

Mealtime Memo

for Child Care

Red, White, and Blue: A Celebration

As a child care provider, you can use July as a month of celebration to teach children how the United States of America was formed. What a great time to recognize our patriotic colors by choosing foods that are red, white, and blue... just think of all the delicious and nutritious foods that are these colors!

The 4th of July is a day of celebration to commemorate the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, which was approved on July 4, 1776. Thirteen American colonies became independent states and called themselves the United States of America. Since red, white, and blue are the colors of our flag, let's identify foods with those colors.



Red

- watermelon
- strawberries
- red leaf lettuce
- red bell peppers
- tomatoes
- raspberries
- beets
- cherries



White

- white beans (cooked)
- cauliflower
- jicama
- rice
- potatoes
- onions
- milk
- plain yogurt



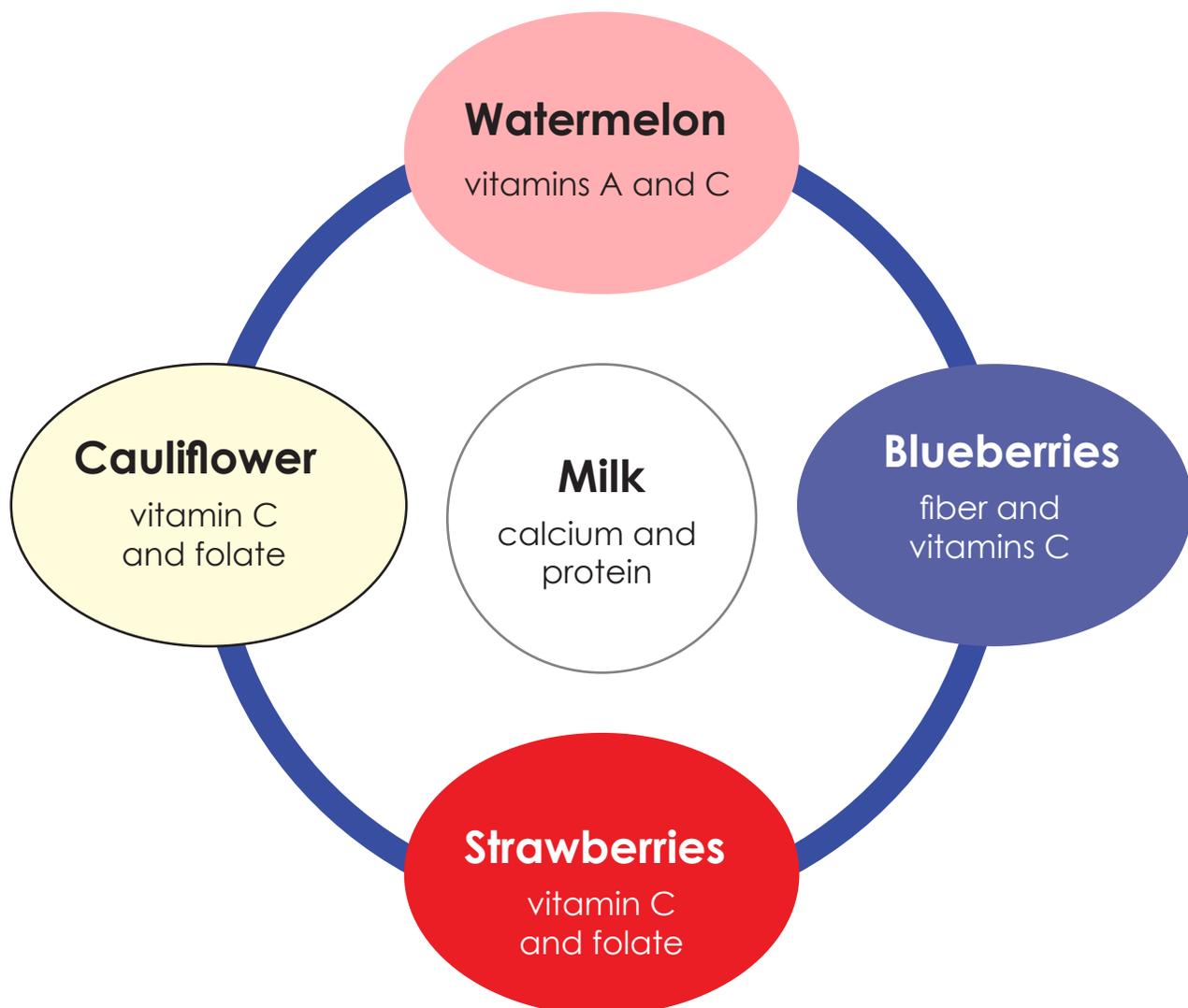
Blue

- blueberries
- blackberries
- purple cabbage
- Concord grapes
- eggplant

All of these foods provide a variety of nutrients needed by children's growing bodies. As you introduce the colorful foods, try to discuss at least one nutrient that each provides and explain how it helps the body.

According to *Fruits & Vegetables More Matters*, some of the key nutrients found in fruits and vegetables include:

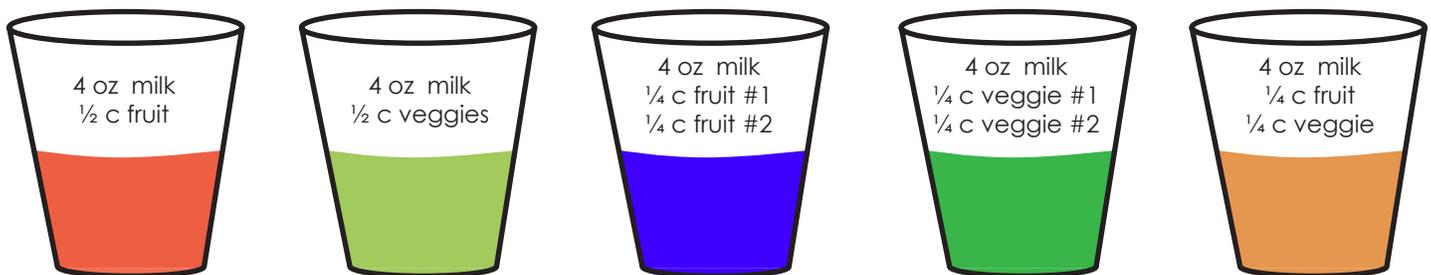
- **Fiber** – helps fill you up, as well as keeps your digestive system working properly
- **Iron** – helps blood to be healthy and cells to function normally
- **Potassium** – may help to maintain healthy blood pressure
- **Sodium** – promotes normal cell function; however, too much sodium in your diet could increase blood pressure
- **Vitamin A** – good for keeping eyes and skin healthy, also protects against infections
- **Vitamin C** – helps cuts and wounds heal and helps keep teeth and gums healthy



What is an easy way to make this understandable for the children? For snacks in the classroom, try making smoothies that include some of the holiday-colored foods. Have the children vote on the ingredients they want to use, being mindful of any food allergies. Plan to make enough smoothies to serve the correct serving size to each child in the classroom.

Choose one ingredient at a time, and teach the children how each ingredient chosen for the smoothie will help their body grow.

Here are some examples of combinations you can offer that include the correct serving size per child.

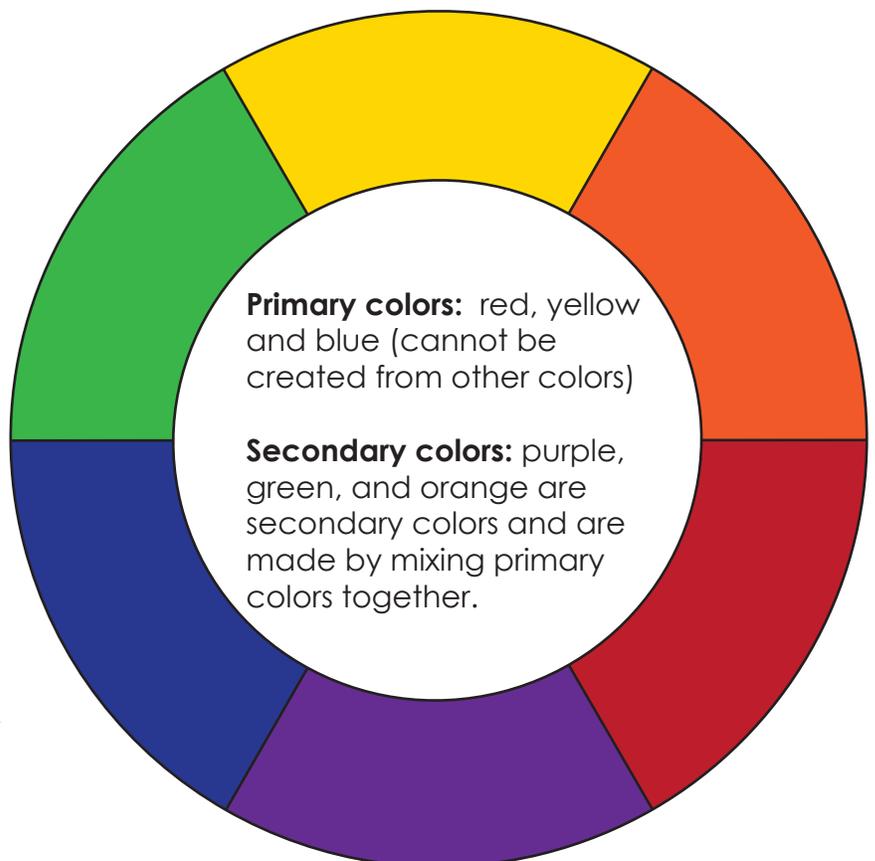


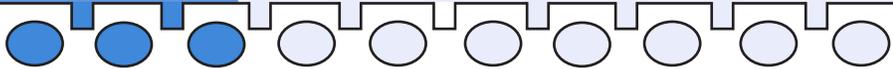
Extra Activity

As an extra activity, consider teaching the primary colors. Allow children to mix different water colors together to make new colors. Use a color wheel to visually show children the different shades of colors.

How do you make the colors purple (violet), green, and orange? These are known as secondary colors and are made by mixing primary colors together.

- Mix blue and red to get **purple**.
- Mix blue and yellow to get **green**.
- Mix yellow and red to get **orange**.





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References

- Crayola. 2018. *What are the primary colors?* Retrieved from <http://www.crayola.com/faq/another-topic/what-are-the-primary-colors/>
- Fruit & Veggies More Matters. n.d. *How fruit & veggie color affects your health.* Retrieved from <https://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/how-fruit-and-veggie-color-affects-your-health>

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