



CHILD CARE NUTRITION & PHYSICAL ACTIVITY POLICY

Obesity rates among American infants, toddlers and young children have risen along with rates among school-aged children. Over the past four decades, obesity rates among pre-school children ages 2 to 5 have nearly quintupled, from 4 to 19 percent.

At the same time, the number of young children receiving care in child-care settings has increased. At least 60 percent of infants and children up to age 5 currently spend an average of 29 hours each week in some form of child care setting.

Child care centers and family child care homes serve an important role in helping young children develop good eating and physical activity habits.

_____ cares about the health of the children that we serve. In an effort to improve the health of the children that we serve, we are implementing the following nutrition and physical activity policies in our child care center.

Physical Activity

Screen Time Limitations

- a) Children younger than 3 years will not have any screen time (TV viewing, video games, computer time, etc.).
- b) Children over the age of 3 years will be limited to no more than 60 minutes per day of screen time (TV viewing, video games, computer time, etc.). Programs will be educational in nature or actively engage the child(ren) in movement.

Physical Activity Standards

- a) Caregivers will interact with infants in daily physical activities that encourage active exploration of the infants' environment.
- b) Children will engage in at least 60 minutes of structured/unstructured physical activity daily. Structured physical activity time will utilize evidence-based curriculum, such as "Color Me Healthy" and others, on a regular basis.
- c) Withholding physical activity time will not be used as a form of discipline.
- d) Children will not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping.



Nutrition

Beverages

- a) Drinking water will be freely available for children to serve themselves throughout the day.
- b) Only skim or 1 percent milk (plain or flavored) will be served to children older than 2 years.
- c) Juice will be limited to a total of 4-6 oz. or less per day for children, and only 100 percent juice will be served.

Mealtime Environment

- a) High-calorie, low nutrition foods (cakes, cookies, chips, candy, frozen treats and other sweets) will be served infrequently, if at all.
- b) Whenever possible, staff members will dine with the children to encourage them to eat a variety of food and observe table manners.
- c) Food will not be used as a basis for discipline, reward or incentive.
- d) Children will be encouraged, but never forced, to eat.

Special Occasions

- a) For special celebrations and birthdays we will encourage parents to provide healthier options like fruits and vegetables or low-fat baked goods instead of sugary treats.

Adherence

_____ staff will receive information and training on the new policy to which they will be expected to adhere. Parents of children will also be informed of the new policy.

Effective Date

This policy will be in full effect as of _____.