



Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES








Here's Why...

Exposing children to different types of foods helps them learn to enjoy new things. The child care setting presents a perfect opportunity to challenge children's taste buds.

The CACFP guidelines offer many good suggestions for meal planning. While 100% fruit juice is presented as an alternative to whole fruit, it contains more sugar and doesn't have the fiber that whole fruit does. Try adding fruits and vegetables to all meals and snacks. They are an important part of a child's diet, offering necessary vitamins and minerals to support healthy growth.



Choices You Make for Your Facility

-  Take advantage of fresh fruits and vegetables in season when they are abundant and inexpensive.
-  Try some innovative ways to serve fruits and vegetables. Slice and freeze seedless grapes or bananas for a new taste treat. Serve raw veggies with low-fat dip or hummus.
-  Be careful when cooking frozen and canned vegetables. Overcooking results in a mushy texture and dull color.
-  Serve vegetables that aren't cooked with fat, and hold the cheese and cream sauces!
-  Purchase canned or frozen fruits and vegetables when they are out of season to save money. Buy no salt/sugar added varieties if possible; if not, rinse canned fruits and vegetables to wash away added salt or sugar.
-  Serve 100% fruit juice occasionally and not in place of whole fruit or vegetables.
-  Use herbs to spice up vegetables instead of salt and butter.

Checklist

- We offer fruit two or more times each day for full-time facilities.
- We offer fruit canned in its own juice (no syrups), fresh or frozen.
- We offer vegetables two or more times each day for full-time facilities.
- We offer vegetables steamed, boiled, or roasted without added meat fat, butter or margarine.
- We offer a variety of fruits and vegetables, taking advantage of a rainbow of colors.



Getting Support From the Parents

- 🍓 Encourage parents to bring in fruits and vegetables for snacks and birthdays.
- 🍓 Send home recipes for fruit or vegetable snacks that children make at the center.
- 🍓 Have a fruit or vegetable taste test for the parents at pick-up time.



For more information, please visit:

<http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/>

http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/fv_galore.html

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Getting the Kids on Board

- 🍓 Serve fruits and vegetables regularly. Have a new fruit or vegetable tasting party by offering unusual fruits or vegetables like kiwi or sweet red pepper.
- 🍓 Have a theme week by color or letter and incorporate a fruit and a vegetable that match, talk about it, show pictures, show the item, and then taste test it! For “orange”, you could do oranges and carrots.
- 🍓 Many children are more likely to eat vegetables raw, like carrots, sweet peppers, snow peas, and even turnips.
- 🍓 Serve brightly colored fruits and vegetables to make them more appealing to children.
- 🍓 Let children create their own fruit or vegetable snack.
- 🍓 Plant a garden outside or in the classroom. It can be as simple as growing a tomato plant in a pot. Talk to young children about where food comes from.

