

National ECELC Newsletter

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Farm-to-Preschool

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What is Farm-to-Preschool?

Farm-to-Preschool is an initiative that aims to connect early care and education programs to local food producers in order to serve “locally-grown,” healthy foods to young children to improve nutrition and provide related educational opportunities.

Farm-to-Preschool is an extension of Farm-to-School, a model that enriches the connection communities have with local food producers by changing food purchasing and education practices at schools and preschools. The initiative includes Head Start and center-based programs.

What does Farm-to-Preschool Do?

Farm-to-Preschool influences the eating habits of young children during the stage they develop food preferences. Research has shown the importance of nutrition education at the preschool level in influencing the development of healthy eating habits and taste preferences. Additionally, Farm-to-Preschool provides exploratory opportunities to create healthy lifestyles through healthy nutrition habits, increased access to healthy foods at home and community, and contributes to policies that address childhood obesity prevention efforts.

The National ECELC

Welcome to the National Early Care and Education Collaboratives Project (ECELC) Newsletter! We hope this newsletter is helpful as we offer supplemental information to help you prepare for the Learning Sessions and provide technical assistance to early care and education (ECE) providers. Topics within each newsletter will emphasize areas outlined in the *Let's Move! Child Care* goals including healthy eating, physical activity, screen time, and breastfeeding support. We hope you enjoy it!

-The National ECELC Team

Visit the *Let's Move! Child Care* website:

www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org

References

www.kidshealth.org

www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org

[www.farmltopreschool.org/
home.html](http://www.farmltopreschool.org/home.html)

www.farmtoschool.org

www.harvestforhealthykids.org



Farm-to-Preschool: How Can You Get Involved?

CELEBRATE "NATIONAL FARMER'S DAY" ON OCTOBER 12th

There are many ways to get involved in Farm-to-Preschool. Encourage programs and families to get involved by:

Programs:

- Organize field trips to local farms and farmers markets;
- Practice sorting and counting using baskets and fruits and vegetables;
- Make a collage of fruits and vegetables seen on a farm;
- Read books about farms;
- If possible, offer locally-grown foods in your programs for meals and snacks;
- Use the Farm-to-Preschool principles to implement policy changes;
- Invite Farmers and Local Producers to visit the center and discuss their role as a Community Helper;
- Host a "Celebrate Farm-to-Preschool Day" or "Farm Festival" and integrate farm activities, fruits, and vegetables into the daily curriculum; and
- Create an indoor garden to use in the Science Exploratory Center.

Families:

- Take trips to farms and local farmers' markets;
- Have children choose foods and discuss where they come from during meals;
- When selecting foods use it as an opportunity to practice counting and identifying colors; and
- Build an indoor or outdoor garden and plant favorite fruits and vegetable.

Questions?

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