

## **Sample Nutrition Policy for Early Childhood Education Centers**

In an effort to provide the best possible nutrition for the children in our facility, we have adopted the policies as listed below. As advised by Nemours Health and Prevention Services, children are provided with an environment that encourages and teaches healthy food and drink habits.

### **Fruits and Vegetables**

- We offer fruit to children at least 2 times a day.
- We only offer fruit canned in its own juice (no syrups), fresh, or frozen.
- We offer vegetables to children at least 2 times a day.
- We only offer vegetables steamed, boiled, roasted, or lightly stir-fried with little added fat.

### **Meats, Fats, and Grains**

- We never offer fried or pre-fried (frozen and breaded) meats (chicken nuggets) or fish (fish sticks).
- We never offer fried or pre-fried potatoes (French fries, tater tots, hash browns).
- We offer high fat meats like sausage, bacon, hot dogs, or bologna less than once a week.
- We offer beans or lean meats at least once a day.
- We offer high fiber, whole grain foods at least 2X a day.

### **Added Sugar and Salt**

- We follow the American Heart Association's recommendations for daily added sugar and salt servings. For children over the age of 2:
  - o No more than 25 grams of added sugar daily, and
  - o No more than 2,300 grams of salt.
- We make an effort to limit the serving of foods with added sugars and salts.

### **Beverages**

- We make drinking water a priority for children. It is freely available so children can serve themselves both inside and outdoors.
- We almost never offer sweetened drinks other than 100% juice.

- We offer no more than one serving of 100% fruit or vegetable juice per day (1/2 cup for breakfast or ¼ cup for lunch or supper)
- We serve only 1% or skim milk to children age 2 or older.
- We do not have soda or other vending machines on site.

### **Menus and Variety**

- We have 3 week (or greater) cycle menu that allows for seasonal changes.
- Our menus include healthy items from a variety of cultures.
- Our menus include a combination of new and familiar foods.

### **Feeding Practices**

- Our staff help children determine if they are full before removing their plate.
- Our staff help children determine if they are still hungry before serving additional food.
- Our staff gently and positively encourage children to try a new or less favorite food.
- We do not use food to encourage positive behavior.

### **Foods Offered Outside of Regular Meals and Snacks**

- We provide and enforce written guidelines for healthier food brought in and served for holidays and celebrations (see below).
- We celebrate holidays with mostly healthy foods or non-food treats.
- Our fundraising efforts consist of selling non-food items only.

### **Supporting Healthy Eating**

- Our staff join children at the table for meal times.
- We always serve meals family style.
- Our staff always consume the same food and drink as the children.
- Our staff never eat unhealthy foods in front of the children.
- Posters, pictures, and books are displayed to provide visible support for good nutrition in classrooms and common areas
- Our staff often talk informally with the children about trying and enjoying healthy foods.

## **Infant Nutrition**

- We recommend that babies from birth through 5 months are fed breast milk exclusively and that infants be breastfed until they are at least 12 months of age.

### **Support for Nursing Mothers**

- We provide a private, clean and comfortable place (that is not a bathroom) for mothers to breastfeed or express milk. Mothers are also welcome to breastfeed in classrooms or other public spaces.
- Visual support of breastfeeding families are displayed in the center.
- We connect families with community support, if they desire it.
- Timing feedings to accommodate breastfeeding mothers. For example, if they want to breastfeed baby at pick-up, we will not offer a bottle directly beforehand.

### **Infant Feeding Practices**

- Babies are feed according to hunger and fullness cues as well as a feeding schedule if needed.
- We do not supplement with formula or solid foods without parental permission.
- We offer refrigerator storage of breast milk and ensure that each child's bottles are labeled with his/ her name, the date, and the contents of the container.
- Staff are trained to appropriately handle and store breast milk and infant formula.

### **Developmentally Appropriate Nutrition**

- Birth to 5 months: breast milk (preferred), or iron-fortified infant formula
- 6 months to 11 months: breast milk (preferred), or iron-fortified infant formula with a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats (or meat alternatives) offered as complementary foods when the infant shows signs that they are developmentally ready.

## **Nutrition Education for Staff, Children, and Parents**

- We provide teacher-directed nutrition education to the children, through a standardized curriculum, 1X per week or more.

### Staff Training

- Information on the nutrition policy is included in the staff orientation.
- Training opportunities for staff on nutrition (other than food safety and food program guidelines) are offered at least once a year.

### Parent Communication

- We communicate regularly with parents and provide information and advice on child nutrition, obesity prevention, healthy food and drink habits, and healthy recipes to try at home. For example newsletters, orientation days, information sessions and informal discussions.
- We offer nutrition education to parents 2X per year or more.

### Child and Adult Care Food Program

- We are enrolled in the USDA’s Child and Adult Care Food Program

<b>Human Milk Storage Guidelines</b>			
<b>Storage Locations and Temperatures</b>			
<b>Type of Breast Milk</b>	<b>Countertop</b> 77°F or colder (25°C) (room temperature)	<b>Refrigerator</b> 40°F (4°C)	<b>Freezer</b> 0°F or colder (-18°C)
<b>Freshly Expressed or Pumped</b>	Up to <b>4 hours</b>	Up to <b>4 days</b>	Within <b>6 months</b> is best Up to <b>12 months</b> is acceptable
<b>Thawed, Previously Frozen</b>	<b>1-2 hours</b>	Up to <b>1 day</b> (24 hours)	<b>Never</b> refreeze human milk after it has been thawed
<b>Left Over from a Feeding (baby did not finish the bottle)</b>	Use within <b>2 hours</b> after the baby is finished feeding		

Adapted from "[ABM Clinical Protocol #8: Human Milk Storage Information for Home Use for Full-Term Infants,](#) Revised 2017.

Adapted from both “Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies” by the NAP SACC Program, Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, NC, May 2007; and, “Best Practices for Healthy Eating” by the Nemours Foundation, 2016.