



# CHILD CARE EXTENSION Newsletter

## CARE FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

Most of the training early childhood professionals receive deals with learning or renewing skills that help educate and care for children in the classroom. In all this training, it is easy to overlook one of the most important factors in the health of your classroom: YOU! Your mental health and overall well-being are critical in how well you take care of the children and families in your program. When you're stressed and overwhelmed, it is easy to slip into negative thinking that shows in how you interact with your students, their parents, and your coworkers.

So, what can you do to protect your mental health and stay engaged in your work? CARE: Connect, assess, release, engage.

1. **Connect:** Healthy social connections are a bigger factor in health, especially for older people, than almost anything else including smoking and healthy eating. Who are the people in your life you can count on to boost your mood and help you relieve stress?
2. **Assess:** How are you doing? What stressors do you have in your life, and what tools do you have to help yourself feel better? Do you have stress management techniques that work for you? Is there something practical you can do to improve or change a stressor?
3. **Release:** What do you do to relax or decompress from your work day? Do you have a ritual or routine that helps you move from work-mode to home? If not, take some time to create something just for you that can help release your daily stresses.
4. **Engage:** How can you engage within yourself to boost your mental health? Do you need the support of a mental health professional? There are lots of options for telehealth or other online services such as UAMS ARConnectNow. This is a free service through UAMS and is available to anyone in Arkansas. Call 1(800)482-9921 or email [ARConnect@uams.edu](mailto:ARConnect@uams.edu) for more info 24/7.

*If you or someone you know is in crisis, call or text the national crisis helpline at 988.*

Taking CARE of your mental health and overall well-being is one of the best ways to take care of the children entrusted to you and to teach them to care for themselves.

## TRAININGS OFFERED

### GUIDING CHILDREN SUCCESSFULLY

**Available Online and/or in paper form**

Guiding Children Successfully offers over 30 hours of PDR verified trainings online or in paper form. For more information click: [GCS](#)

### BEST CARE CONNECTED

**Available Online**

Best Care Connected offers five hours of PDR verified trainings online. For more information click: [BCC](#)

### BEST CARE OUT OF SCHOOL TIME

**Available Online**

Best Care: Out of School Time offers five hours of online PDR verified trainings to participants working with after school youth. For more information click: [BCOOST](#)

### BEST CARE

**Available face-to-face**

Best Care offers 10 hours of face-to-face PDR verified trainings across the state. For more information click: [BestCare](#)

# CRAFT CORNER

## Felt Caramel Apple Friends

### Instructions:

1. Print out an apple template on white paper & cut around the apple so you have a template for your craft.
  2. Now take a marker and trace around the apple template on the green or red craft foam. Trim out those pieces.
  3. Before you discard the apple template, use it to trace on the tan craft felt but only 1/2 of the template. This will be the caramel for the apples. .
  4. Glue the craft foam shape to a popsicle stick, followed by the tan craft felt "caramel."
  5. Finally – it's time for the embellishments and bringing it to life. Glue on the wiggle eyes, paint on a smile and add some glitter "sprinkles" for a fun look.
  6. Then set aside your **Caramel Apple Friends** to let it dry completely before displaying/playing with proudly!
- Found on: [www.gluedtomycraftsblog.com](http://www.gluedtomycraftsblog.com)*



### Supplies:

- Printed Apple Template
- White Cardstock Paper
- Green/Red Craft Foam
- Tan Craft Felt
- Marker
- Scissors
- School Glue
- Jumbo Popsicle Sticks – one per craft
- Colorful Glitter
- Large Wiggle Eyes – two per craft
- Black Puffy Paint

# RECIPE

## Dipped Apple Slices on a Stick



### Ingredients

- Apples
- Knife
- Cutting board
- Lollipop sticks
- Melted chocolate
- Caramel
- Various toppings

1. Cut your apples of choice (I used both red and green apples) into either 4-8 slices depending on your preference.
2. Insert a lollipop stick to make it easier to hold for the children.
3. Melt some chocolate and some caramel. Set out small bowls of each with a spoon to coat the apple slices.
4. Have some topping options that they can place on top of the chocolate / caramel before it dries. I used sprinkles and marshmallow cream (for allergies) but there are so many options that you can use.
5. ENJOY!

Found on: [www.mykitchenscapades.com](http://www.mykitchenscapades.com)



## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHT

### BEST CARE

#### *Online Training for Arkansas Child Care Providers*

If you are an early childhood professional and want to learn more about caring for young children, you may be interested in the Best Care. The University of Arkansas Division of Agriculture, in partnership with the Division of Child Care and Early Childhood Association, is offering training for early childhood professionals. Best Care offers ten hours of early childhood professional development during the months of January through May of each year.



#### *How do I get started?*

In the new year, contact your local county agent to find where and when trainings will be conducted in your county. Click here to find your county agent: [CountyAgentMap](#)

#### Topics offered in the 2023 year

- Body Positivity
- Good Nutrition Counts On Basic Math Skills
- Importance of Immunizations
- Literacy in Early Childhood
- Money As You Grow
- Guidance
- Kindergarten Readiness
- Importance of Physical Activity
- Observation in Early Childhood
- Professionalism & Ethics



## PARENTING CONNECTION

### Spend time together completing a fall seasonal bucket list.

Below are a few ideas of what to add to your bucket list this fall.

- Paint/carve a pumpkin
- Go to a pumpkin patch
- Play outside in the leaves
- Make a fall snack
- Go apple picking
- Make hot cocoa or apple cider
- Collect & paint leaves & acorns
- Make cookies & give them to a friend
- Make stamp art with an apple
- Go on a hayride
- Try 3 pumpkin flavored foods
- Read a book outside with blankets & a warm drink



#### Fall Popcorn Mix

Ingredients:

- 1/2 cup popcorn kernels or 1 bag of microwave popcorn (unbuttered)
- 1 bag of melting white chocolate
- 1 cup broken pretzels
- 1 cup graham cracker cereal
- 1 cup candy corn



Instructions:

1. Spread your popped popcorn, broken pretzels & graham cracker cereal onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper.
2. Melt 2 cups of white chocolate chips in the microwave.
3. Drizzle the melted white chocolate all over the popcorn mix, zig zagging back and forth covering everything
4. Finally, grab the candy corn pieces and remaining UNMELTED white chocolate chips. Sprinkle both over the top of the drizzled mixture.
5. Allow your Fall Popcorn Mix to cool and then break up a bit and enjoy!

*From [www.gluedtomycraftsblog.com](http://www.gluedtomycraftsblog.com)*

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

*Click each logo to go to the page*



Personal &  
Family Life  
Resources



Childcare  
Resources  
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