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| CFS Child & Family Services Operations Manual | <input type="checkbox"/> Program Information <input type="checkbox"/> Procedure <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy |
| | Document Title: <u>Nutrition Policy</u> |
| | Content Area: _____ |
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| | Other Rec/App. Required: <u>C&FS Health Advisory 4/8/2015</u> Reviewed on: <u>4/10/2015</u> |
| | Regulatory References: <u>CACFP, HS Nutrition, ME DHHS Rules for Licensing of Child Care Facilities</u> |
| | Key Word1: _____ Key Word2: _____ |
| Related Documents: <u>Nutrition & Physical Activity Screen for Infants, Nutrition & Physical Activity Screening for Children Over One Year</u> | |

Policy: Meals and snacks are offered to children in each Child & Family Services (C&FS) Center that:

1. Are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
2. Follow recommended patterns with appropriate accommodations for ages of children and individual dietary needs.
3. Consider the number of hours at the center.
4. Foster cultural or ethnic practices.

To assure that meals and snacks will be presented to children in a way that enables them to learn about and to practice dietary habits that allow them to eat a variety of nutritious foods, C&FS chooses plenty of fruits, vegetables and grains, avoids excessive fat or sodium, and uses sugar in moderation. Meals and snacks must ensure 1/3 of the child's daily nutritional needs in a part-day center-based setting, and 1/2 to 2/3 of the child's daily nutritional needs in a center-based full-day program, depending on length of program day. Additionally, C&FS staff will assure water is offered to children throughout the day and made available to children upon request; however water will not be served to displace a part of a reimbursable Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal component.

Head Start's nutrition services assists families in meeting each child's nutritional needs and in establishing good eating habits that nurture healthy development and promote life-long well-being.

PROCEDURE FOR THE NUTRITION POLICY

Menu and Meal Planning

- Cycle menus of three weeks or longer are planned, as well as reflective of seasonal menu choices.
- Meals are planned so they are appetizing and give consideration to the size of children's appetites, while assuring at a minimum the CACFP guidelines are met. Additional food is prepared in order to accommodate spillage and/or second servings.
- Food served to children includes plenty of fruit, vegetables and whole grain products.
- The addition of fat, sugar, high sodium food and processed foods is minimized.
- For children two years and older, skim or low-fat (1%) fluid milk at meals/snacks is provided, as required by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). For children ages one year to two years, whole fat fluid milk is provided. For infants less than twelve months of age, cow's milk is not served; mothers may supply breast milk or C&FS provides iron-fortified formula. For non-EHS/Head Start enrolled infants, the program has Hannaford's iron-fortified milk based formula as the standard formula available or the parent may choose to provide a different formula. For specific formulas that CACFP requires prescriptions for and to provide formula to a child over the age of one year, the program will obtain documentation from the medical provider. When a formula change is requested by a parent, a prescription and documentation will be requested from the child's physician and must be received from the child's physician prior to the change occurring.
- Menu substitutions are made under appropriate circumstances with required documentation. Fluid milk substitutions must also assure CACFP compliance with the minimum nutritional requirements and

USDA “Approved Fluid Milk Substitutes”. Food allergy substitutions require documentation from child’s physician.

- Nutrition education for children includes opportunities to learn about food. Some activities are integrated with the programs Food Services and incorporated into children’s daily mealtimes. Curriculum planning includes team discussion on use of food for education, considers appropriateness and staff are mindful of not being wasteful.
- Adults receive a child’s food portion for the purpose of role modeling at designated meals and snacks; however, it is not intended to meet nutritional adequacy of adults. Food in the classroom for adults is the same food offered to children at meals/snacks; no adults will bring in food or beverages.
- Menus are reviewed by the Health & Nutrition Manager/Registered Dietitian to assure meals and snacks are nutritionally adequate and consistent with the Dietary Guidelines, CACFP and Head Start Standards.
- There is a system in place for parents and staff to provide input/feedback to menus and to support creative nutrition education programming in the curriculum (i.e. menu feedback forms, Food Service staff to attend parent meetings and plan menus, etc.). Parents and staff are encouraged to provide menu input/feedback to assist with menu ideas and to help inform our program about food quality and meal services provided.

Food Safety and Sanitation

- Food items are prepared in an approved kitchen, where staff assures adherence to food safety and sanitation regulations. Food is purchased through an approved vendor. No food items will be brought in from home or outside the program by adults to consume in the classroom or to provide to children by staff, parents or volunteers.
- Site visits are completed by trained, designated C&FS staff for centers and will assure food handling procedures are safe and food is wholesome and of excellent quality. Menus will minimize processed/high fat/high sodium foods and are reflective of Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

Physical and Emotional Environment

- Meals are served family style to promote independence in food choices. The required quantity of food items/beverages to meet CACFP meal components are available at the table/meal setting, as required by CACFP. Breakfast is available to all children; however, for children who have already had breakfast, or who do not wish to eat, may choose an alternate activity.
- Staff and volunteers serve as role models for children facilitating a positive emotional climate. Staff participate in the meal/snack and try foods.
- Duration of breakfast and lunch allows a minimum of one-half hour for children to eat and fifteen minutes for snack. Children who need extra time are accommodated. Mealtime distractions should be kept to a minimum, including encouraging parents not to arrive during a meal for pick-up. Mealtimes are consistent/predictable to assist with establishing routines, while recognizing infants are fed on demand. Food is not used as punishment or reward, and that each child is encouraged, but not forced, to eat or taste his or her food.
- Conversation at mealtime includes, but is not limited to, food and nutrition.
- Furniture and eating utensils are age appropriate and developmentally suitable.

Food for Meetings and Special Events/Celebrations

- Meals for special events/celebrations, including field trips, shall also meet the same standards as meals/snacks eaten at the centers.
- Food for meetings related to C&FS are planned to be reflective of C&FS Nutrition Policy and assure healthy choices are available; refer to Food for Meetings Program Information Document.

Nutrition Education

- Refer to Food for Education Guidelines for using food for the purpose of education.
- Staff are supplied with nutrition education resources for children and families, receive annual nutrition training required by CACFP as applicable, and are informed about: the basic principles of child nutrition, strategies for creating a mealtime environment that promotes the development of good eating habits and the importance of their role as a model for the children to follow in acquiring healthful behavior. Parent opportunities to participate in or receive nutrition education include the basic principles of child nutrition, strategies for extending creative food experiences from the child's program to the home, education for specific family – related issues and/or education specified by parents or staff. Parent nutrition education opportunities are provided through a variety of ways including: Newsletters, Workshops, Cooperative Extension, WIC Program...
- For parents of children participating in programs whose meals are provided by public school, the program has copies of the menus available. Parents and staff may invite Food Service Staff to attend Parent Meetings and are provided opportunities to share nutrition education.
- Parent nutrition education opportunities include information about USDA meal programs, Food Service programs and best practices pertaining to nutrition recommendations.
- C&FS Health & Nutrition Manager is available to provide support to families and staff for children's nutrition screenings, nutrition education resources, workshops and for individual education and counseling related to nutrition.

Nutrition Screening & Assessment

- Qualified C&FS staff provide nutrition screenings (height, weight, and diet) for Head Start, Early Head Start and Childcare children.
- If nutrition related concerns are present at the time of screening, or by request of staff and/or family, C&FS Health & Nutrition Manager is available for assessment and follow-up including consultation as a Dietitian.