

Choose Health LA



Child Care Newsletter

A healthy life starts with you



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First 5 LA through the Los Angeles County
Department of Public Health

Establish Healthy Eating Habits

A healthy life starts with you

Choose Health LA Child Care

is designed to improve the nutrition and physical activity environment in child care settings to support the healthy growth and development of children.

This countywide project will offer free workshops for child care providers from all types of settings (centers, family child care homes, license-exempt), events for parents and children, and information and tools for all.



Recommended Practices:

- **Be a positive example** – eat fruits, vegetables and whole grains at every snack and meal. Talk about how much you love what you’re eating and how yummy it is. Try new foods yourself and offer new foods at the beginning of the meal when everyone is hungry. Avoid lecturing or forcing children to eat.
- **Get creative in the kitchen** – kids love to help so why not let them? Give them things to measure, things to chop with plastic ware, things to mix and things to CLEAN! Decorating aprons and kitchen gloves and fun shaped sponges make clean up time a little more creative.
- **Offer the same foods to everyone** – stop being a “personal chef” by making different dishes to please each meal guest. It is easier, healthier and more cost effective to plan meals that encourage everyone to eat the same foods. Also, eat family-style. Everyone should sit at the table and eat the same food together.
- **Reinforce with attention, not food** – show your love with affection. Offering sweets as a reward or as comfort send kids the wrong message. It lets them think that sweets or dessert foods are better than other foods. Shower them with hugs and kisses instead of candy and chips.



- **Quit the “Clean Plate Club”** – kids will tell you with words or their bodies when they’re full. Forcing them to finish what’s on their plate will teach them to ignore what their bodies are telling them.
- **Limit fried foods and processed meats** – fried foods (such as fries, fish sticks, and chicken tenders or nuggets) and processed meats (bologna, sausage, or spam) are high in total and saturated fat and salt. Cut out these items completely, or serve no more than once a month active.

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Handling a Choosy Eater!



“Choosy” eating is a sign that a child is growing up and showing her independence. Instead of viewing a dining table “no” as a challenge, think about it as a first step in learning how to make decisions. Relax and learn to avoid the conflict. What may appear to be “choosy” may really be a smaller appetite. Preschoolers grow and develop at a slower rate than toddlers. If left alone, most children will grow into a larger appetite when their body requires more energy.

10 Ways to Avoid the “Food Fight”

1. Treat food “jags” casually since they usually don’t last long.
2. Consider what a child eats over several days not just an individual meal.
3. Trust the child’s appetite rather than forcing them to eat everything on the plate. Forcing a child to eat may encourage overeating.
4. Set reasonable time limits for the duration of the meal then clean up. What is reasonable, though, depends on each individual child.
5. Stay positive and avoid criticism. Children believe what you say, including when you call them a “picky” eater.
6. Respect the “no foods touching” rule if that’s important to your child.
7. Avoid being a short order cook by offering the same food at the same time for everyone at the table. Plan, if possible, at least one food that you know everyone will eat without complaint. Balance is the key.
8. Substitute a similar food to avoid the fight – offer sweet potatoes instead of squash, or broccoli instead of peas.
9. Provide just two or three choices at meal times and let the child decide.
10. Focus on the child’s positive eating behavior, not on the food.

Recognizing Food Allergies

True food allergies in children only affect about 4-8% of young children. And, fortunately, most younger children will outgrow these food allergies by the time they are three years old. If you notice that your child develops symptoms after being exposed to certain foods, then you should avoid those foods. Common food allergies include cow’s milk, eggs, soybean, wheat, peanuts, shellfish, and tree nuts. Remember that your child may be allergic to a food that he has eaten many times before without problems.



Symptoms of a food allergy can include:

- Wheezing and difficulty breathing
- Swelling around the mouth
- Itchy skin rash, including hives
- Vomiting, diarrhea, nausea and abdominal pain
- Swelling in the throat

These symptoms usually develop quickly after a child ingests a food they are allergic to, often within minutes. Nasal symptoms by themselves, such as congestion or a runny nose, are usually not caused by food allergies. Symptoms may be mild or very severe, depending how much of the food the child ingested and how allergic he is. More common than food allergies are food intolerances to certain foods which can also cause vomiting, diarrhea, spitting up and rashes. An example of such a reaction occurs in children with lactose intolerance. If you have concerns or questions regarding food allergies, contact your pediatrician, allergist or other licensed healthcare professional.

California's Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

CACFP is a federal nutrition program that provides reimbursement for healthy meals and snacks served to children and adults in child care centers, child care home, at risk after school care centers, emergency shelters and adult day care centers.

What are the benefits of participating?

- Gives you the opportunity to provide more nutritious meals and snacks
- Promote healthy eating habits and physical activity
- Receive training online and in person
- Have more money to spend on other parts of your program
- Submit claims and applications online

What are the basic requirements to participate?

- Complete annual training
- Serve food that meets the requirements of the CACFP meal pattern
- Keep records for food served, meal counts, attendance, and program costs

The USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.



To learn more about the program, call (916) 327-2991 or visit the website <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/nu>.



Eat Well, Spend Less

Like everyone else, you want to prepare the highest quality food on a shoestring budget. For child care providers, explore the Farm to Child Care program, pick at local farms or join a Community Supported Agriculture Program.

Here are a few tips everyone can use to eat well for less!

1. **Know your budget** before you head out on your weekly shopping trip to determine what you're really spending. Look at your grocery list and, using past receipts, write down what each item costs on average. That's your starting point. Then, take inventory of what you have on hand (especially perishables not used the previous week) and review the newspaper and online sales and coupons before you go.
2. **Comparison shopping** is important and worth your time. You don't need to go to five different stores looking for the lowest price but consider buying generic or store brand foods as opposed to name brand. Also, seasonal fruits and vegetables not only taste better but usually cost less.
3. **Plan your meals for the entire week** – breakfast, lunch, dinner and healthy snacks. Write your list, stick to it, and don't shop hungry. Prepackaged snacks and meals are tempting when you are in a hurry but they also tend to cost more per serving and often have added sodium and other unhealthy preservatives. Another thought to keep in mind; precut vegetables like celery, carrots, apple slices, etc. appear convenient but often cost up to \$2 more per item. Remember to let children help with simple snack and meal preparation!
4. **Join a warehouse store** – most big warehouse stores now have organic food sections where you can find great bargains. For a relatively low yearly fee, club members find deals by buying several weeks' worth of groceries at a time. This is a great way to buy dried beans, grains, rolled oats, rice and spices in bulk. You can measure out and buy exactly what you need as you need it.
5. **Grow your own food** – you don't need a big yard or really any yard at all to grow fresh herbs like cilantro, basil, and parsley. Tomatoes and beans are easy to grow on a porch, balcony or patio and don't take up much space.



Making Veggies Fun To Eat!

Vegetables are rich in vitamins and minerals. They play an important role in children's growth. They are also rich in fiber which is good for healthy digestion. Remember to offer children water to drink with snacks and lowfat or nonfat milk to drink with meals.

The following are some suggestions on how to help your child eat more veggies:



1. Have veggies on your table ready to eat so that when kids come home from school hungry they can eat them.

Try It!: Wash vegetables, even organic vegetables, with a little bit of vinegar and water to make sure they are safe to eat. Cut them into small pieces and keep in a clear plastic container so they are visible.

2. Use Positive Language to encourage children to try vegetables.

- Use descriptive words like tangy, juicy, tart, sweet, or crunchy.
- Compare the new food to another food they already like.
- Use fun names like “Dinosaur Leaves” for spinach or “Fairy Wands” for carrot sticks.
- Praise them for small nibbles and tastes.
- Explain to them that they are helping their bodies to jump, run and play better because they are eating good fuel.

Try It!: Serve “magic wands”, celery sticks with apple slices cut into a star shape at the top.

3. Arrange your vegetables creatively, or use cookie cutters to transform the shape into something they love, like hearts, stars, even ninjas! Kids are drawn to colorful dishes that look interesting.

Try It!: Create a veggie body with carrot sticks for the arms and legs, round slices of cucumber for the head and body, and broccoli for the hair.

4. Accompany veggies with peanut butter, low fat yogurt, hummus, or bean dip.

Try It!: Try offering broccoli or cauliflower trees with peanut butter and or yogurt.

5. Be patient with your child if he/she is not interested in eating the veggies you offer. It can take 21 times before your child becomes used to the taste of a new food.

Try It!: Try offering the vegetable in different ways: Raw with dips, in soups and stews, cooked with herbs, and in sandwiches or wraps.



Parmesan Chicken Nuggets

MAKES 7 SERVINGS



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup Italian-style bread crumbs
- ¼ cup parmesan cheese, grated
- ½ cup all purpose flour
- 1 tbsp canola or olive oil
- 1 lb boneless, skinless chicken, cut into small chunks or strips
- ¾ cup fat-free buttermilk

PREPARATION:

Rinse chicken and dry with a paper towel. Measure flour into a resealable plastic gallon bag. Pour buttermilk into a shallow bowl. Add chicken pieces one at a time into the flour bag and shake until coated. Dip each piece into the buttermilk, covering thoroughly, and let the extra buttermilk drip off. Then place each chicken piece one at a time into the parmesan cheese and bread crumb bag and shake to cover. Grease a baking sheet with oil. Place coated chicken pieces on baking sheet. Cook for 5 mins. Flip and cook for another 5 mins. or until done. Serve with brown rice and steamed broccoli.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

Infant

Up and Down, In and Out: Begin by holding the infant's ankles and moving them up and down as you say/sing, "up and down, up and down." Next, move the infant's legs in and out as you again sing or say the motion. Repeat with the arms. Additional movements include around and around, criss-cross, back and forth.

0-2

Stop-n-Go Dancing: Play music and everyone dances. Turn the music off. Explain that when the music is on, you will "go" or dance. When the music stops, you will "stop" too. Play fun music and get moving. Be prepared to model.

3-5

Rock Hop: Spread paper plates on the ground. Pretend they are rocks in a stream. Get from one side to the other without stepping in the stream.

I Like To Move It, Move It!

Encouraging physical activity can be simple and fun. Children naturally love to run, jump, and play, and you can help channel their energy into activities that keep them fit and strong.

Active movement and play, combined with healthy eating, leads to a happier child. It can help decrease the risk of childhood obesity and children who are physically active often show improved concentration and awareness during the day, and sleep better at night. As children develop confidence in their own physical abilities, they not only feel good about themselves, they are also more able to enjoy physical activities with their peers. Physical activity is one of the most important features of a child's development.

In the long term, a child's regular physical activity can assist with:

- Weight management over a lifetime
- Preventing and controlling anxiety and depression
- Maintenance of healthy bones, muscles and joints
- Combating chronic disease
- Increased efficiency of the heart and lungs

Incorporate physical activity into your daily routines with fun and easy ideas that will help lay the foundation for an active and healthy lifestyle.

Recommended time for children under 2:

At least 60 minutes structured and 60 minutes unstructured activities per day.

- **Rise and stretch!** Start the day by doing some quick morning stretches together. Say, "Reach your arms up high to touch the sky! Reach down low to tickle your toes."
- **Sensory bottles!** Collect several empty plastic bottles and fill with various materials such as rice, bean or a small amount of water. Sit with baby and encourage holding, shaking, and rolling the bottles. As baby grows, encourage him to roll the bottles and scoot after them.
- **Hop** to the car or the bathroom or out to play. Instead of walking, encourage your child to jump like a frog or hop like a bunny.
- **Meal parade!** As snacks and meals are being prepared, use this time to encourage your child to march around the table to celebrate the fun of family-style mealtime.
- **Tunnel time!** Create a tunnel by placing several pool noodles or broom sticks across two rows of chairs facing one another. Encourage children to crawl through the tunnel and run around it. Narrate their actions while they are doing it.
- **Silly walk!** Take a walk – first go in straight lines, then curvy, then zigzag and finally try walking backwards.
- **Musical hoops!** Dance around an open area to the music until it stops, then jump into any hula hoop that is on the ground (one per person). Then jump back out when the music starts and keep going.



For more fun tips, videos, and resources to help keep your child active, visit sesamestreet.org/healthyhabits.

Create Your Own Garden



Gardens give children a chance to learn where food comes from and an opportunity to try fresh fruits and vegetables. Kids who learn to love gardening at an early age grow into adults with a passion for plants and respect for the environment.



Gardens Allow Children

- To keep their brain active and engaged in learning
- To develop a relationship with nature
- To explore at their own pace
- To be responsible

Gardens can be as small as a container garden in a window or as large as a school habitat. If you are new to gardening with preschoolers, start small and then expand as your confidence and experience increases.

Tips for Outdoor Gardens



- Involve kids in all stages that are reasonable for their age. Work in small groups of 2 or 3 so each child is engaged and actively involved. Hands-on activities like collecting, touching, tasting, and smelling help them learn through discovery.
- Spend time preparing the soil. Most garden work can be completed with a child-sized trowel if the soil is well-prepared.
- Practice sun safety. Make sure kids use sunscreen, wear a hat, and have plenty of water to drink.
- Teach kids proper gardening behavior. They should not eat anything before asking an adult.
- Don't use pesticides or other chemicals in the garden. Be sure to check about chemicals in potting soil or seeds.
- Plant for immediate and delayed gratification. Plant both seeds and potted plants.

Easy food plants to grow in preschool/child care settings

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|-----------|------------|--------------|-------------------|
| • Lettuce | • Radishes | • Snow peas | • Cherry tomatoes |
| • Carrots | • Potatoes | • Bush beans | • Pumpkins |



Helpful Online Resources

- <http://www.kidsgardening.org>
- <http://farmtopreschool.org/preschoolgardens.html>
- <http://csgn.org>



“Getting dirty is an integral part of growing up...” Anonymous

Breastfeeding

Mothers need all the support they can get to reach their breastfeeding goals and child care centers play an important role in helping moms continue to breastfeed.

Why is breastfeeding important?

- Early breast milk is very rich in nutrients and antibodies to protect baby.
- Breast milk is easier to digest, protects against disease, and changes to grow with baby's needs.
- Life can be easier once a routine is established – no bottles, nipples, formula buying, measuring or mixing.
- Breastfeeding can save money as formula and feeding supplies can cost up to \$3,650 per year.

Child care providers and centers should promote **exclusive breastfeeding until babies are six months old**, with continued breastfeeding until one year and beyond, as recommended by pediatricians everywhere. Providers can talk to dads, partners, grandparents and siblings about breastfeeding and how to support a nursing mom.

Myths about breastfeeding

“I can't nurse, I have to go back to work/school.”

Mothers CAN breastfeed even if they work or go to school. Many working mothers say it is best to exclusively breastfeed when home (no bottles or pacifiers), but to give babies bottles of pumped milk during the work day. You can ask whoever takes care of your child while you are at work to give your baby bottles of pumped milk. Breastfeeding mothers miss fewer days of work because of a sick child, and can reconnect easily after being apart

Sample Child Care Site Breastfeeding Policy

<p>The ABC Child Care Center is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers. Well-defined research has documented a multitude of health benefits to both the mother and infant. The ABC Child Care Center subscribes to the following policy:</p> <p>Breastfeeding mothers shall be provided a place to breastfeed or express their milk.</p> <p>Breastfeeding mothers, including employees, shall be provided a private and sanitary place to breastfeed their babies or express milk. This area has an electric outlet, comfortable chair, and nearby access to running water. Mothers are also welcome to breastfeed in front of others if they wish.</p> <p>A refrigerator will be made available for storage of expressed breast milk.</p> <p>Breastfeeding mothers and employees may store their expressed breast milk in the center refrigerator. Mothers should provide their own containers, clearly labeled with name and date.</p> <p>Sensitivity will be shown to breastfeeding mothers and their babies.</p> <p>The center is committed to providing ongoing support to breastfeeding mothers, including providing an opportunity to breastfeed their baby in the morning and evening, and holding off giving a bottle, if possible, when mom is due to arrive. Infant formula and solid foods will not be provided unless requested by the mother. Babies will be held closely when feeding.</p>	<p>Staff shall be trained in handling breast milk.</p> <p>All center staff will be trained in the proper storage and handling of breast milk, as well as ways to support breastfeeding mothers. The center will follow human milk storage guidelines from the American Academy of Pediatrics and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to avoid waste and prevent food borne illness. Special precautions are not required in handling breast milk.</p> <p>Breastfeeding employees shall be provided flexible breaks to accommodate breastfeeding or milk expression.</p> <p>Breastfeeding employees shall be provided a flexible schedule for breastfeeding or pumping to provide breast milk for their children. The time allowed would not exceed the normal time allowed to other employees for lunch and breaks. For time above and beyond normal lunch and breaks, sick/annual leave may be used, or the employee can come in earlier or leave later to make up the time.</p> <p>Breastfeeding promotion information will be displayed.</p> <p>The center will provide information on breastfeeding, including the names of area resources should questions or problems arise. In addition, positive promotion of breastfeeding will be on display in the center.</p>
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“I'm embarrassed to nurse in front of people.”

You don't have to show your body to breastfeed. Some mothers use a blanket or sling to cover up. You can also ask your child care site for a private space to nurse your baby. During the work day, your employer must also give you a clean, private space (NOT a bathroom) to pump.



Resources

- <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/publications/p0/p00022.pdf>
- http://www.cdc.gov/breastfeeding/recommendations/handling_breastmilk.htm
- www.breastfeedla.org

Why water?

When children are thirsty between meals and snacks, water is the best beverage choice. The amount of water needed will vary among young children, and increase on hot summer days, during physical activity, and on dry winter days. You can help by making safe drinking water freely accessible to children throughout the day.



Drinking water is important to:

- Keep children hydrated and healthy. Replace other high-calorie, sweetened beverages that are served outside of meal times with plain, unflavored, noncarbonated water.
- Help build and maintain strong teeth if water includes fluoride. Many community tap water supplies contain fluoride. Most bottled water is not fluoridated. Bottled water is not necessarily safer than regular tap water, and it's more expensive.
- Help rinse food from teeth and reduce acid in the mouth, both of which reduce the risk of dental cavities.
- Help children develop a habit of drinking water that they will keep for life.



In 2010, California passed legislation to establish nutrition standards for beverages served in licensed child care centers and family child care homes. The standards (below) went into effect on January 1, 2012!

- Only unflavored, unsweetened, nonfat (fat free, skim, 0%) or lowfat (1%) milk can be served to children 2 years of age or older.
- No beverages with ADDED sweeteners (natural or artificial) can be served, including soda, sweet tea, juice drinks, flavored milk and diet drinks.
- A maximum of ONE serving (4-6 ounces for 1-6 year olds) of 100% juice is allowed per day.
- Clean and safe drinking water must be available at all times, including meals and snacks.

Here are a few simple and inexpensive ways to make drinking water fun!

Musical Cups – This game requires only a few drinking glasses (or glass bottles) and a pencil. Fill the glasses to different levels and ask a child to gently tap them on the side with the pencil. Create a musical number of your own or play a favorite song. With each sip, the notes will change in pitch and you can also use different glass sizes to vary the tone. Use this time as a learning experience by explaining that more water in the glass slows the sound waves and creates a lower sound which means the pitch will get higher with every drink.



Spa Water – You can add flavor and color to water by fruits and/or vegetables! Simply cut up some fruits and/or vegetables and add it to the water!.

Buried Treasure – Use a stopwatch to make it a speed competition. Put a slice of cucumber, strawberry, banana, lime or lemon (make sure to remove the seeds first) at the bottom of a clear glass of water. Let children who can safely use a straw try to pull up the fruit by sucking it up with a straw. Kids will slurp up a lot of water in the process. Remind them that, by lowering the water level, it's easier to retrieve the fruit.

Limit screen time

“Screen time” refers to time spent with any type of screen device. This includes, but is not limited to, televisions, computers, tablets, and even phones. Long periods of inactivity, like sitting in front of the TV, put children at greater risk of developing problems associated with obesity. Screen time also exposes children to commercials that may lead to preferences for unhealthy foods.



Best Practices

- Children under 2 years of age should not have any screen time
- Children who are older should have no more than two hours a day of screen time including television, video games and computers
- Instead of screen time, play a board game together, take a walk around the neighborhood, include kids in your daily chores, read a book together, or just talk to each other

Excessive screen time is associated with

- Language delay
- Attention problems
- Aggressive behavior
- Overweight/obesity

Screen time gets in the way!

- Gets in the way of exploring, playing, and social interaction
- Children who spend more time than recommended watching TV are more likely to be overweight or obese
- For children 8-16 months, every hour of viewing is associated with 6-8 fewer words learned, **even if the shows or games they are watching are “educational”**
- More hours of viewing at age 3 can lead to decreased cognitive test scores at age 6



