

FAMILY CONNECTION

Keeping you informed and engaged

DECEMBER 2025

Family Engagement Event

Classroom Celebrations!

Be on the lookout for your invitation from a Family Advocate or Teacher!

Have a wonderful winter!

Check Out CAM's Family Corner!

camarin.org/family-corner



Reminder:

Please stay connected through Brightwheel, our primary tool for communication.

Education

Early math skills start developing long before children enter school. The DRDP Cognition and Math domains grow through everyday play, routines, and hands-on experiences. Kids naturally learn to compare, count, estimate, and problem-solve while measuring ingredients or sorting toys. Try asking your toddler questions like, "Which cup holds more?" or "How many do we need so everyone gets one?" Older children can build skills by doubling a recipe, reading a simple calendar, or estimating the length of a task.



Tip: Make it playful! Board games, puzzles, building blocks, and card games all support reasoning and number sense for ages 0–12. No pressure, just fun learning woven into the day.



Calendar

- **DECEMBER 9, 2025**
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Virtual Parent Leadership Council Orientation
- **DECEMBER 24, 2025 - JANUARY 4, 2026**
Closed for Winter Break



Community Events

- **NOVEMBER 28, 2025 - JANUARY 4, 2026**
Holiday Light Spectacular
4:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Experience a magical winter celebration with glimmering lights, vintage fire trucks, a holiday craft station, and so much more.
Marin Center Fairgrounds
10 Ave of the Flags
San Rafael, CA 94903
- **DECEMBER 13, 2025**
Not So Silent Night
4:00 PM – 9:00 PM
Community-oriented holiday festival with food, lights, and local shops.
Downtown Novato

Follow Us

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Health & Safety

Healthy Hands for a Healthy Winter

December 1–7 is National Handwashing Awareness Week. Build strong habits that protect your family during the busy winter season. Handwashing is one of the easiest and most effective ways to prevent the spread of colds, flu, RSV, and other common winter illnesses.

At school, we practice handwashing routines before meals, after outdoor play, and after using the bathroom.

How to encourage handwashing at home:

- Turn handwashing into play! Sing "Happy Birthday" twice so kids scrub for 20 seconds.
- Remind everyone to wash their hands before eating, after coughing or sneezing, or after touching shared surfaces.
- During the holiday season, encourage regular handwashing before cooking or eating together, and after children play with shared toys.

Nutrition

Hunger Cues & Healthy Holiday Eating

The holiday season brings together family, celebrations, and plenty of delicious food! It is a perfect time to help children practice listening to their bodies, recognizing when they're hungry and when they're full.

Ask open-ended questions like "Is your tummy feeling hungry, or just a little hungry?" or "Does your belly feel full yet?" Encouraging children to tune into these cues supports lifelong healthy eating habits.

Offer an array of foods at celebrations—fruits, vegetables, proteins, and treats—to encourage trying new flavors. Enjoy special meals together and remind kids it's always okay to stop eating when full or save food for later.



Harvest of the Month



Network for a Healthy California

The Harvest of the Month featured harvest is **Lemon & Herbs**



Health and Learning Success Go Hand-in-Hand

Do you want more energy for you and your family? Start by making healthy beverage and meal choices. Water is a vital nutrient that helps keep your body temperature normal. Water also helps keep your joints moving smoothly. Students who are hydrated and healthy have more energy and can focus better in school. Use Harvest of the Month fruits and vegetables in meals and snacks to help your children reach their total daily needs.

Lemon Produce Tips

- Lemon Zest Enhancement:** When using lemon zest in recipes, ensure to zest the lemon before juicing it. Zesting a juiced lemon is much harder and less effective.
- Feel for Firmness and Weight:** When shopping, pick up the lemon and gently squeeze it. A good lemon should feel firm and heavy for its size, indicating that it's juicy and fresh.

Adapted from California Department of Public Health's Network for a Healthy California Harvest of the Month Family Newsletter

Herb Produce Tips

- Reviving Fresh Herbs:** If your fresh herbs have wilted slightly, revive them by placing their stems in a glass of water, covering them loosely with a plastic bag, and refrigerating for a few hours.
- Using Herb Stems:** Don't discard herb stems! While the leaves are often the star, herb stems are also flavorful. Chop them finely and add them to dishes like soups, stews, or stocks for added depth of flavor.

LEMON HERB & VEGETABLE CHICKPEA SOUP

Make 6 servings

Serving Size 1.00 cup

Prep time: 45 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 cup Farro cooked
- 2 tablespoons Canola Oil, Safflower Oil or Grapeseed Oil
- 1 Onion chopped
- 2 Carrots diced
- 2 stalks Celery diced
- 4 cloves Garlic
- Salt to taste
- Black Pepper to taste
- 6 cups Vegetable Broth
- 15 ounces Chickpeas canned, rinsed, drained
- 1 head Broccoli cut into small florets
- 4 cups Greens roughly chopped (kale, chard, etc.)
- 1/2 cup Herbs chopped (parsley, basil, oregano, thyme)
- 2 Lemon zested

Directions

- In a large pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, garlic, carrots, celery, salt and pepper and cook until softened, about 5-7 minutes.
- Add vegetable broth, chickpeas and cooked farro; bring to a boil and reduce heat to a simmer. Simmer for 10 minutes.
- Add broccoli, greens, herbs and lemon zest. Cook until broccoli and greens are tender, about 5 minutes. Add broth or water as needed.

Nutrition information per serving:

Calories 308, Total Fat 8 g, Saturated Fat <1 g, Sodium 462 mg, Total Carbohydrate 49 g, Dietary Fiber 12 g, Protein 12 g

For more recipes, visit: www.eatfresh.org

Healthy Serving Ideas

- Lemon Herb Greek Yogurt Dressing:** Whisk together Greek yogurt, lemon zest, lemon juice, chopped herbs (such as dill and chives), and a pinch of garlic powder. Use as a creamy dressing for salads or a refreshing dip for vegetables, adding a tangy herbaceous flavor to your dishes.
- Lemon Herb Spa Water:** Infuse water with slices of lemon and sprigs of fresh herbs like mint and basil. Let it sit in the refrigerator for a few hours to allow the flavors to meld. Serve chilled for a refreshing and hydrating beverage with a hint of citrus and herbal aroma.

Recommended Daily Amounts of Fruits and Vegetables*

	Kids, Ages 5-12	Teens and Adults, Ages 13 and up
Males	2½ - 5 cups per day	4½ - 6½ cups per day
Females	2½ - 5 cups per day	3½ - 5 cups per day

*If you are active, eat the higher number of cups per day. Visit www.mypyramid.gov to learn more.

What's in Season?

In Mediterranean climates (like California) and some subtropical regions, lemons can be harvested year-round, making them widely available in December. Herbs like rosemary, thyme, and sage are often hardy enough to thrive through cooler months, providing robust flavors and aromas that complement seasonal dishes like roasted meats and hearty stews during the winter holiday season. Their availability allows for fresh, vibrant culinary creations even in colder months.

Let's Get Physical!

- At home:** Start a garden for you and your family.
- At work:** Take stretching breaks! Stretch a couple of minutes for every hour you work.
- At school:** Encourage your child to get involved with the school garden.
- With the family: Get everyone involved in planting and weeding!

For gardening ideas, visit: www.kidsgardening.org