Eat Right, Grow Strong
Nutrition for Young Children
Partnering Organizations:
Objectives

• Describe why good nutrition is so important to young children.

• Explain in detail the components of a child care environment that promote healthy eating.

• Describe the role of child care staff in helping shape children’s eating behaviors.

• List some things staff can do in their classroom to help children develop healthy eating behaviors.
• Young children need to eat nutritious foods because their bodies are growing rapidly.

• Children may receive between 50% and 75% of their daily calories at the child care facility.

• Children learn healthy eating habits at a very young age.
What have you noticed about the eating habits of children in your center?

Have they changed over time?
What does this all mean for CC providers?

- Providers have an important influence on children’s eating habits and attitudes.

- Children look up to their teachers and often “model” their own eating habits based on watching others.

- Providers can make changes to create a better “food environment” so it’s easier for children and staff to make healthier choices.

The healthy choice needs to be the easy choice!
ACTIVITY

Complete the “Are you a good role model?” Worksheet.
Fruits & Vegetables

• A variety of fruits and vegetables give children vitamins and minerals that keep them healthy and help them grow.

• Fruits and vegetables are “nutrient dense,” which means a lot of nutrients but few calories.
Vegetable Subgroups

• Dark Green
• Red/Orange
• Dried Beans/Peas
• Starchy
• Other

Eat Your Colors!
“We worked really hard to make some healthy changes on our fall/winter menu. We added new vegetables to our menu, asparagus, beets and brussel sprouts, due to the encouragement and help we have received from the NAP SACC program.

It was unanimous in the classrooms that beets are "yummy, yummy!" They were well received by the children. Plus, they added a beautiful purple color to our lunch plates which was probably a first for us.

Brussels sprouts were described by teachers and children as looking like lettuce, but tasting like broccoli. We serve family style so the children get to choose what they want. On brussel sprout day one of our toddlers ate almost 7 of them!

Only 1 preschool child in a classroom out of 20 said that she eats asparagus at home, so we are delighted to be able to serve some foods that children may not be able to try otherwise.”

- Quote provided by Jaci Foged, Director @ UNL Children’s Center
Fruits & Vegetables are FUN!

Ways to get kids to LOVE their fruits and vegetables (or at least try them!). . . . .

- Have a party for your senses.
- Serve them creatively.
- Staff “talk them up” before serving them.
- Incorporate them into lessons.
- Eat a rainbow.
- Set a good example.
# Meat & Meat Alternatives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Higher Fat Meats</th>
<th>Leaner Meats or Meat Alternatives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sausage</td>
<td>Skinless, Baked or Broiled Chicken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bologna</td>
<td>Baked or Broiled Fish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salami</td>
<td>Ground Beef or Turkey (at least 93% lean)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bacon</td>
<td>Dried Beans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot dogs</td>
<td>Baked, Poached, or Boiled Eggs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chicken nuggets</td>
<td>Tofu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fish sticks</td>
<td>Nuts &amp; Seeds</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Think about what cooking method you’re using!
Grains

• **Whole grain** – The complete grain kernel (starchy endosperm, germ, & fiber-rich bran).

• **Refined grain** – Bran & germ removed when milled.
  o Removes iron, fiber, and many B vitamins.

• **Enriched** – Vitamins & minerals were added to replace originals that were lost during refining process.

• **Fortified** – Nutrients have been artificially added to a food product that didn’t naturally contain them.
  o Example: Cereals fortified with iron & folate
• **Benefits of whole grains:**
  o Consumed as part of a healthy diet may reduce the risk of heart disease.
  o May help with weight management by helping you to feel full.
  o Helps with digestion.

• Try and incorporate high-fiber whole grain foods into the menu at least 2 times per day!
Grain Label Reading Activity

Which products are actually whole grains?

Ingredients: **WHOLE GRAIN WHEAT FLOUR**, ENRICHED FLOUR (WHEAT FLOUR, NIACIN, REDUCED IRON, THIAMINE MONONITRATE {VITAMIN B1}, RIBOFLAVIN {VITAMIN B2}, FOLIC ACID), SOYBEAN OIL, SUGAR, PARTIALLY HYDROGENATED COTTONSEED OIL, LEAVENING (CALCIUM PHOSPHATE AND/OR BAKING SODA), SALT, HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, SOY LECITHIN (EMULSIFIER), CORNSTARCH. CONTAINS: WHEAT, SOY.

Look at the first ingredient!
Is the first word whole?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOOD</th>
<th>EXAMPLE MAKEOVER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Muffins</td>
<td>Whole wheat english muffin, toast, or mini-bagel with PB or low-fat cream cheese</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frosted Flakes</td>
<td>Cheerios, Wheat Chex, Shredded Wheat, Bran Flakes, Low-Fat Granola, Oatmeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Breakfast Cereal Bar</td>
<td>Tortilla roll-up (spread cream cheese or PB and jelly on a whole wheat tortilla and roll it up), low-fat/high fiber granola bar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cookies</td>
<td>Graham crackers, whole wheat crackers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poptarts</td>
<td>Whole grain waffle or pancake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chips</td>
<td>Whole grain pretzels, homemade chex mix (with pretzels, wheat chex, cheerios, etc.), whole grain tortilla with a bean dip spread</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Beverages

• Water is the best choice for thirsty children. Model good habits for the children by choosing water first.

• Soda and fruit drinks are full of sugar and “empty calories,” meaning few nutrients, many calories.

• Serving low fat milk with meals and snacks provides calcium but doesn’t add many calories.
• **Myth 1: Whole milk is best for all kids.**
  - Under 1: breast milk or formula
  - 1 to 2: Whole milk
  - Over 2: 1% or skim milk

• **Myth 2: Juice is always the best option.**
  - Whole fruits have more nutrients.
  - Under 6: 4-6 oz. a day of 100% juice
  - Not a good choice to quench thirst
### Skim Milk vs. Whole Milk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skim Milk</th>
<th>Whole Milk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Serving Size</strong></td>
<td>8 fl oz (240mL)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Servings Per Container</strong></td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount Per Serving</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Calories from Fat</th>
<th>% Daily Value*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Fat</strong></td>
<td>0g</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturated Fat</strong></td>
<td>0g</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cholesterol</strong></td>
<td>less than 5mg</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sodium</strong></td>
<td>130mg</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Carbohydrate</strong></td>
<td>12g</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dietary Fiber</td>
<td>0g</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sugars</td>
<td>11g</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Protein</strong></td>
<td>8g</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Fat</strong></td>
<td>8g</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Saturated Fat</strong></td>
<td>5g</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cholesterol</strong></td>
<td>35mg</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sodium</strong></td>
<td>125mg</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Carbohydrate</strong></td>
<td>12g</td>
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*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs.

Calories: 2,000 | 2,500
--- | ---
Total Fat | less than 65g | 80g
Saturated Fat | less than 20g | 25g
Cholesterol | less than 300mg | 300mg
Sodium | less than 2,400mg | 2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate | 300g | 375g
Dietary Fiber | 25g | 30g
• Place the following foods in order from which ones have the most amount of calcium to the least amount of calcium:
  • 1 oz. or slice of cheese
  • ½ c. of ice cream
  • 1 c. yogurt
  • ½ c. cottage cheese
  • 4 oz. ready-to-eat pudding cup
  • 1 c. milk
  • ½ c. homemade pudding
    ○ (made w/ milk from box mix)
Calcium Activity – Most to Least

Answer:

1.) 1 c. milk (30% DV)
2.) 1 c. yogurt (25% DV)
3.) ½ c. cottage cheese (16% DV)
4.) 1oz. or slice of cheese (15% DV)
5.) ½ c. homemade pudding (11% DV)
6.) ½ c. ice cream (6% DV)
7.) 4 oz. ready-to-eat pudding cup (6% DV)

(%DV may differ slightly depending upon brand of food product)
# How to Make a Healthy Lunch

## What is the difference?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>More Nutritious</th>
<th>Less Nutritious</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Baked, skinless chicken breast</td>
<td>Chicken nuggets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steamed carrots</td>
<td>Tater tots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresh strawberries</td>
<td>Canned fruit cocktail in heavy syrup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole wheat dinner roll</td>
<td>Slice of white bread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skim milk</td>
<td>Whole milk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Choose MyPlate

Activity Break:
Choose MyPlate Relay

What other creative ways can we incorporate MyPlate teachings into the childcare center and into your classrooms?
THE FOOD GROUPS

- Grains
- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Protein
- Dairy
Menus & Variety

• Serving a variety of foods helps to meet a child’s nutrition needs.

• Cycle menus of 3 weeks or longer, with seasonal change, may help provide variety.

• Children may need to see a new food at least 10 times before they’ll actually try it.

• Don’t give up!

• Including food in your menus from a variety of cultures can make meals more fun and interesting for children.
Brainstorm

1.) Does your center provide a variety of meals and snacks?

2.) Are there easy ways to offer unique or new foods?

3.) Do you give up on serving new foods when they don’t go over well with the kids the first couple of times?
Feeding Practices

• Gently encourage, but don’t force children to try a bite of a new food.

• Forcing children to clean their plates can lead to overeating and weight problems.

• Offer healthy foods to children and then let them decide if and how much to eat.
Feeding Practices

- Make meal and snack time as stress free as possible.
- Staff help children determine if they are still hungry or full.
- Provide enough time to eat.
- Try to avoid using food to reward good behavior or to calm upset children.
Celebrations & Fundraisers

- Ask parents to help celebrate birthdays and holidays with healthier options than candy, cake, and ice cream.
  - Healthier sweets like fruit and low-fat muffins are great alternatives.

- If your facility has fundraisers, consider campaigns that involve healthier foods or non-food items.
  - This sends a message that you care about good health.
“At both Centers, all classrooms asked parents to help bring in healthy snacks for our Valentine’s Day celebration and not to bring cookies, cupcakes, etc. Instead of focusing so much on sweets as we did in the past for holiday parties, classrooms made things like fruit kabobs, friendship fruit salad, smoothies, fruit pizza, cheese hearts, and heart peanut butter/jelly sandwiches. One room had families bring pink or red fruits and vegetables. Some of the staff commented on how they felt so much better at the end of the day compared to how they used to feel after classroom holiday parties.”

- Quote provided by Deanna Turner, Director @ Trinity Infant & Child Care Centers
Support Healthy Eating

- Promote good nutrition through posters, pictures, books.
- What are staff eating and drinking in front of the kids?
- No vending machines at your facility.
- Teachers model healthy eating.
- Create a pleasant social environment around the table.
- If possible, serve meals family-style.
Family Style Meals (FSM)

• The serving of food in bowls and platters with beverages in pitchers on the table.

• It allows child care providers and children to participate in table setting, serving, eating, and clean-up.

• During the meal service there is time for conversation and teaching of appropriate eating habits.
Advantages of FSM

- Promotes/reinforces social skills
- Strengthens serving skills/mannerisms
- Gives children control of their eating
- Indirectly encourages them to try new foods
- For teachers and staff, a successful family style meal is interactive, satisfying, and relaxing.

What possible challenges might you face in implementing FSM at your child care?
Things to Remember

- Children will eat!

- They are capable of regulating their food intake.

- They generally react negatively to new foods, but will usually accept them with time and experience.

- Caregivers can either support or disrupt children’s food acceptance and regulation.
Nutrition Education for Staff, Parents, & Children

• How often are staff provided with nutrition training opportunities?

• How can we offer nutrition education experiences to the parents of the children at your center?

• Examples of Nutrition education resources:
  o Serving up MyPlate: A Yummy Curriculum
  o Nutrition & Wellness Tips for Young Children: Provider Handbook for the CACFP
  o Grow It, Try It, Like It!
  o The Two Bite Club
**Cooking with Children**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What they can do</th>
<th>What they can learn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Measure, stir, beat</td>
<td>Fine motor skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peel, cut, grate</td>
<td>Follow directions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hot vs. cold</td>
<td>Observing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compare quantities</td>
<td>Enhance social skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set the table</td>
<td>Sorting, classifying skills</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Cook and learn!!*
Nutrition Policy

A written policy on food and nutrition:

• Tells parents and staff that these are important issues and that you care about the health of the children in your facility.

• Helps guide decisions and choices your facility makes every day.

• Makes it easier to explain your approach to parents and staff.
Suggested Topics to Include in a Nutrition Policy

- Foods & Beverages provided
- Healthy mealtime environments
- Fundraising with non-food items
- Guidelines on food for holidays & celebrations
- Teacher practices to encourage healthy eating
- Education for families on child nutrition
- Professional development on child nutrition
- Not offering food as a reward
“The first thing that we changed because of our NAP SACC training was to ask parents not to bring outside breakfast food into our center. We’ve had children eating pop tarts or donuts as they enter the building in the mornings, yet we serve a healthy breakfast at no charge to the parents! It was frustrating, but by putting it in words in the form of a nutrition policy for parents, it made the change go very smoothly. Parents no longer bring junk with their child in the morning and we are able to offer them a healthy breakfast.”

- Quote provided by Karen Decker, Owner/Director @ Sugar & Spice Child Care Center & Preschool
Menu Planning Resources

• Recipes for Healthy Kids Cookbook for CCC & homes

• USDA Recipe Finder Database

• USDA SNAP-Ed Connection Recipe Finder
  http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov/

• USDA Recipes for Child Care booklet
  http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/usda-recipes-child-care
USDA Recipe Finder Database

- Fruit Recipes
- Whole Grain Recipes
- Vegetable Recipes
- Bean Recipes

http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov/
Resource Library

USDA Recipes for Child Care

The recipes from the 1999 publication Child Care Recipes: Food for Health and Fun for USDA's Child and Adult Care Program have been updated.

USDA Recipes for Child Care consists of a booklet and 2 CD-ROMs. The booklet describes how to work with recipes, adjusting recipes, food safety information, and much more. One CD includes the booklet text and a supplemental information technical assistance guide that has tips for cooking, preparation, and storage. This CD also has files of the recipes by name and number as well as a "How to make facilities," food storage times, and mini-posters on hand washing and thermometer usage. A bonus CD of the Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs is also included.

Available: in PDF only

Download PDF:

Booklet Content
Full Document
- Introduction (pg 1-2)
- Reimbursable Meal Requirements (pg 3)
- Working with the Recipes (pg 4-17)
- Recipe Adjustment (pg 18-29)
- Nutrition Analysis and Tips (pg 31-59)

Supplemental Information
Full Document
- Introduction (pg 2)
- Storage Tips (pg 3-5)
- Preparation Tips (pg 6-7)
- Cooking Tips (pg 8-17)
- How to Use Specific Ingredients (pg 18-31)

Mini-Posters
- Therry Rules! Cooking for Food Service
- Remember to Wash Hands
- How to Wash Your Hands

All Recipes Alphabetically
All Recipes Numerically
Single Recipes Alphabetically
ACTIVITY

Complete the “Nutrition Classroom Goals” Worksheet.