

To: Child Care Centers, Family Day Care Homes, At-risk sites, Homeless, and Adult Care Centers.  
From: Beth Wetherbee, Education Specialist, CACFP  
Re: Policy Changes in Food Selection  
Date: June 1, 2008

In Delaware, approximately 37% of children are obese or overweight. Promoting healthier food options is an important step to help reduce the prevalence of obesity and promote healthier lifestyles for children. Children who are given healthy food options during early childhood are more likely to continue healthy eating habits when they are older. The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) plays an important part in introducing children to healthy food, by both providing nutritious food and teaching children how to make healthy food choices.

To help child care centers, after-school programs, and family day care homes provide healthier options, the Delaware CACFP, in partnership with Nemours Health and Prevention Services (NHPS), developed and implemented a year long program. This program led to new, more restrictive 'food requirements' that will affect children not only in the CACFP, but in all licensed care programs (The Delaware Office of Child Care Licensing defers to the CACFP for nutrition requirements in their regulation).

In September 2007, with the CACFP, NHPS developed a user-friendly guide, Best Practices for Healthy Eating: A Guide to Help Children Grow Up Healthy, and provided technical assistance and training to all CACFP sponsors.

This guide and training included:

- Healthy food guidelines for beverages, fruits and vegetables, milk, meats and meat alternates, and grains and breads.
- Information and pictures of portion sizes that are based on the CACFP reimbursable meal guidelines.
- Rationale to explain the recommendations.
- Sample policies that providers could use in their program and with families to support their work.
- Healthy celebration guides, sample menus and cost analysis

Collaboration with child care centers and family day care home sponsors and 'non- CACFP' licensed child care providers by obtaining feedback on the training and healthy eating guide throughout the fall of 2007. Incorporating their input, new, more restrictive CACFP 'food requirements' for all licensed children in DE

child care settings were created. The new CACFP Food Pattern requirements will be effective 7/1/2008 and to be fully implemented by 12/31/2008.

You will receive additional training and resources in July and August, 2008 during your Annual CACFP Manadory Training. I would like to thank all of you for your participation this past year and your continued support and commitment to making a difference in the lives of children and making "Delaware kids the healthiest in the nation"

## **DE CACFP Food Policy Changes effective July 1, 2008**

### **Infants:**

#### **Juice:**

No juice for infants under 12 months of age.

#### **Grains:**

All grain products must be  $\leq$ 6 grams of sugar. Whole grains are highly encouraged.

#### **Meat/Meat Alternative:**

Only real cheese may be served no cheese product or cheese food (Policy FFY'05).

### **Children and Adults:**

#### **Milk:**

Children 1-2 years of age: whole milk

Children over 2 and Adults: 1% or fat-free milk

#### **Juice:**

No more than 1 serving/day of 100% juice may be served to children (1-18years).

Non-100% juice (juice drink or cocktail) is not allowed.

#### **Grains:**

A whole grain product must be served at least 1x per day where a whole grain is listed as the first ingredient (e.g. grains, pastas, cereal, breads, rice, etc.).

All grain products (inc. cereals) must be  $\leq$ 6 grams of sugar.

Sweet grains/baked goods (e.g. cookies, cakes, donuts, Danishes, etc.) may only be served once/cycle (1X in 2-week) for snack. Though, it is highly recommended not serving at all.

#### **Meat/Meat Alternative:**

Processed meats (e.g. hot dogs, sausage, baloney etc.) shall be used only 1 time per cycle (1 X in 2-week). Though, it is highly recommended not serving at all.

No baked pre-fried or fried food items shall be allowed (e.g. chicken nuggets, fish sticks) unless 35% total fat rule applies (see Best Practices Guide for Healthy Eating). Though, it is highly recommended not serving at all.

\* Only real cheese may be served no cheese product or cheese food (Policy FFY'05).

#### **Fruits/Vegetables:**

No baked pre-fried or fried fruits and vegetables (e.g. French fries and tater tots) will be allowed unless 35% total fat rule applies (see Best Practices Guide for Healthy Eating). Though, it is highly recommended not serving at all.