

Healthy Food and Beverage Policy and Recommendations

Origination Date:

Effective Date:

Policy: It is the policy of the organization to provide food service that supports and encourages healthy, nutritious foods and beverages that are served in appropriate portion sizes. Food service includes, but is not limited to, meals, snacks, vending machines, concession stands, community events, and staff meetings.

Purpose: This organization recognizes it has a responsibility to provide nutritious food and beverages to promote a culture of wellness within the organization for children, families, and staff members.

Background:

Dietary Guidelines for Americans – *The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010* includes recommendations based upon the most recent evidence available from the nutrition sciences. Two overarching concepts emerge from *The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010* to serve as the basis of this policy:

- 1. Maintain calorie balance to achieve and sustain healthy weight.** Calorie balance refers to the relationship between calories consumed from foods and beverages and calories expended in normal body function and through physical activity. To sustain a healthy weight, one needs to eat fewer calories by making healthier food and beverage choices and eating proper portion sizes. At the same time, one should gradually increase the amount of time one is physically active and decrease the amount of time one is non-active or sedentary.
- 2. Focus on nutrient-dense foods and beverages.** Nutrient-dense foods provide necessary nutrients with relatively fewer calories than other choices in the same food group (USDA). To choose nutrient-dense foods and beverages, one needs to choose more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products, seafood, lean meats and poultry, eggs, beans, peas, seeds and nuts. Americans consume too much sodium and too many calories from solid fats, added sugars, and refined grains, so items should be limited.

The following ten recommendations will help the organization to implement, promote, and support a Healthy Food and Beverage Policy.

Recommendation 1:

Drinking water is available at all times. Regular breaks for drinks from the water fountain are allowed. Sugar-sweetened beverages are not served to children, families and staff.

Why:

Nationally, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) sets the rules for the federally-funded National School Lunch Program (NSLP) and School Breakfast Program (SBP). In December 2010, Congress passed the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act, which included a requirement that free drinking water be made available during school meals.

- Research shows that when students drink more water, young people consume fewer calories from sugar-sweetened beverages, stay hydrated, and increase their energy levels and ability to concentrate.
- Sugar-sweetened beverages are not served because soft drinks and alike are not a nutrient-dense food source and they contribute excess calories to the diet. (Exclusion is fat-free flavored milk).

Educational Materials:

- USDA Water Availability, http://waterinschools.org/pdfs/SP28_2011_osr.pdf
- USDA Water Access, http://changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/documents/WaterAccess_FactSht_FINAL_20111026.pdf

Recommendation 2:

Offer only low-fat (1%) and/or fat-free (skim) milk to youth above age 2 and adults.

Why:

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) new Nutritional Standards for School Meals help ensure the nation's schoolchildren have access to lunches and breakfasts that meet federal dietary guidance for good nutrition. The standards will encourage students to meet federal recommendations for dairy consumption by requiring that either fat-free flavored milk or low-fat or fat-free white milk be offered with each school meal. As the number one food source of three of the four nutrients the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans identified as lacking in children's diets (vitamin D, calcium and potassium), milk plays an important role in delivering many critical nutrients.

Educational Materials:

- USDA Dairy, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/dairy.html>
- National Dairy Council Flavored Milk, http://www.nationaldairyCouncil.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/child_nutrition/milkschools/Flavored%20Milk-FAQ.pdf
- General Lactose Intolerance reference, <http://www.aafp.org/afp/2002/0501/p1855.html>
- Lactose Intolerance and Children, http://www.nationaldairyCouncil.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/health_wellness/lactose_intolerance/LI%20and%20Your%20Child%20FINAL%20November%202012.pdf
- General Lactose Intolerance reference, http://www.nationaldairyCouncil.org/SiteCollectionDocuments/health_wellness/lactose_intolerance/LIPatientEduEnjoyDairyAgain%20Handout.pdf

Recommendation 3:

Increase promotion and consumption of a variety of fruits and vegetables.

Why:

Fruits and vegetables are sources of many vitamins, minerals and other natural substances that may help protect you from chronic diseases. Eating fruits and vegetables of different colors provides a wide range of valuable nutrients, like fiber, folate, potassium, and vitamins A and C.

Educational Materials:

- Center for Disease Control CDC, <http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/fruitsvegetables/index.html>
- 20 ways to enjoy more fruits and vegetables, <http://www.eatright.org/nutritiontipsheets/>
- USDA Fruits, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/fruits.html>
- USDA Vegetables, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/vegetables.html>

Recommendation 4:

Increase foods containing whole grains whenever possible.

Why:

Eating grains, especially whole grains, provides health benefits. People who eat whole grains as part of a healthy diet have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases. Grains provide nutrients vital for the health and maintenance of bodies.

Educational Materials:

- USDA Whole Grains, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/grains-why.html>
- Whole Grains Council–What are the Health Benefits, <http://www.wholegrainscouncil.org/whole-grains-101/what-are-the-health-benefits>
- Tips for Reaping the Benefits of Whole Grains, <http://www.webmd.com/diet/healthy-kitchen-11/reaping-benefits-whole-grains>

Recommendation 5:

Serve healthy snacks at the organization.

Why:

Snacks are an important part of daily nutrition. Snacks can make a positive contribution to diets and overall health. An emphasis should be on serving nutrient-rich foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean meats, and low-fat dairy. It is recommended to serve snacks that include at least two food groups.

Educational Materials:

- USDA Healthy Snack Ideas, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers/healthy-habits/snack-ideas.html>
- USDA Sample Meal and Snack Patterns, <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-tips/sample-menus-recipes/sample-meal-snack-patterns.html>
- 25 Healthy Snacks for Kids, Smart Snacking for Adults and Teens, * Materials also available in Spanish, <http://www.eatright.org/nutritiontipsheets/>

Recommendation 6:

Recognize, promote and serve culturally-specific foods in healthy ways.

Why:

All Americans independent of race, creed or ancestry need nutrient-dense foods. Ethnic and cultural challenges can be addressed by offering a variety of nutrient-dense foods.

Educational Materials:

- USDA Ethnic and Cultural Heart Health Resources, <http://fnic.nal.usda.gov/diet-and-disease/heart-health/ethnic-and-cultural-heart-health-resources>

Recommendation 7:

Provide nutrition and positive eating behavior modeling and education to children, families, and agency staff. Focus on the importance of eating a healthy breakfast and family meal times.

Why:

Role modeling by parents, caregivers, and peers has been shown to increase healthy eating behaviors of youth and the family. Studies have shown that children eat more fruits and vegetables when eating together as a family. Additionally, studies also show that teens are less likely to experiment with drugs and alcohol and students achieve better grades and have less behavioral problems at school when they participate in family meals. Eating a healthy breakfast aids in meeting daily nutritional needs for proper growth and development and aids in preventing health problems such as obesity, dental caries, iron deficiency, and osteoporosis. Eating breakfast also increases concentration and learning.

Educational Materials:

- MCNPAC Role Modeling Action Guide, <http://city.milwaukee.gov/MCNPAC-Role-Modeling-Action-Guide>
- Choose MyPlate, www.choosemyplate.gov
- USDA Team Nutrition, www.teamnutrition.usda.gov
- Let's Move!, www.letsmove.gov
- Wisconsin Nutrition Education Network, <http://www.nutrisci.wisc.edu/nutrinet/index.html>
- City of Milwaukee Healthy Eating and Exercise, <http://city.milwaukee.gov/Healthy-Eating-and-Exercise>
- CDC - Nutrition - Facts - Adolescent and School Health <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/nutrition/facts.htm>

Recommendation 8:

Seek youth input on healthier food options through activities such as listening sessions and food tasting and rating sessions.

Why:

Letting children taste and rate new food items gives youth an opportunity to experiment with new foods. Doing so promotes buy-in for eating healthier food options and potentially reduces plate waste with greater acceptance of foods served. Multiple tasting of the same food may be required to gain acceptance.

Educational Materials:

- MCNPAC Role Modeling Action Guide, <http://city.milwaukee.gov/MCNPAC-Role-Modeling-Action-Guide>
- Choose MyPlate, www.choosemyplate.gov
- USDA Team Nutrition, www.teamnutrition.usda.gov

Recommendation 9:

Provide healthy foods and beverages in organization vending machines, concession stands, and as fund-raising options.

Why:

Nutritious foods can be offered in nontraditional ways. The organization should be diligent in meeting nutrition standards using the Snackwise Nutrition Rating System guidelines. Providing lower fat and calorie foods and beverages are encouraged to promote a healthy environment.

Educational Materials:

- Snackwise resources for healthy options in vending machines, www.snackwise.org
- California Department of Public Health Sample Vending Machine Policy, <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cpns/Documents/Network-FV-WP-VendingMachineStandards.pdf>
- CSPI Healthy fund-raising information, <http://www.cspinet.org/new/200702141.html>

Recommendation 10:

Provide healthy foods and beverages at community meals, events, and staff meetings.

Why:

Healthy eating is important at and away from home. It will help you get the right balance of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients. It will help you feel your best and have plenty of energy. It can help you feel better. Eating healthy foods and beverages is one of the best things you can do to prevent and control many health problems, such as heart disease, high blood pressure and type 2 diabetes. Healthy eating means making changes you can live with and enjoy for the rest of your life.

Educational Materials:

- Healthy Eating Overview, <http://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/tc/healthy-eating-overview>
- Healthy Meeting Foods and Activities, http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cpns/Documents/Healthy%20Meeting%20Policies_FEB_2008FINAL.pdf
- California Department of Public Health Certificate recognizing an organization for committing to provide healthy meetings, http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cpns/Documents/HealthyMeetingCertificate_FINAL_02_08.pdf

Organization Self-Assessment

	Recommendation	Currently in place? Yes or No	Future priority? Yes or No and Date	How does the organization measure progress towards this recommendation?
1	Drinking water is available at all times. Regular breaks for drinks from the water fountain are allowed. Sugar-sweetened beverages are not served to children, families and staff.			
2	Offer only low-fat (1%) and/or fat-free (skim) milk to youth above age 2 and adults.			
3	Increase promotion and consumption of a variety of fruits and vegetables.			
4	Increase foods containing whole grains whenever possible.			
5	Serve healthy snacks at the organization.			
6	Recognize, promote and serve culturally-specific foods in healthy ways.			
7	Provide nutrition and positive eating behavior modeling and education to children, families, and agency staff. Focus on the importance of eating a healthy breakfast and family meal times.			
8	Seek youth input on healthier food options through activities such as listening sessions and food tasting and rating sessions.			
9	Provide healthy foods and beverages in organization vending machines, concession stands, and as fund-raising options.			
10	Provide healthy foods and beverages at community meals, events, and staff meetings.			