



Bite Size: Meeting the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Meal Patterns for Children

Module 8: Menu Planning

Answer Key for Knowledge Check: Meal or No Meal

Do the planned menus below meet the CACFP meal patterns for ages 3-5? Refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) [CACFP Meal Patterns for Children](#) and [Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP](#).

Breakfast menus	Meets requirements?	Explanation
Menu 1 ¾ cup unflavored low-fat milk ½ cup whole-grain round cereal (6.1 grams of sugars per ounce) ½ cup blueberries	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	This breakfast is missing the grains component. Cereals that exceed 6 grams of sugar per ounce do not credit in the CACFP meal patterns.
Menu 2 ¾ cup unflavored low-fat milk ½ large egg scrambled ½ cup mandarin oranges	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	This breakfast contains the minimum serving of all three components. Meat/meat alternates may substitute for entire grains component at breakfast up to three times per week. Half of a large egg substitutes for 1 ounce equivalent of the grains component, which is more than the required ½-ounce equivalent serving for ages 3-5.
Menu 3 ¾ cup unflavored low-fat milk 1 ounce whole grain-rich (WGR) blueberry muffin, ½ cup diced peaches	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	This breakfast contains the minimum serving of all three components. Blueberry muffins are in group D of the USDA's grain ounce equivalents chart and require 1 ounce to credit as ½ ounce equivalent of the grains component (refer to the CSDE's resource, Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP).
Menu 4 ¾ cup unflavored fat-free milk 1½ ounces whole-grain cereal bar ½ cup fruit salad	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	This breakfast is missing the grains component. Cereal bars are a grain-based dessert and do not credit in the CACFP meal patterns

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Lunch and Supper Menus	Meets requirements?	Explanation
Menu 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unflavored low-fat milk 1½ ounces tuna salad ½ ounce whole-wheat pita triangles ½ cup garden salad ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup lettuce and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup tomatoes and carrots) ¼ cup sliced red grapes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<p>This meal is missing the full serving of the meat/meat alternates component. To credit as 1½ ounces of the meat/meat alternates component, tuna salad must contain 1½ ounces of tuna before added ingredients such as mayonnaise, celery, and seasonings. A 1½-ounce serving of tuna salad does not contain 1½ ounces of tuna because of the added ingredients.</p> <p>Pita bread is in group B of the USDA's grain ounce equivalents chart and requires ½ ounce to credit as ½ ounce equivalent of the grains component (refer to the CSDE's resource, Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP).</p> <p>The garden salad credits as $\frac{3}{8}$ cup of the vegetables component, which exceeds the minimum $\frac{1}{4}$-cup requirement. While the carrots and tomatoes credit as $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of vegetables, the $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of lettuce credits as only $\frac{1}{8}$ cup because raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served.</p>
Menu 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unflavored low-fat milk Soft taco: 1½ ounces cooked beef ½ ounce enriched tortilla ¼ cup tomato ⅛ cup lettuce ¼ cup apple slices	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>This meal contains the full serving of all five components. Tortillas are in group B of the USDA's grain ounce equivalents chart and require ½ ounce to credit as ½ ounce equivalent of the grains component.</p> <p>The lettuce is an extra food that does not credit toward the vegetable component because raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served. The $\frac{1}{8}$ cup of lettuce credits as only $\frac{1}{16}$ cup of vegetables, which is less than the minimum creditable amount of $\frac{1}{8}$ cup.</p>

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Lunch and Supper Menus	Meets requirements?	Explanation
Menu 3 ¾ cup unflavored low-fat milk Chili: ¼ cup kidney beans ½ ounce shredded cheese ¼ cup tomato sauce 1 ounce enriched corn muffin ¼ cup green pepper strips	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>This meal contains the minimum serving of all five components. The chili contains 1½ ounces of the meat/meat alternates component from ¼ cup of kidney beans, which credit as 1 ounce of meat alternates, and ½ ounce of shredded cheese. The tomato sauce in the chili credits as ¼ cup of vegetables. Note: CACFP facilities must have a recipe on file to indicate the chili's meal pattern contribution per serving.</p> <p>Corn muffins are in group C of the USDA's grain ounce equivalents chart. A 1-ounce corn muffin provides ¾ ounce equivalent of the grains component (refer to the CSDE's resource, Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP). This exceeds the minimum required ½ ounce equivalent for ages 3-5 at lunch/supper.</p> <p>The green pepper strips substitute for the entire fruits component. Vegetables may substitute for the entire fruits component at any lunch or supper.</p>
Menu 4 ¾ cup unflavored fat-free milk 1½ ounces diced baked chicken ¼ cup brown rice ¼ cup steamed broccoli ¼ cup butternut squash	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>This meal contains the full serving of all five components.</p> <p>Brown rice is in group H of the USDA's grain ounce equivalents chart and requires ¼ cup to credit as ½ ounce equivalent of the grains component (refer to the CSDE's resource, Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP).</p> <p>The butternut squash in this menu substitutes for the entire fruits component. Vegetables may substitute for the fruits component at any lunch or supper.</p>

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Snack menus	Meets requirements?	Explanation
Menu 1 ½ cup orange juice ½ ounce whole-grain crackers	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>This snack contains the minimum serving of two components, fruits and grains. Crackers are in group A of the USDA's grain ounce equivalents chart and require 0.4 ounce to credit as ½ ounce equivalent of the grains component (refer to the CSDE's resource, Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP). This exceeds the minimum required ½ ounce equivalent for ages 3-5.</p> <p>Since juice credits as either the fruits component or vegetables component at only one meal or snack per day, juice cannot credit at any other meal or snack that same day.</p>
Menu 2 Trail mix: ¼ cup mixed dried fruit ½ cup whole-grain round cereal (5 grams sugar per ounce) ½ cup water	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	<p>This snack contains the minimum serving of two components, fruits and grains. Since dried fruits credit as twice the volume served, the ¼-cup serving of mixed dried fruit credits as ½ cup of the fruits component. The breakfast cereal credits as the grains component because it meets the sugar limit of no more than 6 grams of sugars per ounce. A ½-cup serving of round breakfast cereal credits as ½ ounce equivalent of the grains component (refer to the CSDE's resource, Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP).</p> <p>Note: Water does not credit in CACFP meals and snacks and cannot be offered in place of the required food components. However, the USDA recommends serving water when the snack does not include milk or juice as one of the two required components.</p>
Menu 3 ½ cup unflavored low-fat milk Fruit smoothie: ¼ cup of pureed strawberries ¼ cup of pureed peaches	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	<p>This snack contains two beverages. Pureed fruits in smoothies credit as juice. The snack meal pattern requires that only one of the two snack components may be a creditable beverage, such as juice or milk.</p>

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Snack menus	Meets requirements?	Explanation
Menu 4 ½ cup pepper strips ½ cup diced watermelon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	This snack contains the minimum serving of two components, fruits and vegetables. The snack meal pattern allows any two of the five components.
Menu 5 ½ cup spinach salad 1 ounce cheese cubes	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	This snack provides the minimum serving of only one component, meat/meat alternates. Since raw leafy greens credit as half the volume served, the ½ cup of raw spinach credits as only ¼ cup of the vegetables component. This is less than the minimum ½-cup serving that is required for ages 3-5 at snack.
Menu 6 ½ ounce graham crackers ½ cup unflavored low-fat milk	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	This snack contains the minimum serving of two components, grains and milk. Graham crackers are in group B of the USDA's grain ounce equivalents chart and require a ½-ounce serving to credit as ½ ounce equivalent of the grains component (refer to the CSDE's resource, Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP). <p>Note: The USDA encourages centers and homes to limit sweet crackers (such as graham crackers and animal crackers) because of their higher added sugar content. The CSDE recommends limiting sweet crackers to no more than two times per week between all CACFP meals and snacks served to children.</p>

For more information on the CACFP meal pattern requirements for children, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage and [Creditting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.

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Bite Size is the CSDE's training program for CACFP child care facilities, including child care and Head Start centers, at risk afterschool care centers, emergency shelters, and family day care homes. Bite Size is a series of recorded training modules that provide information on the meal pattern components and crediting requirements of the CACFP meal patterns for children. Each module provides key information in 45 minutes or less. To access the Bite Size training modules and resources, visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.

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