

## CHAPTER FIVE: NUTRITION

Nutrition	Nutrition Requirements Menus
Revised August 18, 2017	Policy Number: 5.3 (replaces policy 1.12C)

### Policy

North Hastings Children’s Services promotes healthy eating by providing nutritious and safe foods in a supportive environment, by role modeling healthy eating behaviors, by including healthy foods in creative play and teaching activities for children, and by engaging, supporting and educating parents and child care staff.

A morning and afternoon snack is served as well as a lunch meal in our Infant, Toddler and Preschool Programs.

For School Age Programs please see Bag Lunch Policy. Policy requirements for morning and afternoon snacks would apply.

### Nutritious Foods/ Menu Planning

Nutritious and safe meals and snacks, that meet the Early Years and Child Care Act regulations and contains a variety of food groups in accordance with Health Canada documents, “Canada’s Food Guide”, “Canada’s Food Guide – First Nations, Inuit and Métis” or “Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants”, are planned and prepared for each child care program.

Menus are planned using good menu planning principals and include variety of new and familiar healthy and appealing foods. The menu for the current and following week will be posted on the kitchen window with substitutions posted on the menus. Menu’s including substitutions will be kept on file for 30 days. Each Program will keep a record of what is served daily.

The child care centre staff members optimize healthy eating by encouraging a nutrient-rich diet and by avoiding potentially harmful ingredients such as trans fat and by limiting fat, sodium, and added sugars.

Drinking water is always to be readily available to the children (e.g., water bottles for each child, disposable cups and running water, etc.)

The menu should provide:

- nutritionally adequate meals and snacks;
- each meal should include at least four food groups;
- each snack should include at least two food groups;
- opportunities for children to develop a positive attitude toward a wide variety of foods;
- opportunities for children to prepare and serve food; and
- opportunities to develop and enhance socialization skills, self-regulation, and language skills.

### **Safe Foods/Special Diets**

The child care staff members strive to increase awareness and reduce the risk of food borne illness, the risk of choking and the incidence of adverse reactions to food through safe food-handling practices, adherence to special dietary indicators, education and training.

### **Supportive Environment**

The child care centre provides a safe, clean and pleasant setting for infants and children from breastfeeding to introduction of solids to feeding toddlers and preschoolers. Adequate time is allowed for eating. Mealtime is positive social times in which the children are encourage interacting and conversing. Child care staff use mealtime as an opportunity to teach nutrition and food concept.

Staff members trust children to manage their eating with respect to both amounts and types of food. Children are allowed to decide whether to eat and how much to eat. Foods and beverages are not used as rewards or withheld as punishment.

- providing nutritious food and beverages that incorporate family and cultural preferences;
- creating positive eating environments with foods and portion sizes that are responsive to children's cues of hunger and fullness;
- using a bright, attractive, well-ventilated and comfortable room for serving meals;
- providing suitable child-sized tables and chairs;
- supplying dishes and eating utensils that are attractive, durable and of suitable size and shape for small hands;
- ensuring that dishes and utensils match the children's capabilities so that they can graduate from bowls and spoons to forks and plates;
- providing a quiet time just before meals so that the atmosphere can be friendly and relaxed at meal time;
- avoiding delays in food services so that the children will not have to sit and wait;
- serving foods family style, where possible, with small groups of children and at least

one adult sit around a table and serve themselves. The adult should sit about half way down the long side of a rectangular table rather than at the end so that he/she can respond to individual children (and supervise) while eating.

- program staff eating with the children whenever possible and always eating the same meal as the children.
- providing an opportunity for children to leave the table if they become restless before the meal is over (e.g., let them take their plates to the counter and bring their dessert back to the table);
- encouraging children to practice self-care skills (e.g. feeding themselves) and help with food preparation, distribution etc. (e.g., filling their own glasses or cups, arranging crackers and fruit on plates etc.);
- setting a good example by having a positive approach to new foods and pleasant table manners.
- being prepared for spills and calmly cleaning up and offering reassurance when they happen;
- encouraging interesting conversation and modeling language related to food, drink and eating to support communication development; and
- avoiding the use of mealtimes as a time to criticize or to air unpleasant occurrences.

### **Role Modeling**

Staff members are positive role models for children demonstrating the child care centre's commitment to provide a healthy environment. They do not consume unhealthy foods and beverages such as candy or soft drinks in the presence of children.

Staff model positive behavior, recognizing that their body language and reaction to food can affect a child's decision to try a food.

Staff members accept all body shapes and sizes and refrain from commenting on shape, size, weight and height in the presence of children.

### **Creative Play and Teaching Activities for Children**

Integrating nutrition and healthy eating concepts into a variety of content areas such as language, mathematics, science and music reinforces appropriate messages. Children can be involved in growing, preparing and cooking foods.

### **Engaging, supporting and educating parents and child care staff**

The child care centre staff collaborates with Public Health Services, Ontario Early Years staff and provincial healthy eating initiatives (such as EatRight Ontario) to provide consistent message and resources.

Staff members and parents are provided with appropriate educational and training opportunities. They are familiar with provincial guidelines and the healthy eating policy of the child care.

Child Care and Early Years Act  
Ontario Regulation 137/15

42(2)

Subject to section 44, every licensee shall ensure that each child one year old or older who receives child care at a child care centre it operates and or at a premises where it oversees the provision of home child care is given food and beverages in accordance with the following rules:

1. Where the child is present at meal time, a meal must be supplied and provided by the licensee or provider, except where otherwise approved by a director in the case of a child in a licensed kindergarten group or older child.
2. Between-meal snacks must be supplied and provided by the licensee or provider, except where otherwise approved by a director in the case of a child in a licensed kindergarten group or older child.
3. Where a child receives child care for six hours or more, the licensee or provider shall ensure that the total food offered to the child includes, in addition to any meals provided, two snacks.
4. Drinking water must be available at all times.
5. All meals, snacks and beverages must meet the recommendations set out in the Health Canada documents "Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide", "Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide – First Nations, Inuit and Métis" or "Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants", as amended from time to time, as the case may be.

43(1)

Every licensee of a child care centre shall post planned menus for the current and following week in a conspicuous place in each child care centre it operates with any substitutions noted on the posted menus.

(2)

A menu referred to in subsection (1) shall be kept by the licensee for thirty days after the last day for which it is applicable.