



F2ECE Success Story

Lynn purchased a weekly CSA box of vegetables from Shared Ground Farmers' Cooperative and also grew a small garden-in-a-box. As a child care provider for 18 years, she has never run out of ideas to engage with the children she cares for! The kids love talking about the different plants in the garden and the different animals that visit it, like caterpillars, bumblebees, and bunnies. Lynn incorporates garden-themed art, and even math and science with the older kids. The kids also help cook with the produce from the garden. One of the many decorations around her house is a sign that says, "You're brave if you try new foods." Each time someone tries something new, everyone else cheers them on! She tries to add something new every year, and is working on expanding her garden that now spreads through her front and back yards, as well as alongside her house. Lynn's advice to future Farm to Child Care providers is to start small; pick one new activity a week that simply tries to connect kids with nature.

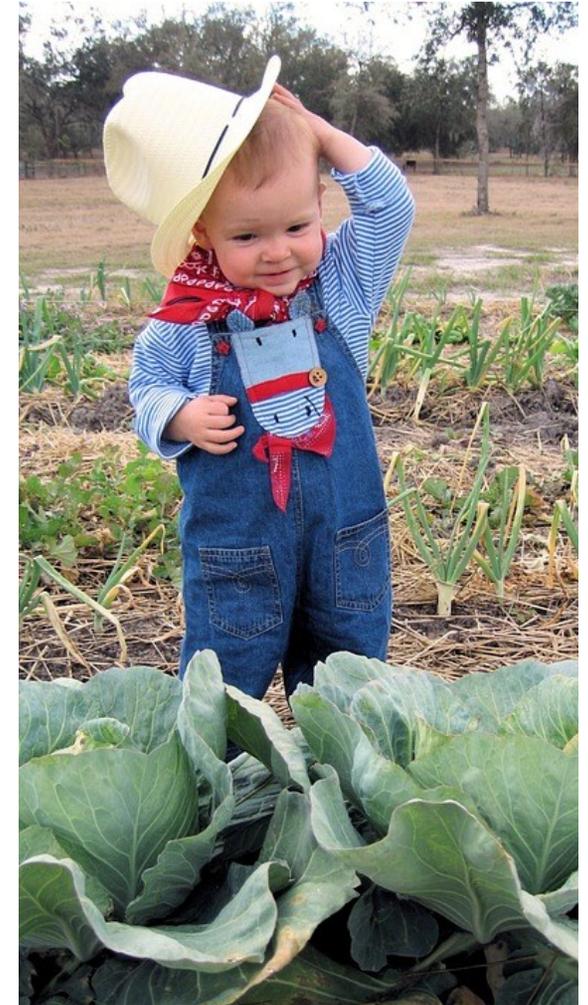
Farm to Early Care Fun!

There are many fun educational activities to explore with your child/children. Visit our website,

renewingthecountryside.org/f2ece_parents

The more you know, the more you grow!

Access guides, curriculum activities, gardening tips, kid-friendly healthy recipes, info on where to find local foods, and other opportunities to adventure with your little one.



Farm To Early Care & Education

 **renewing the countryside**

renewingthecountryside.org



Helps Kids

Helps Farmers

Helps Communities

Helps Local Economies



What is Farm to Early Care?

Nearly 23 percent of young children aged 2-5 are overweight in the United States. Being overweight comes with significant health, social, and emotional challenges. Results from the 2015 Farm to School survey suggest that Farm to School and Farm to Early Care and Education (F2ECE) practices have reduced absenteeism, and that children feel better physically because their bodies are getting fresh nutritional food. With having more than 8 million young children nationwide spending on average 33 hours a week in early care settings, F2ECE has the potential to help set up young children for a life of success with healthy eating habits and quality learning environments.

Why farm to early care?

- This is the most influential age for developing taste preference for healthier life-long healthy habits.
- Children learn through sensory and dramatic play, math and science, circle time and arts and crafts.
- These activities help to build children's farm and food knowledge, by making connections with farmers and local food systems.

How does it work?

This national movement connects farm fresh local foods with 0-5 year olds. Farm fresh food is purchased and prepared for healthy meals and snacks. Agriculture, gardening, and nutrition themes are incorporated into childcare curriculum and activities. Together, we develop lifelong healthy eating behaviors and community vitality by strengthening local food systems.

How might your provider start?

- Start and maintain a learning garden
- Taste test with locally produced foods
- Purchase food from farmers markets or CSA farms
- Take a field trip to a farm or garden
- Incorporate food-themed curriculum and activities

As a Parent, where do I start?

1. Incorporate local, healthy foods in meals and snacks.

- Create a positive environment
- Be a role model
- Start with small portions
- Positive reinforcement
- Keep offering new preparations of foods

2. Incorporate local food themes!

Small twists on what you're already doing! Activities such as planting seeds in the garden. Making art with vegetables, learning about parts of plants, colors, and math with fruits and vegetables. Have fun and use existing resources!

3. Field Trips to farms!

- Visit Farms.
- Create a potted plant area or garden.
- Visit apple orchards or go berry picking.

How do I get my Early Care & Education setting on board?

Ask your child care provider: have they considered using local, healthy food in their meals? Do they have a garden space to learn about gardening? Have they incorporated nutrition into the learning environment? Have they experienced new/different food?

Encourage them to begin to learn more about or incorporate Farm to Early Care and Education practices, and let them know you're supporting it at home!

Suppose your provider has not heard of F2ECE. Tell them there is a professional development class called "Farm to Child Care." It meets the Parent Aware requirements for nutrition and offers up to 5 in-service hours in the Minnesota Core Competency Content Area of health, safety, and nutrition for child care providers

To find a training near them, they can visit the www.develop.com website and search for 'Farm to Child Care.' It will be located in the nutrition section. Or check out our website below for more information!



Learn to garden, grow plants, and try new foods!

Contact Us

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