

<b>Area:</b>	Health Services
<b>Subject:</b>	HS33 – Nutrition & Wellness
<b>Reference:</b>	1304.23 (b) (1) (iv) & 1304.23 (b) (1) (vi)
<b>Policy:</b>	SCOE & Delegate Staff will ensure children are served food based on their developmental and nutritional needs and given food high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar and salt.

**Procedure:**

1. At time of enrollment, parents will be given the Head Start Nutrition and Wellness Informational Handout that will contain the following information:
  - Head Start recognizes the important role nutrition plays in a child's physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth. Nutrition and physical activity also play a role in good dental health and in the prevention of chronic diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, and cancer.
  - The goal is to help ensure that children have the opportunity to eat nutritious foods that promote proper growth, to offer experiences that will teach healthy eating habits, to reinforce choices and habits that prevent disease and support a lifetime of good health, and to provide children and families with the tools to promote physical activity.
  - The Head Start Program will continue to provide children with foods that will contribute to their daily nutritional needs, recognizing individual differences and cultural patterns. The meals and snacks offered consist of a variety of nutritious foods that are low in sugar, sodium, and the recommended fat intake as specified by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
  - Children learn good nutrition and physical activity from the examples as set by adults. Teachers and other adults are to set a good example of healthy eating habits and promote physical activity by also following the Head Start Nutrition and Wellness Policy in the classroom at any Head Start functions.

**Guidelines for Selecting Nutritious Foods**

- Include at least 1 serving daily of fruit, vegetable and/or juice snacks, preferably fresh.
- When planning menus, opt for the most nutrient dense choice of food (i.e.: broccoli instead of corn for vegetable)
- Limit 100% fruit juice to once a week (A.M. or P.M. Snack).
- Include at least 1 serving per week for protein (i.e., eggs, tuna, beans, meat) for snack.
- Always offer water to drink throughout the day
- Serve non-fat or 1% low fat milk (without added flavoring; i.e.:

chocolate/strawberry flavored milk)

- Substitute whole grains and high fiber foods whenever possible (i.e., substitute brown rice for white).
- Substitute lean proteins whenever possible (i.e., turkey slices instead of processed meats such as bologna, salami, or hot dogs).

**The following items are not to be included in any menus:**

- High sugar drinks (i.e., Kool-Aid®, fruit punch, Hi-C®, fruit drinks, sodas, and flavored waters).
- High sugar foods (i.e., Jell-O®, popsicles, cookies, ice cream, candy, and sugarcoated cereals).
- High fat foods (i.e., fried foods, chips, cookies, ice cream, buttered popcorn, pork rinds, cakes, doughnuts, pastries).
- Artificial sweeteners or products containing them (i.e., Sweet-n-Low®, Nutri-Sweet®, Splenda® and aspartame).
- Foods high in salt (i.e. chips, salted pretzels, etc).
- Foods that do not model healthy food choices (i.e., “whole grain” donuts, “fiber rich” cookies, “enriched” cocoa puffs, pop tarts, etc.).

**To Reduce the Risk of Choking:**

Children under age 5 are at the greatest risk for choking injury and death. Foods that are round, hard, small, thick and sticky, smooth, or slippery are high-risk foods often involved in choking incidents. These foods are to be served infrequently and with care.

Avoid serving any of these items to children under the age of 3 years:

Examples:	Hot dogs <sup>1</sup>	Popcorn <sup>2</sup>
	Whole grapes <sup>1</sup>	Seeds
	Whole nuts	Dried fruit
	Spoonfuls of peanut butter	Hard candy <sup>3</sup>
	Raw peas	Chips or tortilla shells
	Pretzels	Marshmallows <sup>3</sup>
	Trail mixes <sup>3</sup>	Gelatin/Jelly cups

<sup>1</sup> To serve, slice in half lengthwise

<sup>2</sup> Serve at celebrations only

<sup>3</sup> Due to low nutritional value, **these items will not be served**

Children should always be seated while eating and have adult supervision.

**Celebrations and Suggestions for Party Foods**

The Head Start Nutrition Policy is to be followed for all celebrations. It is important to remember that food should not make the celebration. Activities, games, decorations and

planning are as important as the foods served. Staff will educate family members prior to celebrations to ensure that food not consistent with the nutrition guidelines are not brought to the event(s). The following are some appropriate food suggestions:

- Fruit Juices: Alone, as punch, used in homemade finger gelatin, frozen  
Fresh Fruits in Season: Served whole, cut up, combined in interesting containers (melon or pumpkin shells) or with cheese squares to dip and dunk.
- Dried Fruits: Apricots, apples, and pears. These can be added to baked goods as decorations or to add nutritional value.
- Fresh Vegetables: Sliced, whole or sticks, raw, parboiled or cooked; with dip or alone.<sup>1</sup>
- Dairy Products: Yogurt with fresh fruit, homemade ice milk, milk smoothies such as an orange chiller. (All should be made with low fat or non-fat dairy products.)
- Protein Products: Deviled egg sailboats, cheese shapes cut with cookie cutters, cheese on whole grain toast or crackers, meat chunks with fruit and cheese, mini pizzas.
- Baked Goods: These should include ingredients that provide added nutrients to the diet and have reduced quantities of sugar. They can be prepared as individual servings or in interesting shapes. Children can be included in the preparation of these items. (Examples: Fruit and bran muffins, fruit and nut breads, peanut butter or applesauce cookies.)

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**Supervised by:** Director of Health Services

**Performed by:** Program Specialists: Food Service Vendors, Registered Dietician, Grantee/Delegated Health/Teaching Staff, Management Staff

**Forms needed:** Infant Needs and Service Plans, Menus, Special Meals Accommodations, My Plate.gov, USDA Meal Patterns, CACFP Site Monitoring Report, Head Start Classroom Nutrition Program Checklist

**Frequency:** Daily