



CHILD CARE WELLNESS TOOL KIT

CACFP BEST PRACTICE

Maryland Child Care Nutrition Guidelines

Overview

One page guidelines were developed by the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) School and Community Nutrition Programs Branch for use by agencies that participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program. The guidelines were modeled after policies developed by the Contra Costa Child Care Council in California. They were disseminated online to agencies to encourage them to adopt the guidelines with the endorsement of MSDE as well as for use as a marketing tool to engage and educate parents and prospective new families.

ABC Child Care Nutrition Guidelines

- Developed by the MSDE School and Community Nutrition Programs Branch. Guidelines were modeled after similar work from the Contra Costa Child Care Council in California.
- One page guidelines are voluntary and come in two different versions:
 - With Infants
 - Without Infants
- Nutrition child care check list includes:
 - ✓ To reduce the amount of unhealthy saturated fat in their diets, we serve only low-fat (1%) or nonfat milk to children after two years of age.
 - ✓ We plan menus to include a variety of healthy foods with emphasis on plenty of whole grain bread and cereals, fresh fruits and vegetables, and protein from both animal and vegetable sources (like beans and nuts).
 - ✓ We serve foods of high nutrient value and limit high-fat, high-sugar, and high-sodium foods (like chips, fried foods, and fruit punch).
 - ✓ We never force, trick, or coerce a child into eating. We provide; they decide. We acknowledge that our role is to provide nourishing food, while the child's role is to decide how much or even whether to eat.
 - ✓ We strive to make mealtime pleasant. Staff sits and eats with the children as often as possible to provide an opportunity for positive social interaction and role modeling.
- Parent engagement statement:
 - As we try to make meals and snacks as nutritious as possible, we ask that you support these policies by leaving all sweets at home, unless special arrangements have been made in advance.

Guideline Distribution and Purpose

The guidelines were sent via an internal memo series on a password protected website for CACFP agencies. The Maryland State Department of Education encourages child care providers to frame the guidelines and/or distribute them to families as a tool to promote their nutrition program and engage parents.

Link to guidelines at:

http://www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/programs/cacfp.html

Future

Extend the guidelines to include family child care homes.

For more information contact:

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