Healthy Food Choices for Children in a Child Care Setting

Presented by:
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SMDHU
Outline

☑ Importance of Your Work

☑ Nutrition Requirements of the Day Nurseries Act

☑ Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide

☑ Menu Planning for Young Children

☑ Healthy Feeding Relationship
Importance of Your Work

- Children spend a large part of their day in your care
  - children in attendance > six hours receive at least half their daily nutrition from you!

- You have real impact on overall nutritional status of children by providing:
  - a pleasant meal environment
  - regular meals and snacks
  - nutritious foods to promote growth and development and healthy immune systems
Nutrition Requirements of the Day
Nurseries Act 8.1.95-100

Regulations are intended to:

- ensure all infants and children attending day nurseries (child care centres) in Ontario are provided with enough safe and nutritious food to meet energy and nutrient requirements

- to protect the health of children (e.g. food safety, food allergies, dental caries, etc.)

- to promote eating practices that encourage and support a lifetime of healthy eating and well-being
### Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in Years</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Teens</th>
<th>Adults</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Girls and Boys</td>
<td>Females</td>
<td>Males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>9-13</td>
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<td>14-18</td>
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<td>19-50</td>
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<td>51+</td>
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#### Food Guide Servings per Day

- **Vegetables and Fruit**:
  - Children: 4-6
  - Teens: 7-8
  - Adults: 7-8

- **Grain Products**:
  - Children: 3-4
  - Teens: 6-7
  - Adults: 6-7

- **Milk and Alternatives**:
  - Children: 2-3
  - Teens: 3-4
  - Adults: 2-3

- **Meat and Alternatives**:
  - Children: 1
  - Teens: 1-2
  - Adults: 2-3
For More Information
Visit Canada’s Food Guide Online:
www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide
AMOUNT and TYPE of Food

- Day Nurseries Act defines types and amounts of food that must be offered
- Based on Canada's Food Guide
- All foods to be selected from four food groups
  - Foods from all four food groups at meal time
  - Foods from two of the four food groups at snack time
- Children in attendance > six hours must be offered specified total amount of food from each food group
# Meal Planning Guidelines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Group</th>
<th>Minimum amounts to be offered to each child in attendance &gt;6 hrs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetables &amp; Fruit</td>
<td>2-2.5 Food Guide Servings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain Products</td>
<td>1.5-2.5 Food Guide Servings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk and Alternatives</td>
<td>1-1.5 Food Guide Servings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat and Alternatives</td>
<td>1 Food Guide Servings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sample Menu

- **AM Snack:**
  - 1 Grain + ½ Milk

- **Lunch**
  - 1 M/A + 1 Grain + ½ Milk + 1½ V/F

- **PM Snack**
  - 1 V/F + ½ Milk

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Required # of Food Good Servings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>V/F 2.5</td>
<td>V/F 2-2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G 2</td>
<td>G 1.5-2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk 1.5</td>
<td>Milk 1-1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M/A 1</td>
<td>M/A 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Meal Planning Tips for Young Children

- Prepare meals that include a variety of foods from each of the four food groups

- **Select the meat or alternative for each day of the week**
  - Consider serving fish twice a week.
  - Choose lean meat and alternatives prepared with little or no added fat or salt.
  - Choose a different meat or alternative for each day: beef, pork, fish, poultry, baked beans, peas, lentils, eggs, peanut butter (if allowed).
Meal Planning Tips for Young Children

- Select a vegetable for each day of the week
  - Provide at least one dark green and one orange vegetable each day.
  - Choose vegetables prepared with little or no added fat, sugar or salt.
  - Include a variety of cooked and raw vegetables throughout the week.

- Select a fruit or 100% fruit juice for each day of the week
  - Serve fruit prepared with little or no added fat, sugar or salt.
  - Have fruit more often than fruit juice for added fibre.
Meal Planning Tips for Young Children

- **Select a grain product for each day of the week**
  - Make at least half of grain products whole grain each day.
  - Consider serving whole-grain breads, oatmeal or whole-wheat pasta.
  - Include a variety of other grain products such as pasta, rice, bulgur, couscous, bagels and pitas.
  - Choose grain products that are lower in fat, sugar or salt.
Meal Planning Tips for Young Children

- Select milk or a milk product for each day of the week
  - Serve 1% or 2% milk each day (for children age 2 and over).
  - Serve milk as a beverage at lunch or snack.
  - Serve milk products, like yogurt and cheese for snacks or desserts.
  - Include milk products in the ingredients used to prepare desserts or for toppings.
Meal Planning Tips for Young Children

- Be a positive role model
- Offer child-size portions
- Include a variety of colours, textures, sizes, shapes, temperatures and flavours
- Make Food Fun!
Meal Planning Tips for Young Children

- Include at least one new food in each menu cycle
- Serve food in forms that are easy to manage
- Allow for substitutions for children with allergies and special diets
- Celebrate different cultures
Menu Planning Tips for Young Children

- Do not restrict nutritious foods because of their fat content
- Watch out for foods that are easy to choke on (nuts and raw carrots)
- Use sound dental practices
- Include the children in meal planning
Introducing New Foods To Children

- Present foods in appealing ways
- Offer small portions of a new food
- Offer new foods along with a familiar one
- Don’t pressure a child to eat a new food
- Be patient - offer the food again another time
How to Increase Vegetables & Fruit

- Serve wide variety of colourful veggies and fruit
- Role model - eat YOUR vegetables
- Serve with a dip
- Add to soups, sauces and casseroles
- Get children involved
- Encourage children to eat their fruits and vegetables as opposed to drinking them
- Eat together
- Make it fun!
Snacking Tips for Young Children

- Snacks contribute in a significant way to a child’s overall energy and nutrient intake
- Choose snacks according to Canada’s Food Guide
- Include at least 2 Food Groups
- Add variety
- Serve snacks at least 2 hours before next meal
- Keep portion sizes small
- Choose snacks that are healthy for teeth
- Avoid high sugar and salt and trans fat
Healthy Snack Ideas

- banana sandwich
- vanilla yogurt and fruit
- apples and cheese
- unsweetened cereal and milk
- vegetable sticks and yogurt dip
- smoothie (yogurt + fruit + milk)
- Small whole grain muffin and vegetable juice
- pineapple/peach with cottage cheese
- fruit juice and yogurt popsicle
- yogurt drink and small oatmeal muffin
- whole-wheat tortilla or pita triangles with hummus
- hard boiled egg and milk
- pancakes and fruit
- cheese and whole grain crackers
A Healthy Feeding Relationship
Division of Responsibility

Parent/Child Care Provider Role

To decide:

**WHAT** foods to serve

**WHEN** to serve meals and snacks

**WHERE** the child will eat
Division of Responsibility

Child's Role

- **HOW much they eat**
- **WHETHER or not they will eat**
Adults decide... what food to serve

- You decide what foods get brought into the home and what foods get served
  - Choose foods from Canada’s Food Guide
- Involve the children in deciding what food you will serve
  - Ask children what they would like to eat when planning meals
- Serve meals that are appealing to children
  - Serve foods the children enjoy
  - Have an alternative, simple standby if they don’t want to eat the food that is served (like cereal and milk or bread and peanut butter) but don’t be a short order cook!
- Try new foods
  - Present them alongside a familiar food.
  - It may take 10-15 times for a child to accept a new food
- Remember, children will not like a food if they are forced to eat it.
Adults decide... when to serve the food

- Children need the routine of regular meals and snacks to grow well
  - need to eat often - every 2-3 hours
  - need 3 meals plus 2-3 snacks a day
- No food or drinks except water between meal and snack times
  - Helps ensure child comes to the table hungry, takes an interest in food, eats until satisfied, and stops eating knowing another meal or snack is coming
- Children need enough time to eat
  - Don’t rush but don’t make them sit for too long if they have lost interest

Children need the routine of regular meals and snacks to grow well. They need to eat often—every 2-3 hours—and need 3 meals plus 2-3 snacks a day. No food or drinks except water are allowed between meals and snacks. This helps ensure children come to the table hungry, take an interest in food, eat until satisfied, and stop eating knowing another meal or snack is coming. Children need enough time to eat. Don’t rush them, but don’t make them sit for too long if they lose interest.
Adults decide...  
**where to serve the food**

- Children should be seated at the table and supervised
- Children should be comfortable
- Make mealtime relaxed and pleasant
- Be a role model
  - sit and eat with the children
- Avoid distractions such as TV, phone
Children decide
if they will eat or not

- Children’s appetites change from day to day. Some days children will not eat much, others days they seem to eat too much – this is normal
- If you put food on the table, let the children serve themselves
- If you serve the food, ask the children to tell you or indicate how much to put on their plate
- Be positive. Forcing a child to eat will cause problems
- It’s okay if a child does not wish to eat a food or even an entire meal
Children’s appetites vary from meal to meal and day to day
Children decide...  
*how much to eat*

- Children know when they are hungry and when they are full
  - Allow them to respond to their own hunger and fullness cues
  - Try not to pressure child to finish his plate or eat just one more bite
- Remember children’s portion sizes tend to be smaller than adult’s
Food should not be used...

◆ As a reward
◆ When a child is bored
◆ To get cooperation
The picky eater

- Pickiness is normal
- Division of responsibility works wonders
- If a picky eater does not seem to be healthy or growing normally, talk to a doctor
Menu Planning Resources for Child Care Workers

SMDHU website section for childcare workers:
http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/JFY/ChildcareWorkers/nutritionphysicalactivity.aspx

SMDHU website section on menu planning:
http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/HealthyEating/FoodSkills/MenuPlanning.aspx

Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index_e.html

Health Canada - Planning Meals

Dietitians of Canada's Eating Well Together Meal Planner

Dietitians of Canada - Let’s Make a Meal
http://www2.dietitians.ca/public/content/eat_well_live_well/english/menuplanner/Overview.asp

Egg Farmers of Ontario - Meal Planning Made Easy
http://www.getcracking.ca/mealplanningmadeeasy/PDF/MealPlanningMadeEasy-EN.pdf

Eat Right Ontario Menu Planning
SMDHU website section for childcare workers
Healthy Eating


Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide

Busy Bodies: Food & Play Ideas (3-5 years)

Eat Right Be Active (3-5 years)

Day Nurseries Act: Meals & Nutrition

Nutrition for Young Children Guidelines

Parents & Parents-To-Be: Nutrition Information

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Key Takeaways

- Your work is important!
- Follow Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide when planning meals and snacks
- Integrate some of the meal planning tips we’ve discussed today
- Achieve and maintain a healthy feeding relationship with children in your care
Further Information.....

Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit
Your Health Connection

Tel: 721-7520
Toll free: 1-877-721-7520
www.simcoemuskokahealth.org

Mon. to Fri.: 8:30 am to 6:00 pm
Thank you!

Any Questions?