important updates for success and more resources from the child care healthy food program

March 2016

Dear Child Care Provider,

Similar to many other aspects of child development, teaching healthy habits about food and hydration are important for the children in your care. In this issue of Tasty Times, we will discuss the importance of making the right choice with meat-based proteins. We will also discuss how important water is to the body, and how to encourage children to make drinking water part of their daily routine.

—John R. Gadient RD, LDN, Supervisor

Go Lean with Protein

For many people, meat is an essential part of their diet, and a meal is not complete without it. Meat offers health benefits such as: protein, iron and B vitamins (which help create energy for your body). Although meat offers health benefits, some types of meat can be a significant source of saturated fat. This is the kind of fat that is linked to heart disease and high cholesterol.

The American Heart Association encourages selecting lean meats over cuts with more fat. Which meats qualify as lean? A good way to remember is this handy rhyme:

 demean

Dear Child Care Provider,

Similar to many other aspects of child development, teaching healthy habits about food and hydration are important for the children in your care. In this issue of Tasty Times, we will discuss the importance of making the right choice with meat-based proteins. We will also discuss how important water is to the body, and how to encourage children to make drinking water part of their daily routine.

—John R. Gadient RD, LDN, Supervisor

Go Lean with Protein

For many people, meat is an essential part of their diet, and a meal is not complete without it. Meat offers health benefits such as: protein, iron and B vitamins (which help create energy for your body). Although meat offers health benefits, some types of meat can be a significant source of saturated fat. This is the kind of fat that is linked to heart disease and high cholesterol.

The American Heart Association encourages selecting lean meats over cuts with more fat. Which meats qualify as lean? A good way to remember is this handy rhyme:

The less feet, the leaner the meat!

Fish: no feet = very lean!

Chicken and turkey: 2 feet = lean

Pigs, cows and lamb: 4 feet = not lean

Sometimes beef, pork or lamb will be on the menu, and eating them in moderation is the key to healthy diet.

Lean Pork and Beef

Beef
• round steak
• roast
• top loin
• top sirloin
• chuck shoulder
• “lean” or “extra lean” ground beef

Pork
• pork loin
• tenderloin
• center loin
• ham

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, religious creed, disability, age, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA. Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English. To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by: mail to U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; fax: (202) 690-7442; or email: program.intake@usda.gov. This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Water Whenever

Getting enough water every day is important for maintaining general health. The reason we become thirsty is because our body recognizes that we do not have enough fluids and we need to replenish them. Though water is in most of the food we eat and drink, research indicates that more than half of the nation’s children and adolescents do not drink enough water throughout the day.

A recent study by Harvard’s School of Public Health found that nearly a quarter of the children in the study reported drinking no clear water at all. When the body does not get adequate fluids, it puts other systems at risk as well. Being well-hydrated helps lubricate and cushion joints, helps protect the spinal cord and other sensitive tissues, and helps the body remove waste products.

Continued
Water Whenever (continued)

This becomes an even greater concern when the body has an increased need for water while engaging in physical activity or in warmer climates.

Having water accessible for children to drink all day is not only a good idea; it is also a USDA requirement to participate in the food program. Although water cannot be recorded on a menu for reimbursement, it should be available to accompany all snacks or meals.

Tips to make sure children drink water throughout the day:

- Make water accessible at any time throughout the day. Create a water station with a pitcher of cold water. Removing barriers will encourage the children to drink whenever they feel they need it.
- Make it available with every meal. While water is not a reimbursable food item, giving the children a cup of water with every meal and snack will help them establish healthy habits.
- Only offer water at snack times (no juice) and serve it with a vegetable/fruit and grain or serve it with cheese and whole wheat crackers for a snack.
- Make it fun. Give the children unique cups for their water to give the appearance of a special occasion.
- Add some natural flavor to encourage them. A slice of lemon, lime or even cucumber can add just a little flavor to the water without adding any calories. It can be useful to encourage the children who don’t like it.
- Explain the importance of water.

Water helps “flush out the system,” and is crucial in preventing the body from overheating. Drinking water is great for the children because it not only helps with hydration, but it also means they might prefer drinking it over other beverages with calories. This helps maintain body weight later on in life. So get them started in the habit of hydration!

The Healthy Food Program Has a New Phone System!

Now you only need to call one number to reach the Healthy Food Program.

Call 773-564-8861 and follow the prompts to report being out of home, check your payment or leave a general message in English or Spanish!

‘Out of School Days’

Tell us when the children are out of school. It is important to either state on your CIF (Claim Information Form) or enter into the computer school days off in your calendar. You will not get reimbursed for children in your care for “out of school days” if you don’t provide that information.

Submit Menus

DO NOT bend, fold or staple your menus. Stained menus cannot be processed.

It is important to send in your menus flat so that they can be read properly and ensure you do not lose money!

Welcome New Providers

Shirley Brown
Tabia Brown
Ericka Carter
Martha Flores
Annette Johnson
Courtney Norwood
Brianna Shields
Dianna Skafi-Adams
Angela Tucker

Illinois Action for Children, 4753 N. Broadway, Suite 1200, Chicago, IL 60640
main: 312-823-1100
direct: 773-564-8861
fax: 773-564-8721
web: www.actforchildren.org

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.