

# Self-Assessment for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies

## Policy Component 3: Nutrition Education

This tool is intended to help child care programs assess their current nutrition and physical activity practices and identify areas in need of improvement, based on the policy recommendations of the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) *Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies*. This document is one of six self-assessment tools available in the “Documents/Forms” section of the CSDE’s *Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies* webpage.



**Step 1 — Assessment.** Check the appropriate box to indicate whether each policy recommendation is fully implemented, partially implemented, or not implemented by the child care program. Refer to the child care program’s policies and guidelines. If a policy recommendation does not apply, check “NA” (not applicable). For example, the policy recommendations for infants do not apply to an afterschool program serving school-age children.

Nutrition Education	Implementation			
Standards-Based Nutrition Education	Full	Partial	None	NA
1. The child care program provides standards-based nutrition education that reflects current science and national guidelines and is focused on children’s eating behaviors. Nutrition education aligns with state standards, such as the <i>Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards</i> and the CSDE’s <i>Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework</i> .				
2. Nutrition education is offered at least once per week as part of a planned comprehensive health education program designed to provide children with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.				
3. Nutrition education activities are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and emphasize the appealing aspects of healthy eating. They promote nutrient-rich foods, healthy food preparation methods, good nutrition practices and include enjoyable, developmentally appropriate, and culturally relevant participatory activities, e.g., cooking, taste-testing, and farm visits.				
Appropriateness of Nutrition Materials	Full	Partial	None	NA
4. The child care program reviews all nutrition education lessons and materials for accuracy, completeness, balance, cultural relevancy and consistency with the state’s and child care program’s educational goals and curriculum standards.				
5. The child care program does not use nutrition education materials with corporate logos or advertising.				

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Nutrition Education, <i>continued</i>	Implementation			
Connecting with Planned Learning Experiences	Full	Partial	None	NA
6. The Nutrition education is a part of comprehensive health education and is included in other content areas, such as language and literacy development, mathematics, science, and music.				
7. The child care program encourages instructional staff members to incorporate nutrition themes from the CSDE’s <i>Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards</i> and <i>Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework</i> into planned learning experiences, when appropriate, to reinforce and support health messages.				
8. Nutrition concepts are integrated into daily routines whenever possible, such as mealtimes and transitions.				
9. Afterschool programs integrate nutrition activities throughout the learning environment.				
Nutrition Promotion				
10. The child care program conducts nutrition education activities and promotions that involve children, families, and the community.				
11. The nutrition education program is coordinated with Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meals and snacks and other foods and beverages available in the child care environment, such as parties, meetings, and other events.				
12. Whenever possible, nutrition education activities involve the entire child care program and are linked to health-related community initiatives, services, and programs.				
13. The child care program collaborates with agencies and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent health messages to children and their families.				
Professional Development				
14. Staff members responsible for nutrition education are adequately prepared and regularly participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the nutrition education program as planned. The child care program includes relevant nutrition training at least twice a year for teachers, assistant teachers, and other staff members, as appropriate.				
15. Professional development includes orientation to appropriate state standards and curriculum frameworks, such as the <i>Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards</i> and the CSDE’s <i>Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework</i> .				
16. The child care program builds awareness among teachers, food service personnel, consultants, and other staff members about the importance of nutrition, physical activity, decreased screen time, and positive body image to academic success and lifelong wellness.				
17. Nutrition and physical activity information shared with children, families, and staff members is based on current science and national health recommendations.				

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**Step 2 — Prioritize areas for change.** Review the areas rated “none” or “partial” and identify the priority areas for change in your child care program. For implementation strategies and resources, refer to the CSDE’s *Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies*.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

**Step 3 — Develop an action plan for each priority area** For more information, refer to the CSDE’s action planning form and sample completed action planning form in the “[Documents/Forms](#)” section of the CSDE’s [Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies](#) webpage.

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### Resources

Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/CCPolicy/Child\\_Care\\_Action\\_Guide.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/CCPolicy/Child_Care_Action_Guide.pdf)

CACFP Infant Meal Pattern (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Infants/Infant\\_Meal\\_Pattern\\_CACFP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/Infants/Infant_Meal_Pattern_CACFP.pdf)

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Meal-Patterns-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs>

Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Child-Care-Nutrition-and-Physical-Activity-Policies>

Feeding Infants in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Feeding-Infants-in-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs>

Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (USDA):

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/feeding-infants-child-and-adult-care-food-program>

Guide to Meal Modifications in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Guide\\_Meal\\_Modifications\\_CACFP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Guide_Meal_Modifications_CACFP.pdf)

Resource List for Nutrition Education (CSDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/Resources\\_Nutrition\\_Education.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/Resources/Resources_Nutrition_Education.pdf)

Self-assessment of Child Care Practices for Meal Modifications in the CACFP (SDE):

[https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Assessment\\_Meal\\_Modifications\\_CACFP.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/SpecDiet/Assessment_Meal_Modifications_CACFP.pdf)

Special Diets in CACFP Child Care Programs (CSDE webpage):

<https://portal.ct.gov/SDE/Nutrition/Special-Diets-in-CACFP-Child-Care-Programs>

Standards, Curriculum, and Assessment (Connecticut Office of Early Childhood):

<https://www.ctoec.org/standards-curriculum-and-assessment-2/>

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For more information, visit the CSDE's [Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies](#) webpage, or contact the [CACFP staff](#) in the CSDE's Bureau of Child Nutrition Programs, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at [https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/CCPolicy/Assess\\_Policies\\_Nutrition\\_Education.pdf](https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/CCPolicy/Assess_Policies_Nutrition_Education.pdf).

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Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights  
1400 Independence Avenue, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410; or
2. fax: (833) 256-1665 or (202) 690-7442; or
3. email: [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov)

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