



# FRAC: Afterschool Nutrition Programs

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## Model Program

### YMCA Serves Breakfast and Snacks through CACFP

#### YMCA - Long Beach, CA

#### **Program Demographics**

- The YMCA operates three afterschool programs that serve a total of 90 to 130 children each day.
- Approximately 70% of the students qualify for free or reduced-price meals.
- The students range in age from 5 to 12 years old.
- All of the programs are located in low-income urban areas.

#### **Meal Program**

- The YMCA serves breakfast at one of their before school programs, where all YMCA students can be dropped off before school, and afterschool snacks at all three of the afterschool programs through the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

#### **Menus**

- Some of the children's favorite snacks include fresh fruit with yogurt, peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, different types of salads, and cold cereal.
- The students also like any type of snack where they can dip items such as bread sticks and marinara sauce or carrot sticks and low-fat ranch dressing.
- Throughout the year the YMCA has theme weeks and tries to have the snacks and meals mirror the activities that are going on at the program.
- The afterschool programs have set up suggestion boxes so children can tell the staff what type of items they would like to see on the menu.

#### **Process for Meal Service**

- All of the meals and snacks are prepared on-site.
- Every afterschool program has one staff member designated to do the meal counts and make sure that the snacks are served in accordance with all health and safety rules.

#### **Funding and Costs**

- The CACFP reimbursement does not entirely cover the cost of the meal but California requires all licensed childcare centers to serve snacks so the reimbursement helps cover a large portion of the cost of snacks that the YMCA needs to serve.
- The staff members believe that the reimbursement is well worth the time involved in filling out all of the paperwork.

#### **Challenges and Solutions**

- The YMCA has found that one challenge with CACFP is learning to complete all of the paperwork properly and incorporate the correct proportions of food into the menu cycle.
- To address the issues of portion sizes, the staff has created a 3 week snack menu cycle that is repeated, which makes snack preparation easier.
- If a student does not like one of the menu items they take it out and replace it with another component.

## **Response to the Program**

- Staff at the afterschool programs have found that providing students with snacks before they start their homework in the afternoon really helps them concentrate and do better on their work.
- There are some families that need help providing healthy meals to their children. The breakfasts and snacks at the program help parents stretch their food budget.
- Since the students receive breakfast at the before school program, they eat later. There is less time between breakfast and lunch so they do not get as hungry in the morning at school.
- Serving breakfast at the program also helps parents save time in the morning as the family is getting ready.

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