

Nutrition Policies...

Sharing Your Feeding Practices with Parents

Everyone who cares for children has an important role in promoting their physical, mental and nutritional health. If a child enters the child care setting at 6 weeks of age and continues through age five, he/she will spend more time in those 5 years at child care than in school in the next 12 years.

Quality child care includes good nutrition to help children grow strong bodies and minds. Providing good nutrition to children is not

only an important responsibility but also an opportunity. Children served well-balanced meals and planned snacks play hard, feel good and sleep well.

Creating a nutrition policy is an excellent way to express your commitment to feeding children well. What exactly is a nutrition policy? A nutrition policy is a written document based on Best Practices and Standards that encourage food attitudes and eating practices, which promote good health for infants and children. You'll want to share your Nutrition Policy with parents when they enroll in your program. You can be certain that parents will appreciate your efforts to make sure their child has the very best nutritional start in life.

If you are unsure where to begin, the sample policy on the next page is a good place to start. If you participate in a USDA Food Program, your nutritionist will be happy to assist you in developing your own nutrition policy.

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did you know...

- ▶ 70%–80% of children fall short of expert's recommendations for hours of sleep, according to researchers at Boston University.
- ▶ The repercussions of sleep deprivation are visible after only 4 nights of one less hour of sleep according to researchers in Nova Scotia.
- ▶ The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children do not consume any caffeine. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control shows that 73 percent of kids consume some caffeine on any given day, much of it from sodas and energy drinks.
- ▶ Children who slumber less than 10½ hours a night, by age 3, are 45% more likely to become obese by age 7 according to a study in the British Medical Journal.

Sources: Boston University, Dalhousie University, Nova Scotia, National Sleep Foundation, AAP, CDC, British Medical Journal

Quotable Quotes

“Vegetables are a must on a diet. I suggest carrot cake, zucchini bread and pumpkin pie.”

– Jim Davis



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Nutrition Policy

As a Commitment to Your Child's Health
We Follow These Feeding Guidelines



Meals Meet USDA – CACFP Guidelines

Meals and snacks served to children meet the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern requirements, which are available upon request.

Variety of Food – Low Fat Milk

We serve a variety of healthy foods with emphasis on plenty of whole grain breads and cereals, fresh fruits and vegetables and protein from both animal and vegetable sources. We serve low fat milk (1%) after age 2 years.

High Nutrient Value Foods

We serve foods of high nutrient value. We limit high fat, high sugar foods that are low in nutrient value, in an attempt to help children learn to enjoy healthy foods. Fruit juice will not be served more than once a day and in child size portions. Children always have access to drinking water.

Frequent Meals and Snacks

Children need many chances during the day to eat in order to insure that their small tummies do not get too hungry. Meals and snacks are offered to children at least every 2–3 hours.

Iron Fortified Formula – Breast Milk

In accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations, infants are fed expressed breast milk or an iron fortified infant formula for the entire first year. When the infant is developmentally ready, and with your approval, solids will be introduced. Infants are always fed on demand and held for bottle feedings.

Pleasant Mealtime Environment

We strive to make our mealtime environment pleasant. We believe that sitting and eating with children provides an opportunity for positive role modeling and social interaction.

Division of Responsibility

We serve family style whenever possible because it is important for children to learn to serve themselves. We never force, trick or bribe a child into eating. We honor the division of responsibility in feeding children; our role as care givers is to provide nourishing food and it is the role of the child to decide how much to eat.

Children Gain Confidence in Eating

Appropriate furniture, utensils and dishes will be used at mealtimes. Children will gain confidence in eating as they learn to eat successfully on their own.

Nutritious Foods and Snacks

We strive to make meals and snacks as nutritious as possible. We ask that you help support these policies by leaving all sweets at home, unless special arrangements have been made in advance. We will be happy to share newsletters and other nutrition related information with you.

Handwashing

Hands are always washed before all meals and snacks.

Special Occasions

Birthdays are a special time for families at home. We honor and celebrate birthdays during our afternoon snack. Guidelines for bringing food for celebrations will be distributed.



KIDS' HEALTH & SAFETY

Snooze Time News

The latest research suggests that sleep is essential to good health. When children get the sleep they need, they may have a lowered risk of becoming overweight and developing diabetes, as well as fewer learning problems and attention issues.



What's the Big Deal About Sleep?

- Sleep promotes growth. Growth hormone is primarily secreted during deep sleep.
- Sleep helps the heart. Experts are learning more about how sleep protects against vascular damage due to stress hormones circulated when there is excessive brain arousal.
- Sleep affects weight. Tired children tend to be more sedentary and crave higher fat or higher carb foods.
- Sleep helps beat germs. During sleep, the body produces cytokines, the proteins which the body depends on to fight infection, illness and stress.
- Sleep reduces injury risk. Children are clumsier and more impulsive when they don't get enough sleep, setting them up for accidents.
- Sleep increases a child's attention span. Getting enough sleep helps children manage their impulses so they can focus on schoolwork.
- Sleep boosts learning. Researchers have found that newborns actually learn in their sleep, and that sleep aids learning in children of all ages.

What Are the Consequences of too Little Sleep?

Major Meltdowns – Moodiness is a major side effect of getting too little sleep.

Trouble Focusing – Inattention on lessons in the classroom can occur with just 1 hour less sleep for five nights.

Weight Gain – Sleep deprivation can impact the production of leptin, a hormone that signals us to stop eating, thereby causing weight gain.

Extra Sick Days – According to research, too little sleep weakens the immune system in adults and it's likely to have the same effect on children, putting them at a higher risk for illness.

Just How Much Sleep Do Children Need?

The National Sleep Foundation suggests these guidelines:

When Kids Are...	They Need...
Up to 2 months	10.5 to 18 hours
3–12 months	9.5 to 14 hours
1 to 3 years	12 to 14 hours
3 to 5 years	11 to 13 hours
5 to 12 years	10–12 hours

Encourage Self Soothing for Infants

Try not to let your infant fall asleep while eating. Put her to bed while still awake, but drowsy. Soothe without feeding, using techniques such as swaddling and swinging. By 3 months, slow your response time when baby awakes and she'll be more likely to drift back to sleep on her own.

Create a Solid Routine

A routine helps children wind down, putting them in the mood to snooze. Establish a consistent bedtime routine; include a bath, brushing teeth and a story. A dim, cool space helps children tap into natural circadian rhythms. Some parents find a fan or other white noise can lull children to sleep.

Remove Tech Temptations

If there is a television in the child's room remove it! Restrict all screen time, the blue light emitted from computers, smart phones and TV's can disrupt the body's ability to drift off. Just two hours of screen time right before bed is enough to lower levels of melatonin by 22 percent. Melatonin is produced naturally at night and signals sleep to the body.

If your child could use more shut eye, take steps to help them get it. Move their bedtime earlier by 10–15 minute each night until they are getting adequate rest. Follow a schedule, unpredictable snoozing times confuse the body's internal clock, making it tougher to fall asleep and stay that way.

— *Scholastic.com, Parent's Magazine*

July 4th Recipes

Show off your patriotic pride with these playful food creations:

Patriotic Parfait

Purée raspberries and blueberries separately. Layer purees with plain yogurt or rice pudding.

Fruit Yogurt Pops

Turn the parfait into a frozen treat by layering purees with plain yogurt in a popsicle mold or small paper cup. Use a knife to swirl colors and freeze.

Waffle Flag

Using a waffle as a base, top with small chunks of banana, raspberries and blueberries to resemble a flag with its stars and stripes.

Graham Cracker Flag

Top a graham cracker with ricotta cheese, make stripes with rows of strawberries or raspberries and place blueberries in the upper left corner for stars.

Flag Inspired Fruit & Cheese Plate

Create stripes of red fruit, such as watermelon, strawberries or raspberries, alternated with white cheese, such as feta chunks, string cheese, Monterey jack or white cheddar. Add a square of blueberries in the upper left hand corner.

Fruit Skewers

Set up bowls of blue fruit—blueberries or blackberries,

red fruit—watermelon or strawberries and white fruit—bananas or white nectarines. Let children skewer their own fruit snack.

Fruit Sparkler

Thread blueberries onto a short skewer and use a star cookie cutter to make a watermelon star on the top.

Independence Day Fruit Salad

Use watermelon cookie cutter “stars”, banana slices and blueberries.

Red, White & Blue Salad

Toss quinoa with strawberry slices, blueberries and a citrus dressing.

Cottage Cheese Salad

Make this festive by topping cottage cheese with strawberry slices and blueberries.

Independence Taco Salad

Flavor ground beef or pinto beans with taco seasoning and salsa. Place a layer in a rectangle, top with a layer of shredded lettuce, then stripes made with rows of cherry tomatoes and shredded jack cheese. Ripe olives are the “stars”.

Fruity Ice Cubes

Give drinks some holiday spirit with strawberries and blueberries frozen into ice cubes and served with sparkling water.

Activity Corner

MOVING TO THE BEAT

Moving to the Beat will help children build listening, flexibility, rhythm, spatial awareness and movement vocabulary skills.

Have an adult tap a rhythm on a drum, tambourine or anything that can be struck to create a rhythm. Have children stand in a large circle, and ask them to listen to the rhythm. Have the group clap their hands to the beat. Then ask the children to move their feet to the rhythm, as you tap a steady beat and then vary it by beating faster and slower. Tell the group to:

walk forward, then backward to the rhythm

stomp forward, then backward to the rhythm

Continue adding variations such as, *jump, hop, move sideways* and *tip-toe* to the rhythm. Have them stop whenever the beat stops.

This activity can be adapted for age and ability. It can be made shorter or longer as time allows and it can be played indoors or outside!

— Adapted from: *Nemours, Nutrition and Movement Activity Book*

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Food Funny Q: What vegetable do you need a plumber for?
A: A leek!