

### Rationale:

ACTIVE play and movement are important for every child's growth, health, development, and learning. Providing an early care and education environment that supports appropriate physical activity for infants helps them with developing movement skills, such as sitting up, rolling over and crawling. During the first six years of life, children will develop gross motor skills (like kicking and throwing) and learn healthy habits by participating in physical activity. Although they may seem to be active and energetic, most children do not get the recommended amount of physical activity they need. Habits are learned early in life, so being active while in an early care and education center can create lifelong physical activity habits. Because the hours spent in an early care and education setting are such a large part of the child's waking hours, it is essential that early care and education curriculum include as much of the total time and type of physical activity children need daily as possible.

Reviewed by: • Ramata Choma, MA - NJ Early Care and Education Learning Collaborative Trainer



# Indoor/Outdoor Play Policy

Children attending {name of Early Care and Education Center} shall engage in active play according to the following recommendations:

- ★ Staff will promote developmentally-appropriate physical activity to help children (and themselves) prevent overweight/obesity and practice lifetime healthful habits.
- ★ Teachers shall lead teacher-directed activities or games that promote moderate to vigorous physical activity over the course of the day, indoors or outdoors.
- ★ Staff will participate in active play or stand near the children during active playtime, instead of sitting on the sidelines.
- ★ Active play will not be withheld from children as a punishment.
- ★ Children will play outdoors except when weather or air quality poses a significant health risk.
- ★ Children will have access to water during outdoor play.
- ★ Staff and parents will be provided with education and professional development regarding physical activity at least twice per year.
- ★ Children need to be dressed appropriately for the current weather conditions to play outdoors:
  - Snow: heavy coat, waterproof boots, hat, and mittens/gloves
  - Rain: raincoat and waterproof boots
  - Different temperature throughout the day: layers of clothing
  - Sunny days: lightweight clothing that is sun protective, including long-sleeved shirts and hats

Footwear should provide support for running and climbing. Examples of appropriate footwear include sneakers, gym shoes, and other shoes with rubber soles that enclose the feet and will not come off easily. Examples of inappropriate clothing and footwear include:

- Footwear that can come off while running, or that does not provide support for climbing (examples: flip-flops and clogs)
- Clothing that can catch on playground equipment (examples: clothes with drawstrings or loops)
- Clothing that does not protect children from the current weather conditions

## Infants (birth to 12 months)

- ★ Babies who are not yet crawling spend 3 to 5 minutes (and more as the infant enjoys the activity) on their tummies interacting with their teachers/caregivers each half day while awake.
- ★ Infants are not placed in restricted equipment for more than 15 minutes at a time, except during meals and napping.
- ★ All infants play outdoors 2 to 3 times daily. Riding in a carriage or stroller may account for no more than 1 of the outdoor play periods for infants.

## Toddlers (12 months to 3 years old) and Preschoolers (3 to 6 years old)

- ★ Toddlers shall participate in 60-90 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity, (prorated for children who attend the program for only part of the day—30 minutes of active play per 2 to 3 hours in the program).
- ★ Preschoolers shall participate in 90-120 minutes per day of moderate to vigorous physical activity.
- ★ Children have *outdoor play* for 60 to 90 minutes per day except in adverse weather conditions that require shorter periods outdoors.



# Family-Style Dining

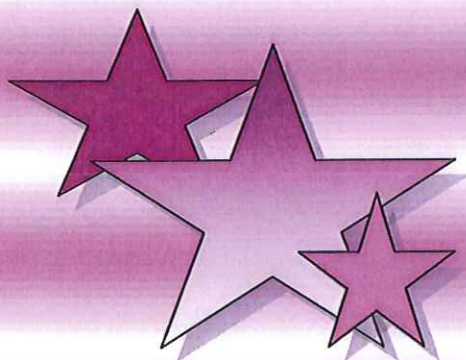


## Rationale:

Family-style meal service is defined as a dining experience when the children and adult staff eat at the table together and the children are allowed to serve themselves from appropriately-sized bowls and pitchers.

Mealtimes provide adults with ideal opportunities to help children adopt positive attitudes toward healthy foods. Family-style dining promotes and supports social, emotional, gross, and fine motor skill development. This type of meal service allows for teachers, caregivers, and children to eat together and create a relaxed atmosphere. Conversation at the table adds to the mealtime environment and provides opportunities for informal modeling of appropriate eating behaviors, communication about eating, and imparting nutrition learning experiences.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) encourages family-style dining as a method for providing nutritious meals in an Early Care and Education (ECE) setting. ECE programs should make every effort to ensure that CACFP meal pattern requirements are fulfilled.



Reviewed by: Kimberly Scarpa, RDN, NJECE Trainer



# Family-Style Dining Policy

{Name of Early Care and Education Center} encourages a supportive mealtime environment by subscribing to the recommendations below for children one year of age and older:

- ★ Food is placed in serving bowls, plates, or baskets; beverages are placed in pitchers on the table.
- ★ Children serve themselves food using child-friendly serving utensils.
- ★ Staff will participate, sit, and interact with children at mealtimes.
- ★ When eating meals with children, the adults should eat the same food as the children whenever possible. If not possible, the adults shall eat items that meet nutrition recommendations.
- ★ Staff will encourage the children to discuss the food texture, taste, color, shape, size, quantity, number, and temperature of food.
- ★ Staff will encourage, but not force, children to try new foods.
- ★ Staff will not use food as a reward or punishment.
- ★ Staff will model family-style practices and appropriate table etiquette for children.
- ★ After the meal, children will participate in an engaging activity while others are finishing up.



## Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding



### Rationale:

Early care and education programs play an important role in providing all infants access to the varied and nutritious foods they need for healthy growth and development during their first year. Human milk is the ideal food for babies. Research overwhelmingly shows that exclusive breastfeeding for six months, and continued breastfeeding for at least a year or longer, dramatically improves health outcomes for children and their mothers. The early care and education program can help working mothers and their infants increase their breastfeeding duration by providing an environment that supports breastfeeding.

Reviewed by: • Kathy Kachur, RD - NJ Early Care and Education Learning Collaborative Trainer  
• Florence Mojta Rotondo, IBCLC, RLC - Breastfeeding Coordinator,  
New Jersey WIC Services  
• Mary Turbek, RN, IBCLC, New Jersey WIC Services  
• Daniel Schober, Ph.D., M.P.H, Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition



# Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding Policy

{Name of Early Care and Education Center} subscribes to the following recommendations for promotion and encouragement of breastfeeding and infant feeding practices:

## Staff Behaviors

- ★ Staff members will encourage and support breastfeeding mothers to continue breastfeeding.
- ★ Caregivers/teachers should feed infants on cue unless the parent/guardian and the child's primary care provider give written instructions otherwise.
- ★ Infants should always be held for bottle feeding.
- ★ Staff members will receive professional development training on promoting and supporting breastfeeding two or more times per year.

## Center Policies

- ★ Breastfeeding mothers will have a clean, welcoming place to breastfeed or express their milk.
- ★ A refrigerator will be made available for the storage of expressed milk.
- ★ No infant is fed the expressed human milk of another infant's mother.
- ★ A mother's milk is for her child only.
- ★ Breastfeeding promotional materials will be displayed to encourage and support breastfeeding mothers. Culturally-appropriate, educational breastfeeding materials will be offered to enrolled families with infants and pregnant women.
- ★ Cow's milk is not fed to children under 1 year of age.
- ★ Formula fed infants, under 1 year of age, drink the formula recommended for them by their health care professionals.
- ★ Formula mixed with cereal, fruit juice, or any other foods will not be served unless written instructions are provided by the child's primary care provider.
- ★ Infants are not permitted to have bottles in the crib and will not be allowed to carry a bottle while standing, walking, or running around.
- ★ A plan to introduce age-appropriate solid foods (complementary foods) to infants will be made in consultation with the child's parent/guardian and primary care provider.



# Worksite Wellness



## Rationale:

Health promotion services for all staff members can improve their eating and physical activity behaviors and their effectiveness in teaching and modeling healthy behaviors. When staff members improve their own personal health and wellness they increase morale, become role models, and build the commitment to promote children and their families' health through a healthy early care and education environment.



Reviewed by: • Corey Wu-Jung, MS, RD - NJ Early Care and Education Learning Collaborative Trainer

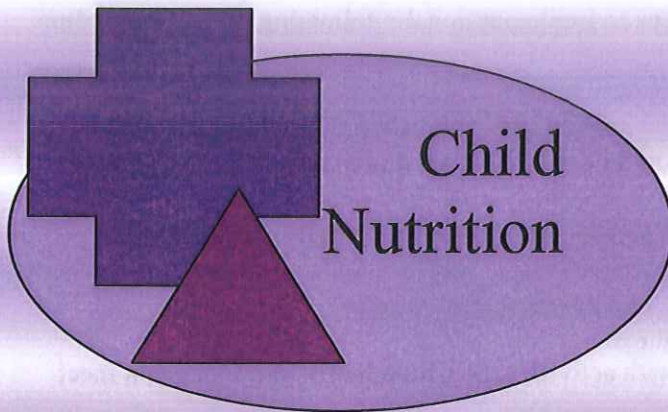


# Worksite Wellness Policy

{Name of early care and education center} supports the health and wellness of all teachers and staff. We are committed to providing a healthy work environment with resources available for staff members to achieve their optimal wellness.

- ★ Nutrition and physical activity education will be provided to all staff members at regular intervals. Education will include topics of importance related to improving health and wellness among staff members.
- ★ Center management will encourage staff members to make healthy choices when possible and will require teachers/staff to model healthy behaviors for children and their families.
- ★ Staff will be required to participate in active play with infants and children.
- ★ Food and drinks, such as fruits, vegetables, and unsweetened beverages, provided at meetings and events will reflect the center's commitment to health.





### Rationale:

One of the core responsibilities of every early care and education center is to provide nourishing food daily that is clean, safe, and developmentally appropriate for children. Current research shows that children need a variety of nutrient-dense foods that include protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, and minerals, with an amount of calories that prevents hunger, fosters healthy growth, supports learning, and prevents obesity. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) regulations on meal requirements provide the basic guidelines for sound nutrition practices and ensure that the nutritional needs of infants and children are met based on current scientific knowledge.



Reviewed by: • Christanne Harrison, MPH, RD - NJ Early Care and Education Learning Collaborative Trainer



# Child Nutrition Policy

{Name of Early Care and Education Center} is committed to implementing the following policies regarding child nutrition:

- ★ All meals and snacks will meet the requirements of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).
- ★ Children in care for 8 or fewer hours in one day should be offered at least one meal and two snacks or two meals and one snack.
- ★ Children in care more than 8 hours in one day should be offered at least two meals and two snacks or three snacks and one meal.
- ★ Children will be allowed time to eat their food and not be rushed during meals.
- ★ Food is not offered as a reward or denied as punishment.
- ★ Special occasions and holidays will be celebrated with activities, non-food items, and foods that meet healthy requirements.

## Foods

- ★ High-fat products (containing >35% of calories from fat), high-sugar products (containing >35% of calories from sugar), and salty foods are avoided.
- ★ Whole-grain breads, pastas, and grains are served when available.
- ★ Developmentally-appropriate servings of protein such as lean meat, skinless poultry, fish, cooked beans or peas, nut butters, eggs, yogurt, or cheese are recommended.
- ★ Staff members will encourage children to try developmentally-appropriate servings of a wide-variety of fruits and vegetables, with no added fat.

## Beverages

- ★ Drinking water is available throughout the day indoors and outdoors.
- ★ Children younger than 12 months do not receive cow's milk unless the child's health care professional gives a written exception and direction to do so.
- ★ Children between 12 and 24 months of age are provided whole milk or reduced fat (2%) milk, unless they are consuming breast milk or a prescribed formula.
- ★ Children 2 years and older are served nonfat (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk.
- ★ Children younger than 12 months do not receive juice.
- ★ Children between 1 and 6 years of age receive no more than a total of 4 to 6 ounces of 100% juice per day, including juice given at home.

## Nutrition Education

- ★ Teachers incorporate planned nutrition education into their classroom routines at least once per week.
- ★ Staff receives professional development on child nutrition at least twice per year.
- ★ Families are offered education on child nutrition two or more times per year.

