February 2017

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

Dear Child Care Provider,

On October 1, 2017, the new USDA meal pattern developed over a number of years by nutrition experts and food program sponsors will take effect. The new meal pattern is designed to improve nutrition standards for children in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and has also been modified with child care providers in mind, so that the changes do not increase the difficulty of staying in compliance.

One of the major changes for lunch and dinner meals will be no longer serving two pieces of fruit together to fulfill the fruit/vegetable requirement. The new meal pattern requires providers to serve a fruit and a vegetable, or two vegetables to fulfill the fruit/vegetable requirement. This is to assure that children receive an adequate amount of vitamins and minerals.

We hope this issue of Tasty Times will be helpful when revising your meals and menus to prepare for the new meal pattern.

—John R. Gadient, RD/LDN, Supervisor

CACFP Meal Pattern Changes

Why having both fruits and vegetables are important

No single fruit or vegetable provides all of the nutrients children need to be healthy. Eating both fruits and vegetables at meals gives children the complete nutrition they need daily. Eating only one or the other can lead to the child missing some key nutrients. Both fruit and vegetables provide Vitamin B6, Vitamin C, fiber, folate, potassium, some calcium and iron; but these nutrients are more commonly found in vegetables than in fruit. Vegetables also contain nutrients that fruit does not have like magnesium, chromium, Vitamin A, Vitamin B7, and Vitamin K. However, fruit does not contain any salt whereas vegetables have a small amount. By eating both fruit and vegetables at mealtime children will learn healthy eating habits for a lifetime.

How to make these changes

Since fruit is naturally sweet, desserts can be replaced by adding more fruit into meals. Think of them as nature’s candy! Fruit and vegetables are naturally low in calories and sodium and high in fiber, which will help children stay full longer while not increasing their risk of becoming overweight or obese. Fruit and vegetables are also a good substitute for “junk foods.” Child care providers can also set a good example for the children by eating vegetables with meals and as snacks every day.

Sample lunches/dinners with both fruits and vegetables

Below are changes you can make to lunch and dinner meals to add both fruits and vegetables:

1. Tuna Sandwich
   Rye bread
   Fries ☺ Baby carrots
   Corn ☺ Grapefruit
   Milk

2. Turkey
   Whole wheat tortilla
   Strawberry
   Orange ☺ Spinach leaves
   Milk

3. Meatballs
   Small roll
   Mashed potatoes ☺ Grapes
   String beans
   Milk

4. Chicken
   Garlic bread
   Lettuce
   Carrots ☺ Blueberries
   Milk

Remember, January claims are due in our office by February 6th! Warning! Late claims WILL result in late payment!

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Healthy Food Program Number
For the Out of Home voicemail, payment information or to speak to a customer service representative:
Call: (773) 564-8861

Tips on Using Paper Scan Menus
Please pay attention using paper scan menus or you may lose reimbursement:
• You must sign each sheet that is being submitted for reimbursement.
• Be sure not to write in the area of the menu shaded blue.
• Stay within the space given to write the type of food served.
• Do not fold scan forms.

Welcome New Providers
Lateshia Bass
Sylvia Bond Robinson
Miya Bowers
Cecily Bursey
Lolita Coats
Allen Crittle
Darlene Davis
Catalina Herrera
Kimberly Isaacs
Carmen McWillis-McGhee
Fredonia Metzler
Rochelle Oliver-Thompson
Danielle Timmons

CACFP Meal Pattern Changes  Continued

Ways to eat more vegetables:
• Buy fresh vegetables in season when they may be less expensive and at their peak flavor.
• Stock up on frozen vegetables for quick and easy cooking in the microwave.
• Buy vegetables that are easy to prepare such as pre-washed bags of salad greens, baby carrots, grape tomatoes, and celery sticks.
• Vary your vegetable choices to keep meals interesting.
• Try crunchy vegetables, raw or lightly steamed.
• Plan some meals around a vegetable main dish, such as a vegetable stir-fry or soup.
• Keep chopped vegetables like carrots, celery sticks, green pepper strips, broccoli florets, or cucumber slices in see-through containers in the refrigerator for afternoon snacks.
• Depending on their age, children can help shop for, clean, peel, or chop vegetables.
• Children often prefer foods served separately, so, rather than mixed vegetables try serving two vegetables separately.

Ways to eat more fruit:
• Buy fruit in season.
• Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table, counter, or in the refrigerator.
• Refrigerate chopped fruit in a see-through container.
• Add fruit to coleslaws like crushed pineapple, or add them salads like apples, orange, grapes, and berries.
• Make fresh fruit salads using a mix of apples, bananas, or pears with acidic fruits like oranges, pineapple. Add lemon juice to keep the fruit from turning brown.
• At breakfast try topping cereal, pancakes, or yogurt with fruit.
• Try meat dishes that incorporate fruit, such as chicken with apricots or mangoes.
• Have children try and describe different color, textures and smell of fruits.