to be the center of attention and will misbehave in order to prevent others from talking. Creative uses a talking cup that is passed around, giving the holder the talking privilege. Do not use the meal as a time to discuss the office or other

topics that will not be of any interest to your child - it may give them information they have no business knowing.

If a child gets down from the table, their meal is over. No matter how worried you are about their eating, do not buy into this game. Empty their plate and move them away from the table area. If necessary, move them into their room. Remember, you are training your child to exhibit the behavior you want them to use in restaurants and at grandmother's house at Thanksgiving. When you start to put them to bed they will probably tell you how hungry they are. Children who leave food on the table will not starve. Bite your lip, smile, and say, "I know you must be. We will have breakfast in the morning." It will only take a few times of being firm about the behavior you expect at the table for your meals to get easier.

## FRIENDS, FRIENDS, FRIENDS

A C G F G G A G F  
Friends, friends, friends I have some friends I love

C F F G G A A Bflat  
I love my friends and they love me

C G G A A Bflat Bflat C  
I help my friends and they help me

A C G F G G A G F  
Friends, friends, friends I have some friends I love

A Bflat A F A Bflat A F  
Let's be thankful, let's be thankful

A Bflat C A Bflat C  
Let's be glad, let's be glad

C D CBflat A F C D CBflat A F  
For the many good things, For the many good things

F C F F C F  
That we have. That we have.

We offer children water every 20-30 minutes during their waking time at Creative. We also serve water with every meal. Water should be used as a beverage rather than juice. Creative seldom serves juice: WATER is our main stay.

Research shows that children need the following each day:

Age Range	Gender	Total Water (Cups/Day)
4 to 8 years	Girls and Boys	5
9 to 13 years	Girls	7
	Boys	8
14 to 18 years	Girls	8
	Boys	11

*Data from Institute of Medicine of the National Academies. Dietary Reference Intakes (DRIs) Tables. Recommended Daily Allowance and Adequate Intake Values: Total Water and Macronutrients.*

#### **Ages 2 to 3: Daily guidelines for girls and boys**

Calories 1,000-1,400, depending on growth and activity level

Protein 2-4 ounces

Fruits 1-1.5 cups

Vegetables 1-1.5 cups

Grains 3-5 ounces

Dairy 2 cups

#### **Ages 4 to 8: Daily guidelines for girls**

Calories 1,200-1,800, depending on growth and activity level

Protein 3-5 ounces

Fruits 1-1.5 cups

Vegetables 1.5-2.5 cups

Grains 4-6 ounces

Dairy 2.5 cups

#### **Ages 4 to 8: Daily guidelines for boys**

Calories 1,200-2,000, depending on growth and activity level

Protein 3-5.5 ounces

Fruits 1-2 cups

Vegetables 1.5-2.5 cups

Grains 4-6 ounces

Dairy 2.5 cups





# Breakfast

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Creative has always served breakfast at 9:00 a.m. Having a solid meal with protein sets the tone for a good morning filled with learning. We have served breakfast to every child since the program began because we felt that children were like the gasoline commercial that shows some cars running out of gas earlier than others. When we all start with a full tank we have a better morning.

Each breakfast contains a fruit and a protein. Brain research now tells us clearly that children who have a healthy breakfast with some protein

learn better; we were prepared long before everyone knew what to do.

Many children may have a snack when they get up, but they all need a good, hearty breakfast and research shows that they eat best around 9:00 a.m.

Children should receive some nourishment every three hours. We serve a healthy breakfast to all and the Baby House toddlers receive a fruit, water, and bread product snack around 10:15am to support their wait till lunch.





## PANCAKES WITH SYRUP, BACON, AND FRUIT

Almost any pancake mix will do; just be sure your pancakes are small (they should not be larger than 3 inches in diameter). Children love to pour their syrup from small pitchers - be sure and only fill the pitcher partially until they have good control over their pouring skill. Lean pork bacon or turkey bacon goes well with pancakes. We always serve the fruit separately. Strawberry slices with a little sugar, blueberries, and fresh peach slices go well with pancakes.

## FRENCH TOAST WITH HONEY OR SYRUP, SAUSAGE, AND FRUIT

Creative uses wheat bread, usually Flower's brand. If you are making 8 slices of French toast, whip 3 eggs with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup milk and a cinnamon/sugar blend (1 tbsp. sugar to 1 tsp. cinnamon, a 1: 3 ratio). Dip the bread into the egg, milk, and cinnamon mixture and fry in a buttered griddle or pan until browned on both sides. Take out of the pan and cut into quarters. Honey, syrup, or sprinkled powdered sugar make this a tasty meal.

## OATMEAL WITH FRUIT AND BROWN SUGAR

Cook amount of oatmeal needed for the meal; we use Quaker Oats regular oatmeal and cook it according to the directions (2x the water for the amount of oats). A pinch of salt & a little butter/margarine should be added to the water as it boils to keep the oatmeal from tasting flat. Like sweet tea, your oatmeal will taste best if the sugar is placed in the oats when they are cooking - we use brown sugar. Children like most fruits with their oatmeal: raisins strawberries, blueberries, and bananas are good. Be sure and serve them separately so that they children can put them in their oatmeal or eat them separately. A link of turkey

sausage and a few quarter pieces of wheat toast with butter/margarine will round out this meal. Always offer milk. Again, let the children decide if they want to drink the milk in a cup or pour it on their oatmeal.

## SPICE BREAD WITH CREAM CHEESE ICING

Creative usually uses Duncan Hines spice cake, but other recipes will do. (We have even baked homemade zucchini bread and the children loved it!) Follow directions on the box, mixing batter thoroughly with a hand mixer, and pour batter into a well-greased pan. We use waxed paper to keep our bread from sticking. Once the bread is baked, we turn it out on a cutting board and cut into small one-inch squares.

The "icing" is made by whipping cream cheese and flavoring it with grape jelly; it is very smooth and the children can spread it on their bread.

1. Heat cream cheese (1 pkg. in microwave or leave out of the refrigerator until it is soft)
2. Whip with hand mixer, adding  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{3}$  cup of grape jelly.
3. Mix until smooth. Serve in a bowl with a small butter knife for spreading.



## CHEESE TOAST WITH JELLY

We make our cheese toast in the oven under the broiler. Toast each piece of wheat bread on one side under the broiler. Take out of oven and butter untoasted side, placing two slices of American cheese on the buttered side. Toast cheese side. Cut into quarters and serve with jelly. We use either strawberry jam or grape jelly.

## BISCUITS WITH SAUSAGE AND JELLY

We use Pillsbury buttermilk frozen biscuits. Take several out the night before you are going to use them and let them defrost in the refrigerator. Children like small pieces of food and you can make three small biscuits out of each large adult sized biscuit. Flour your hands and break the large biscuit into pieces. Roll the pieces into balls. Bake them according to package directions. Serve the biscuits with sausage pieces and jelly.

## EGG DROP GRITS

We use regular Quaker grits; well-ground grits make a smooth mixture and larger ground grits may not do the trick. Add water according to directions. Add salt and butter/margarine to water and bring to a boil. Add the grits, stirring regularly. When the grits begin to thicken, add whipped eggs to the cooking grits - ½ egg per child is enough. Stir until grits are completely cooked. It should be smooth and creamy, not thick and lumpy (this is best achieved by stirring, especially when grits are first added to boiling water). Serve with shredded cheddar cheese in a separate bowl - the cheese can be eaten alone or added to the grits and eggs to make cheese grits. Orange slices go well with this meal. We cut our oranges into at least 1/8ths. Remember, children would like to have several small pieces rather than one larger one.

## CEREAL BREAKFAST

Creative's cereal of choice is Cheerios. Vanilla yogurt or other fruit yogurt your children like, wheat germ, and fruit should be served in separate bowls with small spoons. The children may eat these separately from a small plate or put all or some on their cereal. Blueberries, strawberries, apple slices, or raisins are the fruit usually served.

## POTATO, EGG, AND CHEESE CASSEROLE

We use dehydrated, shredded hash brown potatoes, but frozen ones are just as good. Depending on how many people are eating, choose a casserole pan at least two inches deep and cover the bottom with approximately 1 inch of shredded potatoes. If they are dehydrated, add water so that they reconstitute. We usually do this the night before, cover, and keep in the refrigerator. Whip at least one egg for each person eating. Add a 1/8 cup of water or milk to the eggs and whisk well, pouring the eggs over the potatoes and covering with shredded cheddar cheese. If your family likes other ingredients, tomatoes, sausage, bacon, mushrooms, or peppers can be added on top of the potatoes and under the eggs. Other kinds of cheese also work well. Bake at 350 degrees until eggs are completely cooked (about 1 hour). We serve the casserole cut into two-inch squares for the children and always have a squeeze bottle with ketchup available. This meal is served with fruit on the side - apples, strawberries, sliced oranges are good choices. Remember to cut the apples into small slices (we cut them into quarters, core them, and cut into ¼ inch slices - approximately 5 slices per quarter). If you slice your apples early and soak them in pineapple juice they will not turn brown. Plus, the pineapple juice adds a little flavor!





# Lunch

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Our lunches are planned to provide a solid protein with a good vegetable and fruit. Maslow made it clear in his theory about what we need to grow and reach our potential; good food and plenty of water is at the top - or should I say the foundation - of his work.

Hungry children cannot learn at their best so we have always tried to make sure that they have healthy meals that they like and enjoy eating.

After a quiet nap the Baby House gets another fruit, water, and bread product snack and then supper at 4:30 p.m. When my own children were little, I taught in the public schools and seldom got home before 5:30 p.m. They were

always very hungry and our suppers were not always pleasant because of their wait. We feed the Baby House toddlers a good supper so that they can go home and hopefully eat again with the family.

The Big School children get a large snack of their choosing each afternoon between 3:15 and 4:00 p.m. This snack contained at least two fruits, two vegetables, two proteins and bread products such as cheese crackers, saltines, or graham crackers. Each child can make their own snack choices, but are expected to have one protein, one vegetable, and one fruit. They usually eat much more.



# QUICHE

*This is a favorite recipe and can be used for dinner or a special breakfast.*

*If you are a baker, make your own crust, but because we usually make a dozen at a time we purchase frozen pie-crusts. Read the label to avoid animal fat.*

## BASE INGREDIENTS FOR QUICHE

1 cup of milk  
(evaporated)

3 tablespoons  
of flour

3 eggs

Add ingredients in this order and blend well.

Prick holes in the bottom of crust and pre-bake until lightly brown. If you have pie weights, use them.

Add 2 cups of cheese and any additional ingredients into the pre-baked crust.

We steam broccoli and chopped spinach for ours, adding a little finely chopped onion in the bottom under the cheese. We make the following kinds of quiche:

- Bacon, tomato (diced fresh or canned well drained), and finely chopped spinach.

- Plain cheese quiche, with a little finely chopped onion for flavor.

- Broccoli quiche (chopped into tiny pieces).

- Pour the cream mixture over your cheese and vegetables in the crust.

Bake at 325 degrees until the center is cooked through; it takes approximately 45 minutes. Stick a fork or toothpick into the center - if it comes back clean it is done. The center should rise up slightly. Serve hot with a side salad and fruit tray.







## BEANIE BURGER

We use Bush's beans and they come in a wide variety. The vegetarian beans are good, but we usually use the original recipe beans for the majority of the children. If you want to soak and cook yours, just add a little more of the same seasonings we use.

For each 28oz can of beans add the following:

- ¼ cup brown sugar
  - ¼ cup ketchup
  - ¼ cup mustard
1. Cook ½ lb. of lean ground beef or turkey. Drain all liquid.
  2. Mix together all ingredients in a baking dish and place in 350-degree oven and cook until hot throughout.

Serve with a bowl of shredded cheddar cheese to sprinkle on top, carrot and raisin salad, and applesauce. Wheat bread cut into ¼ slice pieces with butter/margarine is nice with this meal.

## BEANIE WEANIES

Make the previous recipe, but add beef or chicken hotdogs.

Cut the hotdogs into quarters and the quarters into small pieces - hotdogs are a choking hazard for young children.

## BEANIE WEANIE CASSEROLE

Use the cornbread recipe and bake a thin layer (about ½ inch) in the bottom of a well greased square or rectangle pan. If the cornbread is too thick it will make the dish too breadly.

Using the ratio of brown sugar, ketchup, and mustard from the original Beanie Burger recipe, season the amount of beans you are using and spread it evenly on the top of the baked cornbread. Add a layer of shredded cheddar cheese and chopped hotdogs. Bake in the oven until hot through and through. Serve with carrot and raisin salad or coleslaw and applesauce.



# CHICKEN & RICE

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1 cup of milk	1 small can cream of chicken or mushroom soup	Optional: ¼ medium onion and 1 celery stalk to blend in gravy
4 Boneless Chicken Breasts or 8 to 10 chicken tenders	Better than Bouillon (chicken)	Uncle Bens White Rice (regular, not instant)
White wine (optional)	¼ cup corn starch	
Garlic salt & minced garlic		

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Place the chicken breasts in a square pan or glass baking dish.

Pour water or equal parts of water and white wine (optional for home - we do not use wine at school) up to the edges of the chicken – do not quite cover the meat (to keep the chicken from drying during cooking, add more liquid if needed.)

Bake in oven at 350 degrees until done.

Remove chicken from baking dish - reserving the liquid in the baking dish - and cut chicken into small child bite size pieces.

Return chopped chicken to a pot with the reserved liquid to heat on the stove top.

Add one can of cream of chicken or cream of mushroom soup and enough water to cover chicken with approximately 1 inch of liquid.

Add 2 tablespoons of Better than Bouillon (chicken) and minced garlic to taste. (This is the only bouillon that doesn't contain MSG)

Bring mixture to a boil.

In a measuring cup, mix together ¼ cup of cornstarch to ½ cup of water until it is completely smooth. Add to boiling chicken mixture in the pot and stir constantly until the gravy thickens; turn off and the gravy is ready to serve.

One-quarter of a medium sized onion and 1 stalk of celery will add flavor to the gravy. Blend these items in a blender with a little water - if children see chunks they are less likely to eat the gravy.

Separately cook 2 cups of Uncle Ben's white rice (2 parts water to 1-part rice with a little salt and butter to taste for regular rice).

Mix cooked rice and chicken mixture together in a separate bowl and let the children serve themselves.

Creative serves this meal with peas and carrots or green beans, sliced fresh apples, and biscuits or quarters of bread with butter.



## CHICKEN AND BISCUITS (CHICKEN POT PIE)

If you put a crust on top of the chicken sauce some children receive some and others don't, so we began serving biscuits with the chicken sauce so that everyone got an equal share.

In the old days, before Pillsbury buttermilk biscuits could be purchased in the frozen foods section of the grocery, we made our biscuits from scratch. Today, we buy the Pillsbury buttermilk frozen ones. If you take the number you need for dinner out of the freezer before you leave in the morning, they will be defrosted and soft (usually we leave them out for awhile - maybe while you dress - and then put them in the refrigerator to continue defrosting).

**Biscuits:** When the biscuit dough is soft you can divide and roll it into little balls (3 per biscuit). If your child is old enough to roll in between their hands, break the biscuits into 3 parts and let them roll them and place them on a lightly greased pan. Little children eat more if the things are more their size. Bake the biscuits per the package directions. Because they are small they will take less baking time.

**Chicken:** We use chicken tenderloins. Bake them in a little water or white wine and sprinkle the pieces with garlic salt. Bake them in a 350-degree oven until they are cooked. Cut into tiny pieces for the sauce.

**Sauce:** Cook a package of mixed vegetables in water until they are well done. A small potato cut into tiny pieces and a tablespoon of chopped white onion will add to this. Be sure the potato is completely done. It can be cooked in the mixed vegetables.

If you like to cook a white sauce can be made with flour, butter, and milk or a can of cream of chicken soup should be added to the vegetable mixture when it is done.

A white sauce can be made by melting two tablespoons of butter/margarine in a pan.

When it is melted, add two tablespoons of flour into it, stirring until it is smooth. Add 1 cup of milk and stir over moderate heat until a smooth white sauce appears. A can of cream of chicken soup can also be used. If it is too thick, add a little more milk. Keep stirring to keep it smooth.

Be sure you pour off most of the vegetable water. Save it in case the sauce is too thick and add a little to thin it. You can cook the chicken the night before...save the liquid and cook the vegetables in it. Add a little water if needed. A tsp. or tbsp. of chicken bouillon will add to the taste. Add the amount that fits your taste. We use Better Than Bouillon because it has no MSG.

Serve the biscuits and sauce separately. Let the children eat their biscuit with butter along with their sauce or let them crumble the biscuit in their bowl to pour sauce over it.

A nice, simple salad with ranch dressing will go well with this meal. Let your child tear the greens and cut the cucumbers and tomatoes with a small plastic knife. If they make it, they will usually eat it. They also love small apple slices (green grannies) stored in pineapple juice to keep them from turning brown. We cut ours in quarters and each quarter into fifths.





## HONEY ORANGE CHICKEN WINGS

We bake a bag of chicken wings in a sauce made from either fresh squeezed orange juice or frozen orange concentrate (add only 1 can of water) mixed with ½ cup honey or brown sugar.

Cook the chicken wings in a 325-degree oven until done. Add a little water in the bottom of the pan to keep them from burning. Cover the wings in orange juice sauce and return to the oven until they are golden brown.

We serve these chicken wings with tater tots or mashed potatoes with a tossed salad with ranch dressing and a good vegetable.

## FISH STICKS

We make several meals using breaded fish sticks. We try to purchase good quality ones and they are usually rectangular in shape.

We bake them in the oven according to directions and serve them with coleslaw, grits w/ shredded cheddar cheese (this way the children can make their own cheese grits), a good vegetable, and wheat bread with butter/margarine.

We also serve fish sticks as a sandwich. We call them whalers. The fish sticks are served with ½ of a hot dog bun, a slice of cheese, and ketchup. Some of them like tarter sauce; we make our own by mixing 1 cup mayonnaise, 1/3 cup of sweet pickle relish, and 1 tablespoon of cream of tarter. Mix well and keep chilled.

This meal is usually served with baked beans (add the brown sugar, ketchup and mustard in the Beanie Burger recipe), coleslaw, and potato chips or tater tots.

## TURKEY ON A CLOUD

Creative uses turkey hams and we have two meals that the children love; one is called "Turkey on a Cloud" and the other is just turkey with cheese grits.

Cut a 1 to 1 ½ lb. turkey ham into 1/4 inch slices. Then cut the slices into 1/4 inch strips and then into small cubes

Make the mashed potatoes according to the recipe in this book (see meatloaf recipe) and add two tablespoons of mustard- this gives the potatoes a tang. Add another tablespoon or two for taste. Be careful to not make it too spicy.

Mix potatoes w/ mustard, turkey cubes and 1/2 cup of cheddar cheese thoroughly.

Heat in oven approximately 350 degrees

## TURKEY AND CHEESE GRITS

Cut a 1 to 1 ½ lb. turkey ham into 1/4 inch strips  
Make a sauce using 1/2 can frozen orange juice concentrate and 1/2 cup brown sugar.

Pour sauce over ham slices and bake until thoroughly heated in the oven at 350 degrees

Creative serves these ham slices with grits. Use the recipe in the book and make sure a bowl of shredded cheddar cheese is available so that the children can make cheese grits. Broccoli and orange slices go well with this meal.

# SHEPHERD'S PIE

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Fresh ground beef or turkey  $\frac{3}{4}$  to 1 lb. browned with grease poured off. Add  $\frac{1}{4}$  finely chopped onion and garlic salt during browning.

1 can or 1 pkg frozen green beans. Cook

the frozen green beans until tender, add 1 tablespoon soya sauce during cooking. Drain well.

1 can Campbell's tomato soup

2 potatoes mashed with butter and sour cream (see meatloaf

recipe) - instant potatoes can be used if you make them smooth and add sour cream and butter.

Shredded cheddar cheese

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Add the ingredients above into a well greased baking pan. It needs to be at least two inches deep and approximately 10"x10".

Place the browned beef/turkey and onion mixture on the bottom of the pan.

Mix the tomato soup with the drained green beans. Spread this

mixture smoothly over the meat. Add a layer of mashed potatoes (about 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch) and cover with shredded cheddar cheese. Bake in the oven until heated through and cheese is melted.

Serve with tossed salad, applesauce or sliced apples, and wheat bread and butter.



## TACO IN A BOWL

This chili is easy to make and we serve it in a bowl with the following:

- Taco chips
- Shredded lettuce (can be spinach leaves)
- Chopped tomato pieces
- Shredded cheddar cheese
- Sour cream

Cook 1 to 1 ½ pound of lean ground beef or ground turkey with garlic salt to taste. Pour off grease.

Add:

- 1 can kidney beans or soak and cook your own to equal 30 oz.
- 1 can of crushed tomatoes to equal 28 to 30 oz.
- 3 tablespoons of chili powder or taco seasoning
- No hot sauces - add these per individual taste

Pour 1 cup of water in a blender and add:

- ½ of a large onion
- ½ of a sweet pepper (can be green, yellow, red)
- 3 cloves of garlic

**Some children and adults do not like to see pieces of vegetables in their food. We use the blender to liquefy ingredients such as onions, bell peppers, etc. Many adults say they do not like certain things in their food because they made that decision years ago and do not realize that these ingredients are in many recipes they actually enjoy.**

Blend everything together. We often mix the spices and vegetables in the pot the night before we plan to cook them, adding the meat later. When chili sits with the spices and vegetables overnight they taste better.

When the meat is added, stir well on medium heat. Stir periodically, making sure it doesn't stick to the bottom of the pot.

Serve the meat, chips, lettuce, tomatoes, cheese and sour cream in small bowls. We serve this meal with a bowl and a small plate. The children will put what they want onto their chili and eat the rest from the slide plate. Do not edit their choices. It is important that they eat, not the order or how they eat it. Creative mixing can create lovely new food items.

Let your child (3 and older) chop the tomatoes and shred lettuce leaves with a small plastic serrated knife on a cutting board.





## MEATLOAF

With this meal we serve mashed potatoes, green beans, sliced apples or applesauce, and wheat bread with butter/margarine.

For mashed potatoes, peel and cut the potatoes into small pieces. Put them in a pot and cover with water - add a small amount of salt if desired. Boil until tender and pour off the water. Add milk, butter, and sour cream to taste & whip with an electric hand mixer until completely smooth. Salt and pepper to taste. Instant potatoes will also work if you add the sour cream and butter so that they are smooth. Creative uses a good brand of instant potatoes.

We use canned green beans at school, but if you are worried about the salt content, frozen are just as good. Heat them with a little soy sauce for seasoning & 1 tbsp. dehydrated onion. Some of the children like them crisp and just steamed with butter.

This recipe serves a family of six (two adults with children).

Purchase 2 pounds of lean ground beef...Dr. Pam uses ground sirloin at home.

Break beef into a large bowl and add the following:

- 1 cup of plain oatmeal
- ½ cup ketchup
- ½ cup milk (more can be used to make mixture moist)
- 2 eggs (leave these out if someone is allergic)
- 1/3 bell pepper, 1/3 large white onion (chop onion and pepper in ½ cup of milk in blender - be sure no pieces are visible)
- 1 tsp salt or garlic salt

Mix thoroughly by hand until all ingredients are blended. Put in a baking dish (use one that allows the meatloaf to remain about 2 inches thick so that it doesn't dry out)

Bake at 325 degrees until thoroughly cooked. Serve ketchup as a condiment. Children like a little on top from a squeeze bottle and may even put it on their potatoes.

## SPAGHETTI SAUCE

*We use this spaghetti sauce to also create Spanish rice and beef-a-roni.*

1/2 to 1 ½ lbs. of lean ground beef or turkey cook in a small amount of olive oil (not more than two tablespoons). If the beef creates grease, pour all of it off.

You can use any purchased spaghetti sauce; we use a jar with approximately 24 ounces. If you want to make your own sauce from fresh tomatoes, take out the seeds and cut them into small pieces. Place them into the blender with ½ cup of dry red wine. We can't use this at the school, but it adds a nice flavor for home.

Use a blender to liquefy the following:

- ½ large onion
- At least 3 cloves of garlic - more will not hurt

Tie a sprig of rosemary, oregano, parsley, and basil together with a string and place in the sauce. This should be removed when the sauce is ready to serve.

These herbs can be grown in pots and should be planted so that they are ready to pick pieces from by April. Rosemary lasts for years and can weather most of our winters. Parsley draws the black swallowtail butterflies and one caterpillar can eat an entire plant. We love to raise these at school. Basil and oregano are easy to grow.

If you want more sauce, add one can (14 to 15 ounces) of crushed tomatoes.

If you want to add mushrooms, chop them into very small pieces. Children can help wash them and they can cut them into small pieces using a plastic serrated knife



## SPAGHETTI

The children love spaghetti noodles. Even though it isn't cool to do, we break the noodles in half to make them easier for the children to handle when eating.

Garlic, salt, and butter on French bread or squares of wheat bread put under the broiler add a nice touch to this dish.

If you bake chicken fingers (see chicken and rice recipe) with garlic salt and white wine, you can add chicken to the spaghetti sauce and make a chicken cacciatore dish.

Always add a bowl of shredded cheddar cheese on the table so that the children can sprinkle it on their dish.

## SPANISH RICE

Spaghetti sauce can be used to create a Spanish rice meal that the children love when served with garlic bread strips, salad with ranch dressing, and steamed broccoli florets.

The rice can be cooked on the stovetop or in the oven; the oven takes longer, but the rice is often fluffier if you have the time. We use Uncle Ben's regular rice and you cook 1 part of rice to 2 parts of water. Add a little salt and butter to taste.

When the rice is done, mix the meat and sauce into it. A bowl of shredded cheddar cheese is a nice touch, plus adds more protein and flavor.

## BEEF-A-RONI

When noodles are used, cook them per the directions on the box. Let your child help you choose different shapes. The bow ties are fun. It doesn't always have to be elbow noodles.

Mix the spaghetti sauce in the cooked drained noodles. Again, shredded cheddar cheese gives the children something to add and it is a great taste. We always sing the Beef-A-Roni song with this meal. Some of you may remember it from your childhood:

We are having Beef-A-Roni.  
It is made with Macaroni.  
Beef-A-Roni's good to eat.  
Beef-A-Roni's quite a treat.  
Beef-A-Roni's full of meat.  
HURRAY for Beef-A-Roni!





# *Salads & Vegetables*

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Other than salads, we use mostly frozen vegetables.

Broccoli florets are a favorite. We steam them a little with butter and a little salt. Do not cover the pot or pan because it will overcook them and make them dark - just verily bring the water to a boil and turn it off. You can also use a strainer in the bottom of your pot providing the broccoli with just a little steam. Take it out of the water before it can overcook.

We steam mixed vegetables well with butter/margarine and a little salt. We cook these well so that the peas and beans are done.

Peas and carrots are steamed well, just like the mixed vegetables, with a little butter/margarine and a little salt.

Canned green beans only need warming, but if they are frozen they should be steamed for a while. We add minced onion and a tablespoon of soy sauce.

We use frozen sliced carrots. We steam them and add a little margarine/butter and ¼ cup of brown sugar for each small package.

We cut yellow squash into thin slices and slightly cover them with water. Add butter/ margarine and salt. Steam until tender and serve. A little sour cream in a bowl on the side adds a nice flavor.





## TOSSSED SALAD

Our all-time favorite is a regular tossed salad with chopped cucumber and tomato pieces. We use the mixed salad greens you can purchase at the grocery and add fresh spinach leaves. Your child will love to cut the cucumbers and tomatoes once you have peeled the cucumbers and cut the tomatoes into 1/8s - let them use a cutting board and a serrated knife. The greens can also be cut into smaller pieces with small scissors (be sure and wash the scissors well; a little Clorox will disinfect) or a serrated knife. Ranch dressing seems to be the all-time favorite dressing.

Garden greens are easy to grow in Tallahassee. We had a marvelous garden this year thanks to Seth Miller and family. We picked and picked and ate and ate.

## CARROT AND RAISIN SALAD

We purchase shredded carrots at the grocery and add mayonnaise, raisins, and honey.

- 1 pkg. of carrots
- ¼ cup of mayonnaise
- ¼ cup of raisins
- ¼ cup of honey

Add more mayonnaise if your salad is not creamy enough. Mix thoroughly and refrigerate. Stir well before serving.

## COLESLAW

We used to make our coleslaw with sweet pickles and mayonnaise, but one time when I was out of the kitchen Mr. Keith used the carrot and raisin salad recipe by mistake. As many cooking mistakes turn out, we discovered that the children loved it this way and we have been using honey, raisins, and mayonnaise ever since. We purchase the coleslaw pre-shredded

cabbage mix at the grocery and add the ingredients as above. If the package is larger we will add more mayonnaise, raisins, and honey until we have a nice tasting salad.

## CUT CUCUMBERS AND TOMATOES

We use a peeler and cut the skin off the cucumber everyone ½ inch to make a pattern before we cut it into thin slices. The children love cucumbers with garlic salt and a little red wine vinegar sprinkled on. We do the same with tomatoes cut into small pieces.



*We make this recipe, taken from TheKitchen.com, from the basil grown in our garden and serve it with cream cheese on crackers. It makes a wonderful snack. Basil and other herbs make lovely small arrangements for the table. A few flowers and the greenery make any table look like a banquet.*

*Basil is easy to grow in Tallahassee and the more you pick the more grows. Our children love to cut this carefully with their disinfected scissors from the bush. Once the leaves are washed they can cut them into small pieces for the blender. The aroma is wonderful. This is an easy recipe.*

*Over the years we have tried pecans, walnuts, and pine nuts in our pesto. All of them make a great pesto.*

## PESTO

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5 to 6 ounces (2 healthy bunches or about 6 cups gently packed) basil leaves, or any other green

1/2 cup pine nuts, or any other nut

1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

1 to 2 garlic cloves

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/4 to 1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil

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Blend half the basil with the nuts, cheese, and garlic: Combine half of the basil with the nuts, cheese, cloves, and salt in a blender or food processor. Blend continuously until the ingredients are finely chopped. A blender or food processor works well to make pesto.

Blend in the rest of the basil: Scrape down the sides of the bowl and add the rest of the basil. Blend until a uniform paste has formed. Scrape down the sides of the bowl as needed.

Stream in the olive oil: With the blender running, stream in the olive oil. Less olive oil will make a paste good for spreading on sandwiches and pizzas; more will make a sauce better for pastas and stirring into soup. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and continue blending as needed until the olive oil is

emulsified into the basil and the pesto looks uniform.

Taste and adjust: Taste the pesto and add more salt, garlic, nuts, or cheese as needed to taste.

Storing your pesto: Pesto will darken and brown very quickly, but will still be tasty and fresh for several days. For best appearance use it right away. If storing, store it in the smallest container possible and thoroughly press the pesto to eliminate air pockets. Pour a little olive oil over the surface, cover, and refrigerate for up to a week. Pesto can also be frozen for several months.

At Creative, we also use it as a snack served on crackers with cream cheese.







# *Breads*

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We use wheat bread as a staple with our meals. We always cut the slices into fourths and serve it with butter or margarine.



## PIZZA DOUGH

We use a kitchen aid mixer with a bread hook for this dough.

- 1 tbsp. yeast
- 1 ½ cup warm water
- 3 ½ cups flour sifted until dough stands from the side of the bowl.
- 1 tbsp. oil
- Pinch of salt

This dough can be chilled in the refrigerator for several days. Sit it out and let it come to room temperature and begin to rise before spreading it out onto the pan. This dough is thick, so roll or press it thin in a well olive oiled or semolina layered pan.

We use pizza sauce can that can be purchased at any grocery. Add whatever toppings your family likes. Bake in a 350-degree oven until bottom is brown.

## BISQUICK PIZZA CRUST

- 1 ½ cups Regular Bisquick
- 1/3 cup hot water
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- ½ tsp. garlic salt

Mix ingredients by hand or with a strong spoon.

Use olive oil on the pan or semolina. Olive your hands and spread the dough evenly and thinly over the bottom of the pan. Push up on the sides approximately ½ inch.

Cover dough with sauce and add toppings. Bake in 350-degree oven until bottom is brown.

## BISCUITS

We use Pillsbury buttermilk frozen biscuits. Take several out the night before you are going to use them and let them defrost in the refrigerator. Children like small pieces of food and you can make three small biscuits out of each large adult sized biscuit. Flour your hands and break the large biscuit into pieces. Roll the pieces into balls. Bake them according to package directions. Serve the biscuits with sausage pieces and jelly, chicken pot pie gravy, or anything else that the children like to eat.

## GOLDEN SWEET CORNBREAD

- 2 cups all-purpose flour, sifted
- 2 cups yellow cornmeal
- 1 cup white sugar
- 2 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 7 teaspoons baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups milk
- 2/3 cup vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Spray or lightly grease a a 1" deep x 12" wide x 18" long sheet cake pan. In a large bowl, combine flour, cornmeal, sugar, salt, and baking powder. Stir in egg, milk, and vegetable oil until well combined. Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the loaf comes out clean.

## SWEET BREAD

This is a Winter Holiday tradition that Dr. Pam bakes with the kindergarten class each December. The dough can be rolled out as a loaf or sliced into rolls. A cream cheese icing is always great on the top.

- 3/4 cup milk
  - 1/4 cup butter or margarine
  - 1/3 cup sugar
  - 1 tsp. salt
  - 1/4 cup very warm water
  - 2 packages active dry yeast
  - 2 eggs, beaten
  - 4 1/2 to 5 cups sifted all-purpose flour
1. Scald milk in small saucepan; stir in butter or margarine, sugar, and salt; cool to lukewarm.
  2. Measure very warm water into large bowl. (Very warm water should feel comfortably warm when dropped on wrist.) Sprinkle yeast into water; stir to dissolve; blend in milk mixture and eggs.
  3. Stir in half the flour; beat until smooth; stir in enough of remaining flour to make soft dough, stirring until dough forms a ball that leaves side of a bowl.
  4. Turn out onto lightly floured pastry cloth or board; press into flat ball; knead until smooth and elastic, adding only enough flour to keep dough from sticking.
  5. Place dough in greased large bowl; coat top lightly with soft shortening; cover; let rise in warm place, away from draft, about 50 minutes, or until double in bulk.
  6. Punch dough down; turn out onto lightly floured pastry cloth or board; divide into thirds; shape and bake each third as desired.

## CREAM CHEESE ICING

1 pkg. of softened regular cream cheese. Whip with a hand mixer until soft and smooth, add 1 tsp. of vanilla and 2 cups of powdered sugar (be sure and sift the sugar). If the mixer is too thick, add a tablespoon of milk until you get a good, spreadable consistency.







# Desserts

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We seldom serve desserts with our meals. Many families use desserts as a reward to eating a healthy meal, but this can lead to later use of sweets to reward oneself.

We have fruit and it is always a part of the meal. At home Dr. Pam serves fruit with cheese and crackers. We live in an area where fruit is plentiful throughout the year.

We serve the following fruits in season:

- Cantaloupe
- Honeydew
- Strawberries
- Blueberries

We serve the following fresh fruits year-round:

- Oranges
- Apples
- Bananas
- Pineapple

Cut the fruit into small pieces. Apples into cored quarters that are then cut into at least five thin slices. These should be soaked in pineapple or orange juice to keep them from oxidizing. It also makes them taste good. A small container with two cut-up apples will last for several days in the refrigerator and will make a healthy instant snack.

Cut oranges in half and then cut the halves into at least sixths.







# Crafts

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Dishwashing in the sink and shaving cream on cookie trays with a drop or two of food coloring provide fun rainy day activities. Let the child choose the color they would like or give them two colors and let them combine them to make another color.

Blue + Yellow = Green

Red + Blue = Purple

Red + Yellow = Orange

Orange + Blue = Brown

Shaving cream around the edge of the tub with drops of food coloring can make bathtime a delight.



## CINNAMON ORNAMENTS

During the winter holidays we often make cinnamon ornaments.

- 1-part ground cinnamon (get a large bottle; Publix, Sam's and Costco carry them)
  - 1-part applesauce
1. Stir into a smooth dough and roll out on the counter or a large cutting board. You can put a little flour on the surface to help with sticking.
  2. Roll dough out to about ½ inch thick and cut ornament shapes with cookie cutters. Use a straw to cut a nice hole to run ribbon through for hanging. Put the hole about an ½ inch from the top of the ornament.
  3. Bake in the oven at 200 degrees until hard.
  4. Decorate with glitter glue, etc.

## PLAY DOUGH

- 2 cups flour
  - 1 cup salt
  - 4 tsp. cream of tartar
  - 2 tbsp. cooking oil
  - 2 cups water
  - Food color of choice
1. Stir together all ingredients.
  2. Pour into skillet, stirring constantly.
  3. Cook over medium heat until completely cooked through, scraping from bottom like scrambled eggs.
  4. Pour out onto clean, dry surface.
  5. Knead until cool.

## OUBLECK

Water

Cornstarch

Food coloring

- Slowly add water to cornstarch until desired consistency is obtained
- Mixture should be smooth, but not watery
- Add food coloring













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