



HEALTHIER CACFP AWARD RESOURCE BOOK

Recognizing Excellence in Nutrition and Physical Activity in Child Care



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August 2012 Utah Child Nutrition Program Edition

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GENERAL INFORMATION

What is it?

The Healthier Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Award is a recognition system that supports the wellness efforts of child care centers participating in CACFP. Child care centers taking steps to improve the nutrition, physical activity, nutrition education and/or environment for children in their care can apply to win an award in one or more of these categories. Three award levels are offered: Honors, High Honors and Highest Honors.

Why is it important?

With one in five children being overweight or obese by the age of six, child care centers play an essential role in the prevention of childhood obesity. Child caregivers have an opportunity to have a positive impact on children's healthy development by encouraging children to develop healthy habits at a young age.

Am I eligible to apply?

Participation in the CACFP and compliance with CACFP regulations is required to be eligible for the award. Meeting the award criteria and winning an award does not replace CACFP requirements. Applicants are required to be in good standing with the CACFP, defined as having completed and implemented all corrective actions from the previous compliance review and having not been seriously deficient in the past two years, at the time of application.

How do I apply?

Interested applicants can obtain a Healthier CACFP Award Application from the Utah State Office of Education. The application includes criteria in four categories: Menus, Physical Activity, Nutrition Education, and Environment. Applicants can choose which categories they would like to apply for and at which level, and then submit the application with required supporting documents to the **Utah State Office of Education Child Nutrition Program**. This resource book, which explains “why” and “how to” for each criterion listed in the application, will assist applicants by providing valuable resources and instructions on implementing the criteria.

What do I win?

Winners are recognized with awards issued jointly by the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, and State agency that showcase the child care center's achievement in the community. Specific awards are based on the award level achieved and include banners, certificates, letters to parents, and logo stickers that can be posted to announce the high wellness priority of the center. At the highest award level, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, officials will send an individualized congratulatory award presentation to the winners. Contact the Utah State Office of Education to find out more about the specific awards being offered to Healthier CACFP Award winners.



MENUS CRITERIA

Criterion 1	Reimbursable meals meet the USDA standards. All meals for one month of the submitted menus meet the USDA meal patterns. Institution has had a review within the last three (3) years, and all corrective actions have been completed.
Why	In order to be eligible for participation, compliance with CACFP regulations is required. Centers must be in good standing, having completed all necessary corrective actions and not having been seriously deficient in the past two (2) years at the time of application.
How To/ Resources	Check in with the Utah State Office of Education (USOE) to confirm your standing with CACFP regulations. If you are not currently participating with CACFP, contact the USOE to learn the steps for application and approval.
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit one (1) month of menus for meals claimed.

Criterion 2	Different fruits and different vegetables are served every day of the week at lunch. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fresh and/or frozen fruit or vegetables must be served each week. ■ Fried, breaded, or high-fat vegetables (i.e., Tater Tots®, French fries) are limited.
Why	Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables ensures that a broad range of vitamins and minerals are consumed. The body cannot make or store vitamin C, so a good source is needed each day. Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables tend to have less sugar and/or sodium than canned, and may provide more nutrients. Fried vegetables provide extra sodium and calories.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fruit may be fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. Dried fruit must have no added sweeteners. Canned fruit must be packed in juice or light syrup. ■ Fruits and vegetables must be of an appropriate texture based on the child’s development to prevent choking. ■ Sources of vitamins A and C in fruits and vegetables are identified as good, better, and best in Appendix B of <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i>: http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/buildingblocks.html
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Different vegetables and fruits are served every day of the week at lunch. ■ Fresh and/or frozen fruit and vegetables are served a total of two (2) times per week. ■ Fried, breaded, or high-fat vegetables are limited to three (3) times or less per month.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe fruits and vegetables on the menu as canned, fresh, or frozen. ■ Identify vegetables as homemade and baked, if applicable.

Criterion 3	Only low-fat (1% or less) and/or fat-free (skim) milk are served to participants over age two. Only whole milk is served to participants between the ages of one and two. Only low-fat (1% or less) and/or fat-free (skim) milk are served to participants over age two (2).
Why	Whole and 2% milk provide extra unnecessary calories and saturated fat for children over the age of two (2). It is recommended that children ages 1–2 receive whole milk to supply adequate fat and calories for the rapid brain development that occurs during this age.
How To/ Resources	<i>Feeding Infants, A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Program:</i> http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all meals that serve milk.
Evaluation Method	Identify the type of milk and age groups served on the menu.

Criterion 4	Water is served as an extra item when two (2) non-beverage creditable food items are served as snacks. (Water itself is not a creditable item; it is always an extra.)
Why	Water provides fluids without adding calories. Children benefit from learning that water is an acceptable beverage.
How To/ Resources	Serve water with snacks when no other beverage is being served, at other mealtimes, and throughout the day. Young children should not be served too much water before and during mealtimes since excess water may lead to meal displacement, reducing the amount of food and milk consumed by children.
How Often	This criterion is required at all snacks when two non-beverage creditable food items are served.
Evaluation Method	Identify on the menu when water is served.

Criterion 5	Cooked dry beans or split peas must be served each week (includes canned beans and canned split peas).
Why	Dry beans are a low-cost source of many nutrients that are lacking in children’s diets.
How To/ Resources	Cooked dry beans or split peas include, but are not limited to, black beans, kidney beans, lentils, refried beans, pinto beans, navy beans, and great northern beans. This category does not include green beans or green peas.
How Often	Serve a total of one (1) time per week.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify on menus. ■ Submit receipts showing bean purchases.

Criterion 6	100% fruit juice is limited.
Why	Too much fruit juice can crowd out other foods and provide extra sugar and calories. Children tend to fill up on juice and may not eat much during meals or snacks. Drinking juice throughout the day has been associated with dental cavities.
How To/ Resources	Offer whole fruits and vegetables, which provide more fiber and less sugar than 100% fruit juice. When children are thirsty, the best drink to offer them is plain, fresh water.
How Often	Serve one (1) time or less per day.
Evaluation Method	Identify on the menu when juice is served.

Criterion 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole grain foods are served each week (not the same each day). ■ Dry cereal is served at least once each week. Whole grain cereal may be counted toward the weekly whole grain servings. ■ Sweet grain/breads are limited.
Why	Whole grain foods provide more fiber and other nutrients than refined grains. Eating more whole grains is associated with reduced risk of several chronic diseases including diabetes, heart disease, stroke and obesity.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A serving of whole grain food is equal to a serving of Grains/Breads as defined in the <i>Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs</i> (http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/foodbuyingguide.html), pages 3.15–3.16, according to the child’s age. To count as a whole grain, the food products served must have whole grain listed first on the ingredient statement. Scratch recipes must have whole grain as the primary ingredient by weight or measure. ■ Sweet grains and breads are noted with a footnote of 3 or 4 as defined on the grains/breads chart in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i>, pages 3.15–3.16.
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Serve whole grain foods at least three (3) times per week. ■ Any dry cereal can be served. ■ Limit sweet grains/breads at snacks and breakfast to two (2) times per week or less.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify whole grain items on menus. ■ Submit an ingredient list for whole grain items. ■ Submit recipes for center-made items.

Criterion 8	Processed, preserved, and higher fat meats and entrees (hot dogs, lunch meat, breaded commercially-prepared meats such as fish sticks and chicken nuggets, and purchased prepared entrees) are limited.
Why	Processed and preserved meats and entrees provide extra sodium, and cured meats provide nitrates. Too much sodium is associated with high blood pressure, stroke, and heart disease. Higher fat meat and entrees usually provide extra saturated fat and calories.
How To/ Resources	This category includes fried meats, hot dogs, bologna, commercially prepared combination foods, sausages, salami, and breaded commercially-prepared meats such as fish sticks and chicken nuggets.
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Processed and preserved meats and entrees are limited no more than two (2) times per month. ■ Fried meats are limited to no more than two (2) times per month.
Evaluation Method	Identify items on the menu that are homemade and/or baked.

Criterion 9	Locally grown and/or in-season foods are purchased.
Why	Purchasing locally grown foods supports the local economy. In-season foods are usually fresh and often cost less than when purchased out of season.
How To/ Resources	http://www.foodroutes.org/
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Locally grown foods are purchased and served one (1) time per month. ■ Seasonal fruits and vegetables are included as often as possible.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify locally grown items on menus. ■ Identify seasonal items on menus.



MENUS CRITERIA

Criterion 1	Reimbursable meals meet the USDA standards. All meals for one month submitted menus meet the USDA meal patterns. Institution has had a review within the last three (3) years, and all corrective actions have been completed.
Why	In order to be eligible for participation, compliance with CACFP regulations is required. Centers must be in good standing, having completed all necessary corrective actions and having not been seriously deficient in the past two (2) years at the time of application.
How To/ Resources	Check in with the Utah State Office of Education to confirm your standing with CACFP regulations. If you are not currently participating with CACFP, contact the CACFP state agency to learn the steps for application and approval.
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit one (1) month of menus for meals claimed.

Criterion 2	<p>Different fruits and different vegetables are served every day of the week at lunch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Good, better, and best sources of vitamin A are served three (3) or more times per week. ■ Fresh and/or frozen fruit or vegetables must be served each week. ■ Fried, breaded, or high-fat vegetables (i.e., Tater Tots®, French fries) are limited.
Why	Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables ensures that a broad range of vitamins and minerals are consumed. The body cannot make or store vitamin C, so a good source is needed each day. Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables tend to have less sugar and/or sodium than canned, and may provide more nutrients. Fried vegetables provide extra sodium and calories.
How To/ Resources	<p>Fruit may be fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. Dried fruit must have no added sweetener; canned fruit must be packed in juice or light syrup.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Fruits and vegetables must be of appropriate texture based on the child’s development to prevent choking. ■ Vitamin A and C fruits and vegetables are identified as good, better and best sources in Appendix B of <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i>: http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/buildingblocks.html
How Often	<p>Different vegetables and fruits are served every day of the week at lunch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Good, better, and best sources of vitamin A are served three (3) or more times per week. ■ Fresh and/or frozen fruit and vegetables are served a total of three (3) times per week. ■ Fried, breaded, or high-fat vegetables are limited to two (2) times per month or less.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Describe fruits and vegetables on the menu as canned, fresh, or frozen. ■ Identify vegetables as homemade and baked, if applicable.

Criterion 3	Only low-fat (1% or less) and/or fat-free (skim) milk are served to participants over age two. Only whole milk is served to participants between the ages 1 and 2.
Why	Whole and 2% milk provide unnecessary extra calories and saturated fat for children over the age of two. It is recommended that children ages 1–2 receive whole milk to supply adequate fat and calories for the rapid brain development that occurs during this age.
How To/ Resources	<i>Feeding Infants, A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Program:</i> http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all meals that serve milk.
Evaluation Method	Identify the type of milk and the age groups served on the menu.

Criterion 4	Water is served as an extra item when two (2) non-beverage creditable food items are served at snacks. (Water itself is not a creditable item; it is always an extra.)
Why	Water provides fluids without adding calories. Children benefit from learning that water is an acceptable beverage.
How To/ Resources	Serve water with snacks when no other beverage is being served, at other mealtimes, and throughout the day. Young children should not be served too much water before and during mealtimes since excess water may lead to meal displacement, reducing the amount of food and milk consumed by children.
How Often	This criterion is required at all snacks that serve two (2) non-beverage creditable food items.
Evaluation Method	Identify water when it is served on the menu.

Criterion 5	Cooked dry beans or split peas must be served each week (includes canned beans and canned split peas).
Why	Dry beans are a low cost source of many nutrients that are lacking in children’s diets.
How To/ Resources	Dry beans include, but are not limited to, black beans, kidney beans, lentils, refried beans, pinto beans, navy beans, and great northern beans. This category does not include green beans and green peas.
How Often	Serve a total of two (2) times per week.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify cooked dry beans or split peas on menus. ■ Submit a purchase receipt for dry beans or split peas.

Criterion 6	100% fruit juice is limited.
Why	Too much fruit juice can crowd out other foods and provide extra sugar and calories. Children tend to fill up on juice and may not eat much during meals or snacks. Drinking juice throughout the day has been associated with dental cavities.
How To/ Resources	Offer whole fruits and vegetables which provide more fiber and less sugar than 100% fruit juice. When children are thirsty, the best drink to offer them is plain, fresh water.
How Often	Serve fruit juice three (3) times per week or less.
Evaluation Method	Identify fruit juice when served on the menu.

Criterion 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole grain foods are served each week (not the same each day). ■ Dry cereal is served at least once each week. Whole grain cereal may be counted toward the weekly whole grain servings. ■ Sweet grain/breads are limited.
Why	Whole grain foods provide more fiber and other nutrients than refined grains. Eating more whole grains is associated with reduced risk of several chronic diseases, including diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and obesity.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A serving of whole grain food is equal to a serving of Grains/Breads as defined in the <i>Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs</i> (http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/foodbuyingguide.html), pages 3.15–3.16, according to the child’s age. To count as a whole grain, the food products served must have whole grain listed first on the ingredient statement. Scratch recipes must have whole grain as the primary ingredient by weight or measure. ■ Sweet grains and breads are noted with a footnote of 3 or 4 as defined on the grains/breads chart in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i>, pages 3.15–3.16.
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole grain foods are served at least five (5) times per week. ■ Dry cereal with sugar is limited to six (6) grams per ounce and should be served as a whole grain serving once a week. ■ Sweet grains/breads at a snack or breakfast are limited to one (1) time per week or less.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify whole grain items on menus. ■ Submit ingredient list for whole grain items. ■ Submit recipes for center-made items.

Criterion 8	Processed, preserved, and higher fat meats and entrees (hot dogs, lunch meat, breaded commercially-prepared meats such as fish sticks and chicken nuggets, and purchased prepared entrees) are limited.
Why	Processed and preserved meats and entrees provide extra sodium, and cured meats provide nitrates. Too much sodium is associated with high blood pressure, stroke, and heart disease. Higher fat meats and entrees usually provide extra saturated fat and calories.
How To/ Resources	This category includes fried meats, hot dogs, bologna, commercially prepared combination foods, sausages, salami, and breaded commercially-prepared meats such as fish sticks and chicken nuggets.
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Processed and preserved meats and entrees are limited to two (2) times per month or less. ■ Fried meats are limited to two (2) times per month or less.
Evaluation Method	Identify on the menu if the items are homemade and baked.

Criterion 9	Locally grown and/or in-season foods are purchased.
Why	Purchasing locally grown foods supports the local economy. In-season foods are usually fresh and often cost less than when purchased out of season.
How To/ Resources	http://www.foodroutes.org/
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Locally grown foods are purchased and served two (2) times per month. ■ Seasonal fruits and vegetables are included as often as possible.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify locally grown items on menus. ■ Identify seasonal items on menus.



MENUS CRITERIA

Criterion 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reimbursable meals meet the USDA standards. All meals for one month of submitted menus meet the USDA meal patterns. Institution had a review within the last three (3) years, and all corrective actions have been completed.
Why	In order to be eligible for participation, compliance with CACFP regulations is required. Centers must be in good standing, having completed all necessary corrective actions and having not been seriously deficient in the past two (2) years at the time of application.
How To/ Resources	Check in with the Utah State Office of Education to confirm your standing with CACFP regulations. If you are not currently participating with CACFP, contact the CACFP state agency to learn the steps for application and approval.
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit one (1) month of menus for meals claimed.

Criterion 2	<p>Different fruits and different vegetables are served every day of the week at lunch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good, better, and best sources of vitamin A are served three (3) or more times per week. Good, better, and best sources of vitamin C are served each day. Fresh and/or frozen fruit or vegetables must be served each week. Fried, breaded, or high-fat vegetables (i.e., Tater Tots®, French fries) are limited.
Why	Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables ensures that a broad range of vitamins and minerals are consumed. The body cannot make or store vitamin C, so a good source is needed each day. Fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables tend to have less sugar and/or sodium than canned and may provide more nutrients. Fried vegetables provide extra sodium and calories.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fruit may be fresh, frozen, canned, or dried. Dried fruit must have no added sweetener. Canned fruit must be packed in juice or light syrup. Fruits and vegetables must be of appropriate texture based on the child’s development to prevent choking. Vitamins A and C fruits and vegetables are identified as good, better, and best sources in Appendix B of <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i>: http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/buildingblocks.html
How Often	<p>Different vegetables and fruits are served every day of the week at lunch.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good, better, and best sources of vitamin A are served three (3) or more times per week. Good, better, and best sources of vitamin C are served every day. Fresh and/or frozen fruit and vegetables are served a total of five (5) times per week. Fried, breaded, or high-fat vegetables are not served.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Describe fruits and vegetables on the menu as canned, fresh, or frozen. Identify vegetables as homemade and baked, if applicable.

Criterion 3	Only low-fat (1% or less) and/or fat-free (skim) milk are served to participants over age two. Only whole milk is served to participants between the ages of 1 and 2.
Why	Whole and 2% milk provide extra unnecessary calories and saturated fat for children over the age of 2. It is recommended that children ages 1 and 2 receive whole milk to supply adequate fat and calories for the rapid brain development that occurs during this age.
How To/ Resources	<i>Feeding Infants, A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Program:</i> http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all meals that serve milk.
Evaluation Method	Identify the type of milk and the age groups served on the menu.

Criterion 4	Water is served as an extra item when two (2) non-beverage creditable food items are served at snacks. (Water itself is not a creditable item; it is always an extra.)
Why	Water provides fluids without adding calories. Children benefit from learning that water is an acceptable beverage.
How To/ Resources	Serve water with snacks when no other beverage is being served, at other mealtimes, and throughout the day. Young children should not be served too much water before and during mealtimes since excess water may lead to meal displacement, reducing the amount of food and milk consumed by children.
How Often	This criterion is required at all snacks that serve two (2) non-beverage creditable food items.
Evaluation Method	Identify when served on the menu.

Criterion 5	Cooked dry beans or split peas must be served each week (includes canned beans and canned split peas).
Why	Dry beans are a low cost source of many nutrients that are lacking in children’s diets.
How To/ Resources	Dry beans include, but are not limited to, black beans, kidney beans, lentils, refried beans, pinto beans, navy beans, and great northern beans. This category does not include green beans and green peas.
How Often	Serve a total of three (3) times per week.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify on menus. ■ Submit purchase receipt(s).

Criterion 6	100% fruit juice is limited.
Why	Too much fruit juice can crowd out other foods and provide extra sugar and calories. Children tend to fill up on juice and may not eat much during meals or snacks. Drinking juice throughout the day has been associated with dental cavities.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Offer whole fruits and vegetables, which provide more fiber and less sugar than 100% fruit juice. ■ When children are thirsty, the best drink to offer them is plain, fresh water.
How Often	Serve two (2) times per week or less.
Evaluation Method	Identify on the menu when fruit juice is served.

Criterion 7	Whole grain foods are served each week (not the same each day). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Dry cereal is served at least once each week. Whole grain cereal may be counted toward the weekly whole grain servings. ■ Sweet grain/breads are limited.
Why	Whole grain foods provide more fiber and other nutrients than refined grains. Eating more whole grains is associated with reduced risk of several chronic diseases including diabetes, heart disease, stroke and obesity.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ A serving of whole grain food is equal to a serving of Grains/Breads as defined in the <i>Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs</i> (http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/foodbuyingguide.html), pages 3.15–3.16, according to the child’s age. To count as a whole grain, the food products served must have whole grain listed first on the ingredient statement. Scratch recipes must have whole grain as the primary ingredient by weight or measure. ■ Sweet grains and breads are noted with a footnote of 3 or 4 as defined on the grains/breads chart in the <i>Food Buying Guide</i>, pages 3.15–3.16.
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Whole grain foods are served at least seven (7) times per week. ■ Dry cereal with sugar is limited to six (6) grams per ounce and must have at least two (2) grams of fiber per ounce. ■ Sweet grains/breads at snacks and breakfast are limited to two (2) times per month or less.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify whole grain items on menus. ■ Submit an ingredient list for whole grain items. ■ Submit recipes for center-made items.

Criterion 8	Processed, preserved, and higher fat meats and entrees (hot dogs, lunch meat, breaded commercially-prepared meats such as fish sticks and chicken nuggets, and purchased prepared entrees) are limited.
Why	Processed and preserved meats and entrees provide extra sodium, and cured meats provide nitrates. Too much sodium is associated with high blood pressure, stroke, and heart disease. Higher fat meats and entrees usually provide extra saturated fat and calories.
How To/ Resources	This category includes fried meats, hot dogs, bologna, commercially prepared combination foods, sausages, salami, and breaded commercially-prepared meats such as fish sticks and chicken nuggets.
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Processed and preserved meats and entrees are limited to one (1) time per month. ■ Fried meats are not served.
Evaluation Method	Identify items on the menu that are homemade and baked.

Criterion 9	Locally grown and/or in-season foods are purchased.
Why	Purchasing locally grown foods supports the local economy. In-season foods are usually fresh and often cost less than when purchased out of season.
How To/ Resources	http://www.foodroutes.org/
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Locally grown foods are purchased and served three (3) times per month. ■ Seasonal fruits and vegetables are included as often as possible.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify locally grown items on menus. ■ Identify seasonal items on menus.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CRITERIA

Criterion 1	Television, DVD, and video watching and computer use are prohibited for children under the age of two.
Why	Children’s brains and bodies grow at an amazing rate in the first few years of life. When a young child is watching a screen, he/she is missing out on other important neural stimulation as well as fine and gross motor development skills. In addition, allowing infants and toddlers (18–24 months of age) to watch television can lead to shortened attention spans.
How To/ Resources	“Active Bodies, Active Minds (WAABAM) Toolkit” Screen Time Reduction Resources for Early Childhood Professionals: http://depts.washington.edu/tvhealth/resources_prof.htm
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy.

Criterion 2	Screen time of educational/movement material is limited to no more than 30 to 60 minutes per day.
Why	Limited educational screen use can be constructive in child development. However, excessive use can inhibit physical movement and the development of social or cognitive skills.
How To/ Resources	“Active Bodies, Active Minds (WAABAM) Toolkit” Screen Time Reduction Resources for Early Childhood Professionals: http://depts.washington.edu/tvhealth/resources_prof.htm
How Often	Limit screen time to no more than 60 minutes per day.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of daily schedules.

Criterion 3	Moderate to vigorous physical activity is provided during each full day of care (8- to 9-hour day) for at least 45–120 minutes.
Why	Children need an outlet for their abundant energy! When children are allowed to develop their gross motor skills through vigorous play, they are calmer and able to focus on learning during educational times.
How To/ Resources	Integrating Physical Activity into the Complete School Day: http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/publications/teachingTools/upload/PA-During-School-Day.pdf
How Often	Provide 45 to 60 minutes (3/4 to 1 hour) of physical activity each day.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of daily schedules.

Criterion 4	Periods of inactivity (at one time), excluding nap time, are limited.
Why	Children need an outlet for their abundant energy! When children are allowed to develop their gross motor skills through vigorous play, they are calmer and able to focus on learning during educational times.
How To/ Resources	National Association for Sport and Physical Education: www.naspeinfo.org
How Often	Inactivity should be limited to 30 minutes or less two (2) times per day. OR for 60 minutes or less one (1) time per day.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of daily schedules.

Criterion 5	The physical activity provided includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Both indoor and outdoor activities. ■ Unstructured physical activity (free play). ■ Structured physical activity (age appropriate activities guided by the caregiver).
Why	A mix of physical activity settings means that children have opportunities to use their imagination and initiative during free play, and ensures they develop gross motor and social skills (sharing, waiting your turn, the joy of teamwork) during structured play and sport.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Association for Sport and Physical Education: www.naspeinfo.org. ■ “Stories in Motion” is a series of short stories that include action words which prompt bursts of physical activity. Utilize these stories in your classroom for short physical activity breaks. http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=373&Itemid=1332#StoriesMotion
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Both indoor and outdoor activities are provided daily. ■ Unstructured physical activity (free play) is provided for at least 20 minutes. ■ Structured physical activity (age appropriate and guided by the caregiver) is provided for at least 20 minutes.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy and indicate the types of activity on the daily schedule.

Criterion 6	Active play time is not restricted as punishment.
Why	In many children, restricting activity to punish leads to yet more misbehavior. It is important to find other ways to motivate children rather than using restriction of play time as a punishment.
How To/ Resources	National Association for Sport and Physical Education: www.naspeinfo.org
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CRITERIA

Criterion 1	Television, DVD, and video watching and computer use are prohibited for children under the age of two.
Why	Children’s brains and bodies grow at an amazing rate in the first few years of life. When a young child is watching a screen, he/she is missing out on other important neural stimulation as well as fine and gross motor development skills. In addition, allowing infants and toddlers (18–24 months of age) to watch television can lead to shortened attention spans.
How To/ Resources	“Active Bodies, Active Minds (WAABAM) Toolkit” Screen Time Reduction Resources for Early Childhood Professionals: http://depts.washington.edu/tvhealth/resources_prof.htm
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy.

Criterion 2	Screen time of educational/movement material is limited to no more than 30–60 minutes per day.
Why	Limited educational screen use can be constructive in child development. However, excessive use can inhibit physical movement and the development of social or cognitive skills.
How To/ Resources	“Active Bodies, Active Minds (WAABAM) Toolkit” Screen Time Reduction Resources for Early Childhood Professionals: http://depts.washington.edu/tvhealth/resources_prof.htm
How Often	Screen time is limited to 45–60 minutes per day.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of daily schedules.

Criterion 3	Moderate to vigorous physical activity is provided during each full day of care (8- to 9-hour day) for at least 45–120 minutes.
Why	Children need an outlet for their abundant energy! When children are allowed to develop their gross motor skills through vigorous play, they are calmer and able to focus on learning during educational times.
How To/ Resources	Integrating Physical Activity into the Complete School Day: http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/publications/teachingTools/upload/PA-During-School-Day.pdf
How Often	Physical activity is provided for 60–90 minutes (1 to 1.5 hours) each day.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of daily schedules.

Criterion 4	Periods of inactivity (at one time), excluding nap time, are limited.
Why	Children need an outlet for their abundant energy! When children are allowed to develop their gross motor skills through vigorous play, they are calmer and able to focus on learning during educational times.
How To/ Resources	National Association for Sport and Physical Education: www.naspeinfo.org
How Often	Inactivity is limited to 30 minutes or less one (1) time per day.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of daily schedules.

Criterion 5	The physical activity provided includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Both indoor and outdoor activities. ■ Unstructured physical activity (free play). ■ Structured physical activity (age-appropriate activities guided by the caregiver).
Why	A mix of physical activity settings means that children have opportunities to use their imagination and initiative during free play, and ensures they develop gross motor and social skills (sharing, waiting your turn, the joy of teamwork) during structured play and sport.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Association for Sport and Physical Education: www.naspeinfo.org. ■ “Stories in Motion” is a series of short stories that include action words which prompt bursts of physical activity. Utilize these stories in your classroom for short physical activity breaks. http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=373&Itemid=1332#StoriesMotion
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Both indoor and outdoor activities are provided daily ■ Unstructured physical activity (free play) is provided for at least 30 minutes. ■ Structured physical activity (age appropriate and guided by the caregiver) is provided for at least 30 minutes.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy and indicate the types of activity on the daily schedule.

Criterion 6	Active play time is not restricted as punishment.
Why	In many children, restricting activity to punish leads to yet more misbehavior. It is important to find other ways to motivate children rather than using restriction of play time as a punishment.
How To/ Resources	National Association for Sport and Physical Education: www.naspeinfo.org
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy.

Criterion 7	Physical activity curricula that encourage a variety of basic movement and manipulative skills are utilized at least weekly.
Why	A consistent physical activity curriculum ensures children’s gross motor development in a variety of areas and school physical education readiness.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NASPE offers an array of teaching tools and guidance documents to help you engage with your students, implement best practices, educate parents, and motivate children to engage in a lifetime of physical activity. http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/publications/teachingTools/ ■ The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance (AAHPERD) has created the <i>Let’s Move in School Physical Education Teacher Toolkit</i>. This free online toolkit will provide you with easy-to-use resources and activities every month. http://www.aahperd.org/letsmoveinschool/tools/peteachers/index.cfm
How Often	Curriculums are utilized at least weekly.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of the physical activity curriculums utilized.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CRITERIA

Criterion 1	Television, DVD, and video watching and computer use are prohibited for children under the age of two.
Why	Children’s brains and bodies grow at an amazing rate in the first few years of life. When a young child is watching a screen, he/she is missing out on other important neural stimulation as well as fine and gross motor development skills. In addition, allowing infants and toddlers (18–24 months of age) to watch television can lead to shortened attention spans.
How To/ Resources	“Active Bodies, Active Minds (WAABAM) Toolkit” Screen Time Reduction Resources for Early Childhood Professionals: http://depts.washington.edu/tvhealth/resources_prof.htm
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy.

Criterion 2	Screen time of educational/movement material is limited to no more than 30-60 minutes per day.
Why	Limited educational screen use can be constructive in child development. However, excessive use can inhibit physical movement and the development of social or cognitive skills.
How To/ Resources	“Active Bodies, Active Minds (WAABAM) Toolkit” Screen Time Reduction Resources for Early Childhood Professionals: http://depts.washington.edu/tvhealth/resources_prof.htm
How Often	Screen time is no more than 30–45 minutes each day.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of daily schedules.

Criterion 3	Moderate to vigorous physical activity is provided during each full day of care (8- to 9-hour day) for at least 45–120 minutes.
Why	Children need an outlet for their abundant energy! When children are allowed to develop their gross motor skills through vigorous play, they are calmer and able to focus on learning during educational times.
How To/ Resources	Integrating Physical Activity into the Complete School Day: http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/publications/teachingTools/upload/PA-During-School-Day.pdf
How Often	Activity is provided for 90–120 minutes (1.5 to 2 hours) each day.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of daily schedules.

Criterion 4	Periods of inactivity (at one time), excluding nap time, are limited.
Why	Children need an outlet for their abundant energy! When children are allowed to develop their gross motor skills through vigorous play, they are calmer and able to focus on learning during educational times.
How To/ Resources	National Association for Sport and Physical Education: www.naspeinfo.org text
How Often	Inactivity is limited to 15 minutes or less one (1) time daily.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of daily schedules.

Criterion 5	The physical activity provided includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Both indoor and outdoor activities. ■ Unstructured physical activity (free play). ■ Structured physical activity (age-appropriate activities guided by the caregiver).
Why	A mix of physical activity settings means that children have opportunities to use their imagination and initiative during free play and ensures they develop gross motor and social skills (sharing, waiting your turn, the joy of teamwork) during structured play and sport.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Association for Sport and Physical Education: www.naspeinfo.org ■ “Stories in Motion” is a series of short stories that include action words which prompt bursts of physical activity. Utilize these stories in your classroom for short physical activity breaks. http://educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=373&Itemid=1332#StoriesMotion
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Both indoor and outdoor activities are provided daily. ■ Unstructured physical activity (free play) is provided for at least 45 minutes. ■ Structured physical activity (age appropriate and guided by the caregiver) is provided for at least 45 minutes.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy and indicate the types of activity on a daily schedule.

Criterion 6	Active play time is not restricted as punishment.
Why	In many children, restricting activity to punish leads to yet more misbehavior. It is important to find other ways to motivate children rather than using restriction of play time as a punishment.
How To/ Resources	National Association for Sport and Physical Education: www.naspeinfo.org
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy.

Criterion 7	Physical activity curricula that encourage a variety of basic movement and manipulative skills are utilized at least weekly.
Why	A consistent physical activity curriculum ensures children’s gross motor development in a variety of areas and school physical education readiness.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ NASPE offers an array of teaching tools and guidance documents to help you engage with your students, implement best practices, educate parents, and motivate children to engage in a lifetime of physical activity. http://www.aahperd.org/naspe/publications/teachingTools/ ■ The American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation & Dance (AAHPERD) has created the <i>Let’s Move in School Physical Education Teacher Toolkit</i>. This free online toolkit will provide you with easy-to-use resources and activities every month. http://www.aahperd.org/letsmoveinschool/tools/peteachers/index.cfm
How Often	Curriculums are utilized at least weekly.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of the physical activity curriculums utilized.

Criterion 8	Physical activity ideas and resources are sent home with parents at least monthly.
Why	Caregivers can be role models for parents and increase the chances that education received while in child care is reinforced at home.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ “WA Active Bodies, Active Minds (WAABAM) Toolkit” Screen Time Reduction Resources for Parents: http://depts.washington.edu/tvhealth/resources_family.htm ■ “Make Family Time an Active Time”: http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthylifestyle/PlayHard/makefamilytimeanactivetime.htm
How Often	Physical activity ideas and resources are sent home with parents at least monthly.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of the parent newsletters which contain this information.



NUTRITION EDUCATION CRITERIA

Criterion 1	Caregivers participate in CACFP family-style meals and a staff member is seated at each dining table with the children. Caregivers eat the CACFP meals with children and serve as role models at mealtime.
Why	Eating family-style meals encourages independence by allowing children to learn how to serve themselves, and lets them choose what they will eat and how much. It also gives them a chance to observe providers modeling good table manners and healthy eating.
How To/ Resources	<p>Role play mealtime using different scenarios.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University of Idaho: Feeding Young Children in Group Settings, http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/feeding/ 2. NFSMI CARE Connection Curriculum, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=199 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo for Childcare, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Setting the Stage: Policies and Best Practices for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Early Childhood Settings</i>, Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/lowa/Setting%20the%20Stage%20Child%20Development%20Homes.pdf
How Often	This criterion is required at every meal.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a photo of a family-style meal. ■ Submit the policy for family-style meal service.

Criterion 2	Parents have knowledge of the center's participation in CACFP, and the CACFP meal pattern is shared with parents.
Why	Parents' understanding of meal pattern requirements promotes respect for and modeling of caregivers' use of nutritional best practices.
How To/ Resources	<p>Include CACFP information in center policies and in the child enrollment packet. Present the information at parent meetings. Include the information in the parent newsletter.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CACFP Meal Pattern Guidelines, http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal_Patterns.htm 2. NFSMI CARE Connection Curriculum, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=199 3. USDA Nibbles for Health, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/nibbles.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit a sample of parent communication.

Criterion 3	Breastfeeding resources are promoted and available to parents.
Why	Breast milk is, in most cases, the healthiest choice for infants. It also prevents excess weight gain. Caregivers' support significantly influences parents' decisions to continue breastfeeding. Mothers who feel strong social support to breastfeed are more likely to continue with it for at least six (6) months (the minimum recommended time).
How To/ Resources	<p>Include breastfeeding information in center policies and in the enrollment packet. Discuss the information with parents when enrolling an infant.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) handouts, http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/publications.htm 2. WIC Breastfeeding, Anytime, Anywhere (poster), http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/publications.htm 3. NFSMI (National Food Service Management Institute) Mealtime Memo, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Feeding Infants: A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs</i>, http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit sample of breastfeeding resources.

Criterion 4	Quantities of foods served are enough to meet children's appetites and energy needs.
Why	Children grow at variable rates and their calorie needs fluctuate. In addition, children who are hungry may have difficulty focusing and may feel irritable and unhappy.
How To/ Resources	<p>Learn how to use the Food Buying Guide and USDA recipes. Practice completing the food production record.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>USDA Food Buying Guide</i>, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/foodbuyingguide.html 2. <i>USDA Recipes for Child Care</i>, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/childcare_recipes.html 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo for Childcare, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Feeding Infants: A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs</i>, http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all meals.
Evaluation Method	Submit one week of meal production records.

Criterion 5	New foods are introduced with familiar foods, or familiar foods are prepared in new ways.
Why	Exposure, modeling, and social support for trying new foods encourages children to become comfortable with different types/preparations of foods. Serving new foods along with familiar foods ensures that children can feel secure, that they can satisfy hunger with familiar foods while cautiously tasting new foods.
How To/ Resources	Resources: 1. <i>Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guide for Outside-of-Home Child Care</i> , http://nrckids.org/CFOC3/index.html 2. <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i> , http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/buildingblocks.html
How Often	This criterion is required as often as possible.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written narrative describing examples of new foods and/or submit recipes.

Criterion 6	Children are taught to eat appropriately for age and developmental ability.
Why	Children's digestive systems and motor skills for swallowing and feeding themselves progress at variable rates. It is critical that caregivers protect children from harmful bacteria, allergens, and choking by providing developmentally appropriate foods.
How To/ Resources	Resources: 1. <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i> , http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/buildingblocks.html/ 2. <i>University of Idaho Feeding Young Children in Group Settings, Building Mealtime Environments and Relationships</i> , http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/feeding/
How Often	This criterion is required at all meals.
Evaluation Method	Submit written examples of adapting mealtime to developmental readiness.

Criterion 7	Nutrition education is woven into activities throughout the day and provided through a standardized curriculum (e.g., Team Nutrition; Choose MyPlate; Grow it, Try it, Like it; Healthy Habits for Life Resource Kit).
Why	Learning to enjoy healthy foods is a critical life skill that caregivers are uniquely positioned to support. Food and eating can also provide familiar, hands-on contexts for teaching a variety of early academic skills.
How To/ Resources	<p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose MyPlate, http://www.choosemyplate.gov/ 2. Grow it, Try it, Like it, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/growit.html 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Healthy Habits for Life™</i> Resource Kit, http://kidshealth.org/classroom/index.jsp?Grade=cc&Section=hhfl
How Often	Nutrition education is provided at least one (1) time per month.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written narrative describing how nutrition education is woven into the curriculum.

Criterion 8	<p>Caregivers have completed one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Training provided by the USOE on the CACFP meal pattern and reimbursable/creditable meals ■ The NFSMI CARE Connection Nutrition Education webinars at http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=207 ■ Ellyn Satter’s “Division of Responsibility in Feeding,” www.ellynsatter.com (3 segments @ 1 hour each = 3 hours of training)
Why	Continuing education of caregivers supports their competency and motivation for supporting children’s healthy development.
How To/ Resources	Resources listed in criterion.
How Often	Training provided by Utah State Office of Education on the CACFP meal pattern and creditable meals and NFSMI CARE Connection Nutrition Education webinars are required for all caregivers.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of current caregiver training records.



NUTRITION EDUCATION CRITERIA

Criterion 1	Caregivers participate in CACFP family-style meals, and a staff member is seated at each dining table with the children. Caregivers eat the CACFP meals with children and serve as role models at mealtime.
Why	Eating family-style meals encourages independence by allowing children to learn how to serve themselves, and lets them choose what they will eat and how much. It also gives them a chance to observe providers modeling good table manners and healthy eating.
How To/ Resources	<p>Role play mealtime using different scenarios.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University of Idaho: Feeding Young Children in Group Settings, http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/feeding/ 2. NFSMI CARE Connection Curriculum, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=199 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo for Childcare, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Setting the Stage: Policies and Best Practices for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Early Childhood Settings</i>, Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/Iowa/Setting%20the%20Stage%20Child%20Development%20Homes.pdf
How Often	This criterion is required at every meal.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a photo of a family-style meal. ■ Submit a policy for family-style meal service.

Criterion 2	Parents have knowledge of the center's participation in CACFP, and the CACFP meal pattern is shared with parents.
Why	Parents' understanding of meal pattern requirements promotes respect for and modeling of caregivers' use of nutritional best practices.
How To/ Resources	<p>Include CACFP information in center policies and in the child enrollment packet. Present at parent meetings. Include in parent newsletter.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CACFP Meal Pattern Guidelines, http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal_Patterns.htm 2. NFSMI CARE Connection Curriculum, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=199 3. USDA Nibbles for Health, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/nibbles.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit sample of parent communication.

Criterion 3	Breastfeeding resources are promoted and available to parents.
Why	Breast milk is, in most cases, the healthiest choice for infants. It also prevents excess weight gain. Caregivers' support significantly influences parents' decisions to continue breastfeeding. Mothers who feel strong social support to breastfeed are more likely to continue with it for at least six (6) months (the minimum recommended time).
How To/ Resources	<p>Include breastfeeding information in center policies and in the enrollment packet. Discuss information with parents when enrolling an infant.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WIC handouts, http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/publications.htm 2. WIC Breastfeeding, Anytime, Anywhere (poster), http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/publications.htm 3. NFSMI (National Food Service Management Institute) Mealtime Memo, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Feeding Infants: A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs</i>, http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of breastfeeding resources promoted.

Criterion 4	Quantities of foods served are enough to meet children's appetites and energy needs.
Why	Children grow at variable rates and their calorie needs fluctuate. In addition, children who are hungry may have difficulty focusing and may feel irritable and unhappy.
How To/ Resources	<p>Learn how to use the Food Buying Guide and USDA Recipes for Child Care. Practice completing a food production record.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>USDA Food Buying Guide</i>, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/foodbuyingguide.html 2. <i>USDA Recipes for Child Care</i>, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/childcare_recipes.html 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo for Childcare, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Feeding Infants: A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs</i>, http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all meals.
Evaluation Method	Submit one week of meal production records.

Criterion 5	New foods are introduced with familiar foods or familiar foods are prepared in new ways.
Why	Exposure, modeling, and social support for trying new foods encourages children to become comfortable with different types/preparations of foods. Serving new foods along with familiar foods ensures that children can feel secure, and they can satisfy hunger with familiar foods while cautiously tasting new foods.
How To/ Resources	Resources: 1. <i>Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guide for Outside-of-Home Child Care</i> , http://nrckids.org/CFOC3/index.html 2. <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i> , http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/buildingblocks.htm
How Often	This criterion is required as often as possible.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written narrative describing new food examples and/or submit recipes.

Criterion 6	Children are taught to eat appropriately for age and developmental ability.
Why	Children’s digestive systems and motor skills for swallowing and feeding themselves progress at variable rates. It is critical that caregivers protect children from harmful bacteria, allergens, and choking by providing developmentally appropriate foods.
How To/ Resources	Resources: 1. <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i> , http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/buildingblocks.html/ 2. <i>University of Idaho Feeding Young Children in Group Settings, Building Mealtime Environments and Relationships</i> , http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/feeding/
How Often	This criterion is required at all meals.
Evaluation Method	Submit written examples of adapting mealtime to developmental readiness.

Criterion 7	Nutrition education is woven into activities throughout the day and provided through standardized curriculum (e.g., Team Nutrition; Choose MyPlate; Grow it, Try it, Like it; Healthy Habits for Life Resource Kit).
Why	Learning to enjoy healthy foods is a critical life skill that caregivers are uniquely positioned to support. Food and eating can also provide familiar, hands-on, contexts for teaching a variety of early academic skills.
How To/ Resources	Resources: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose MyPlate, http://www.choosemyplate.gov/ 2. Grow it, Try it, Like it, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/growit.html 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Healthy Habits for Life™</i> Resource Kit, http://kidshealth.org/classroom/index.jsp?Grade=cc&Section=hhfl
How Often	Nutrition education is provided at least two (2) times per month.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written narrative describing how nutrition education is woven into the curriculum.

Criterion 8	Caregivers have completed one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Training provided by the Utah State Office of Education on the CACFP meal pattern and reimbursable/creditable meals ■ The NFSMI CARE Connection Nutrition Education webinars http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=207 ■ Ellyn Satter's "Division of Responsibility in Feeding," www.ellynsatter.com (3 segments @ 1 hour each = 3 hours of training)
Why	Continuing education of caregivers supports their competency and motivation for supporting children's healthy development.
How To/ Resources	Resources are listed in the criterion.
How Often	All three (3) trainings are required for all caregivers.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of current caregiver training records.

Criterion 9	Ellyn Satter’s “Division of Responsibility in Feeding” is communicated with parents.
Why	Parents often need caregivers support in order to understand best practices for feeding their children. Consistent use of the division of responsibility in feeding, from child care to home environments, ensures that children develop healthy relationships with food and match energy needs with energy expenditure.
How To/ Resources	Resources: www.ellynsatter.com
How Often	Communication is required for all parents, only one (1) time per parent.
Evaluation Method	Submit a sample of a parent communication.

Criterion 10	Policies for nutrition education are written for caregivers and parents and are reviewed annually.
Why	Specific policies for nutrition education ensure that children receive the early experiences they need to develop healthy relationships with food. Reviewing the policies annually ensures that new and relevant information can be incorporated into practice.
How To/ Resources	Resources: <i>Setting the Stage: Policies and Best Practices for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Early Childhood Settings</i> , Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/iowa/Setting%20the%20Stage%20Child%20Development%20Homes.pdf
How Often	This criterion occurs one (1) time, and may be updated annually upon review.
Evaluation Method	Submit the nutrition education policy with a current review date.

Criterion 11	Written documentation shows that all nutrition education policies are presented to caregivers, and caregivers have opportunities to learn and practice the policies. Policies are shared with parents.
Why	Written, shared, nutrition education policies promote a high standard of care.
How To/ Resources	Resources: 1. <i>Setting the Stage: Policies and Best Practices for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Early Childhood Settings</i> , Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/iowa/Setting%20the%20Stage%20Child%20Development%20Homes.pdf 2. USDA Nibbles for Health, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/nibbles.html
How Often	Each caregiver has the opportunity to learn and practice policies. Policies are shared with all participating parents.
Evaluation Method	Submit nutrition education policies and caregiver training records.

Criterion 12	Parents are encouraged to volunteer/participate in mealtimes.
Why	Including parents in mealtimes reinforces a positive attitude toward food and mealtimes, and promotes continuity between home and child care.
How To/ Resources	Resources: <i>Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guide for Outside-of-Home Child Care</i> , http://nrckids.org/CFOC3/index.html
How Often	Parents are encouraged to participate or volunteer as often as possible.
Evaluation Method	Submit the volunteer policy.

Criterion 13	Visible support for good nutrition is provided in classrooms and common areas through posters, pictures, and displayed books. Nutrition education involves multiple channels of communication, including the classroom and home/parents.
Why	Using a variety of means to impart nutrition messages to children and parents increases awareness and understanding of nutrition topics.
How To/ Resources	Resources: 1. USDA Nibbles for Health, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/nibbles.html 2. Team Nutrition Resource Library, http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/library.html 3. Choose MyPlate, http://www.choosemyplate.gov/
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit a list of visible support for nutrition education.



NUTRITION EDUCATION CRITERIA

Criterion 1	Caregivers participate in CACFP family-style meals, and a staff member is seated at each dining table with the children. Caregivers eat the CACFP meals with children and serve as role models at mealtime.
Why	Eating family-style meals encourages independence by allowing children to learn how to serve themselves, and lets them choose what they will eat and how much. It also gives them a chance to observe providers modeling good table manners and healthy eating.
How To/ Resources	<p>Role play mealtime using different scenarios.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University of Idaho: Feeding Young Children in Group Settings http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/feeding/ 2. NFSMI CARE Connection Curriculum, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=199 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo for Childcare, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Setting the Stage: Policies and Best Practices for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Early Childhood Settings</i>, Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/iowa/Setting%20the%20Stage%20Child%20Development%20Homes.pdf
How Often	This criterion is required at every meal.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a photo of a family-style meal. ■ Submit the policy for family-style meal service.

Criterion 2	Parents have knowledge of the center's participation in CACFP, and the CACFP meal pattern is shared with parents.
Why	Parents' understanding of meal pattern requirements promotes respect for and modeling of caregivers' use of nutritional best practices.
How To/ Resources	<p>Include CACFP information in center policies and in the child enrollment packet. Present information at parent meetings. Include information in the parent newsletter.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CACFP Meal Pattern Guidelines, http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/care/ProgramBasics/Meals/Meal_Patterns.htm 2. NFSMI CARE Connection Curriculum, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=199 3. USDA Nibbles for Health, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/nibbles.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit a sample of parent communication.

Criterion 3	Breastfeeding resources are promoted and available to parents.
Why	Breast milk is, in most cases, the healthiest choice for infants. It also prevents excess weight gain. Caregivers' support significantly influences parents' decisions to continue breastfeeding. Mothers who feel strong social support to breastfeed are more likely to continue with it for at least six (6) months (the minimum recommended time).
How To/ Resources	<p>Include breastfeeding information in center policies and in the enrollment packet. Discuss with parents when enrolling an infant.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WIC handouts, http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/publications.htm 2. WIC Breastfeeding, Anytime, Anywhere (poster), http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/publications.htm 3. NFSMI (National Food Service Management Institute) Mealtime Memo, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Feeding Infants: A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs</i>, http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit a sample of breastfeeding resources.

Criterion 4	Quantities of foods served are enough to meet children's appetites and energy needs
Why	Children grow at variable rates and their calorie needs fluctuate. In addition, children who are hungry may have difficulty focusing and may feel irritable and unhappy.
How To/ Resources	<p>Learn how to use the Food Buying Guide and USDA Recipes for Child Care. Practice completing a food production record.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>USDA Food Buying Guide</i>, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/foodbuyingguide.html 2. <i>USDA Recipes for Child Care</i>, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/childcare_recipes.html 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo for Childcare, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Feeding Infants: A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs</i>, http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	This criterion is required at all meals.
Evaluation Method	Submit one week of meal production records.

Criterion 5	New foods are introduced with familiar foods, or familiar foods are prepared in new ways.
Why	Exposure, modeling, and social support for trying new foods encourages children to become comfortable with different types/preparations of foods. Serving new foods along with familiar foods ensures that children can feel secure and that they can satisfy hunger with familiar foods while cautiously tasting new foods.
How To/ Resources	Resources: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guide for Outside-of-Home Child Care</i>, http://nrckids.org/CFOC3/index.html 2. <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i>, http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/buildingblocks.html
How Often	This criterion is required as often as possible.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written narrative describing new food examples and/or submit recipes.

Criterion 6	Children are taught to eat appropriately for age and developmental ability.
Why	Children’s digestive systems and motor skills for swallowing and feeding themselves progress at variable rates. It is critical that caregivers protect children from harmful bacteria, allergens, and choking by providing developmentally appropriate foods.
How To/ Resources	Resources: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i>, http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/buildingblocks.html/ 2. <i>University of Idaho Feeding Young Children in Group Settings, Building Mealtime Environments and Relationships</i>, http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/feeding/
How Often	This criterion is required at all meals.
Evaluation Method	Submit written examples of adapting mealtime to developmental readiness.

Criterion 7	Nutrition education is woven into activities throughout the day and provided through standardized curriculum (e.g., Team Nutrition; Choose MyPlate; Grow it, Try it, Like it; Healthy Habits for Life Resource Kit).
Why	Learning to enjoy healthy foods is a critical life skill that caregivers are uniquely positioned to support. Food and eating can also provide familiar, hands-on, contexts for teaching a variety of early academic skills.
How To/ Resources	<p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Choose MyPlate, http://www.choosemyplate.gov/ 2. Grow it, Try it, Like it, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/growit.html 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. Healthy Habits for Life™ Resource Kit, http://kidshealth.org/classroom/index.jsp?Grade=cc&Section=hhfl
How Often	Nutrition education is provided at least one (1) time per week.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written narrative describing how nutrition education is woven into the curriculum.

Criterion 8	<p>Caregivers have completed one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Training provided by the State agency on the CACFP meal pattern and reimbursable/creditable meals ■ The NFSMI CARE Connection Nutrition Education webinars at http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=207 ■ Ellyn Satter’s “Division of Responsibility in Feeding,” www.ellynsatter.com (3 segments @ 1 hour each = 3 hours of training)
Why	Continuing education of caregivers supports their competency and motivation for supporting children’s healthy development.
How To/ Resources	Resources are listed in the criterion.
How Often	All three (3) trainings are required for all caregivers.
Evaluation Method	Submit copies of current caregiver training records.

Criterion 9	Ellyn Satter’s “Division of Responsibility in Feeding” is communicated with parents.
Why	Parents often need caregivers support in order to understand best practices for feeding their children. Consistent use of the division of responsibility in feeding, from child care to home environments, ensures that children develop healthy relationships with food and match energy needs with energy expenditure.
How To/ Resources	Resources: www.ellynsatter.com
How Often	Communication is required for all parents, only one (1) time per parent.
Evaluation Method	Submit a sample of a parent communication.

Criterion 10	Policies for nutrition education are written for caregivers and parents and are reviewed annually.
Why	Specific policies for nutrition education ensure that children receive the early experiences they need to develop healthy relationships with food. Reviewing the policies annually ensures that new and relevant information can be incorporated into practice.
How To/ Resources	Resources: <i>Setting the Stage: Policies and Best Practices for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Early Childhood Settings</i> , Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/iowa/Setting%20the%20Stage%20Child%20Development%20Homes.pdf
How Often	This criterion occurs one (1) time, and may be updated upon review annually.
Evaluation Method	Submit the nutrition education policy with a current review date.

Criterion 11	Written documentation shows that all nutrition education policies are presented to caregivers, and caregivers have opportunities to learn and practice the policies. Policies are shared with parents.
Why	Written, shared, nutrition education policies promote a high standard of care.
How To/ Resources	Resources: 1. <i>Setting the Stage: Policies and Best Practices for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Early Childhood Settings</i> , Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/iowa/Setting%20the%20Stage%20Child%20Development%20Homes.pdf 2. USDA Nibbles for Health, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/nibbles.html
How Often	Each caregiver has the opportunity to learn and practice policies. Policies are shared with all participating parents.
Evaluation Method	Submit nutrition education policies and caregiver training records.

Criterion 12	Parents are encouraged to volunteer/participate in mealtimes.
Why	Including parents in mealtimes reinforces a positive attitude toward food and mealtimes, and promotes continuity between home and child care.
How To/ Resources	Resources: <i>Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guide for Outside-of-Home Child Care</i> , http://nrckids.org/CFOC3/index.html
How Often	Parents are encouraged to participate or volunteer as often as possible.
Evaluation Method	Submit the volunteer policy.

Criterion 13	Visible support for good nutrition is provided in classrooms and common areas through posters, pictures, and displayed books. Nutrition education involves multiple channels of communication, including the classroom and home/parents.
Why	Using a variety of means to impart nutrition messages to children and parents increases awareness and understanding of nutrition topics.
How To/ Resources	Resources: 1. USDA Nibbles for Health, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/nibbles.html 2. Team Nutrition Resource Library, http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/library.html 3. Choose MyPlate, http://www.choosemyplate.gov/
How Often	This criterion is required at all times.
Evaluation Method	Submit a list of visible support for nutrition education.

Criterion 14	Nutrition education is presented to parents at a minimum, two times per year.
Why	Many parents need and benefit from caregiver support for learning to safely and appropriately feed their children and for planning meals and snacks.
How To/ Resources	Include in parent newsletters and at parent meetings: 1. USDA Nibbles for Health, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/nibbles.html 2. Team Nutrition Resource Library, http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/library.html
How Often	Presented to parents at a minimum of 2 times per year.
Evaluation Method	Submit two (2) samples of nutrition education provided to parents.

Criterion 15	Caregivers receive additional training opportunities on nutrition-related topics two (2) times per year.
Why	Continuing education ensures that caregivers' knowledge of nutrition topics is accurate and up-to-date.
How To/ Resources	Resources: The NFSMI CARE Connection Nutrition Education webinars http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=207
How Often	Caregivers receive additional training two (2) times per year.
Evaluation Method	Submit caregiver training records.

Criterion 16	Children have the opportunity to see, identify, taste, and enjoy a variety of foods that are culturally significant and commonly available in local markets, such as fruits, vegetables, breads, grains, milk, meats, fish, beans, eggs, etc.
Why	Food provides an ideal context for teaching important cultural concepts and for promoting children's pride in their heritage.
How To/ Resources	Resources: 1. Team Nutrition Resource Library, http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/library.html 2. <i>Physical Activities and Healthy Snacks for Young Children</i> , Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://www.educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=431 3. USDA Nibbles for Health, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/nibbles.html/ 4. NFSMI (National Food Service Management Institute) Mealtime Memo, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87
How Often	Share culturally significant and commonly available foods from local markets with children as often as possible.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a written narrative of cultural food activities. ■ Submit a photo of cultural food activities.

Criterion 17	Children are learning interactively about food and nutrition through books and by using food as a hands-on context for learning math, science, and social concepts.
Why	Using a variety of means to impart nutrition messages to children increases awareness and understanding of nutrition topics.
How To/ Resources	<p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Team Nutrition Resource Library, http://teamnutrition.usda.gov/library.html 2. Grow it, Try it, Like it, http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/Resources/growit.html 3. <i>Physical Activities and Healthy Snacks for Young Children</i>, Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://www.educateiowa.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=431 4. <i>Healthy Habits for Life™</i> Resource Kit, http://kidshealth.org/classroom/index.jsp?Grade=cc&Section=hhfl
How Often	This criterion is an ongoing requirement.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written narrative with examples of interactive food activities.



ENVIRONMENT CRITERIA

Directions specific to Environmental Criteria:

The first six (6) categories are required for all levels. **Add your choice of three (3) ADDITIONAL CRITERIA for the Honors level beginning on page 51 and running through page 55.**

Criterion 1	The daily schedule promotes a relaxed and adequate period for meals and snacks. Children have ample time to eat and practice social interaction skills, such as having a conversation.
Why	Children need to have enough time to practice table skills. Younger children tend to need a longer amount of time to eat a meal. They are less coordinated and are still developing the fine motor skills that help them use silverware effectively. If they feel rushed they may be less likely to eat well.
How To/ Resources	While every child is different and caregivers should individualize based on children's needs, at least ten (10) minutes for a snack and at least 20 minutes for a meal should be an appropriate amount of time for most children.
How Often	This criterion is required on a daily basis.
Evaluation Method	Submit a daily schedule of activities including meal beginnings and end times.

Criterion 2	Food is not used as an incentive or a punishment, and children are not punished or rewarded for what they choose to eat. Certain food is not withheld as punishment, and children are not forced to eat foods as a prerequisite to receiving an item or completing an activity.
Why	Offering food to encourage or reward behavior places unnecessary importance on food and may have negative effects. This action teaches children to eat when they are not hungry and can alter their internal hunger and fullness cues. Foods commonly used to encourage positive behavior, such as candy or cookies, are often high in fat or sugars with little nutrition. These foods offer little to support proper growth and development. As children become older, rewarding them with food may lead to emotional overeating and excessive weight gain.
How To/ Resources	Reward children with non-food choices like praise, stickers, a favorite game or story, a chance to be a classroom helper, etc.
How Often	This criterion is required on a daily basis.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy and explain what techniques are used to punish or reward.

Criterion 3	Children are instructed in hand-washing techniques, and both children and staff wash their hands before meals and snacks.
Why	Keeping hands clean is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of infection and illness. Washing hands before meals is especially important, since hands will come into contact with the mouth and with food that will be consumed.
How To/ Resources	Centers for Disease Control hand-washing techniques: http://www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing
How Often	All children should be instructed in hand-washing, and all children and staff should wash their hands before all meals and snacks.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy and provide details of the hand-washing techniques taught to children.

Criterion 4	Children, including picky eaters (able to eat food but resisting), are gently encouraged by the staff to try new or less favorite foods. Staff members act as role models for tasting new foods, and food is never forced.
Why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If encouragement is too strong, it may cause a child to eat for reasons other than hunger. Children may learn to overeat if they are made to eat everything or clean their plates, which can lead to weight problems later in life. Interfering with their internal hunger and fullness cues could lead to unhealthy eating patterns. ■ Learning food efficacy is an important part of development. Children need to know that they can choose what foods to eat and how much. When given these choices, they are likely to try a wider variety of foods. This also helps them learn hunger/satiated cues their bodies give them.
How To/ Resources	<p>Staff members can help children learn to listen to their bodies to decide whether they are hungry, full, or eating out of habit. Children should never be forced to eat if they are full, and should be given more food if they are still hungry. If you don't like a food, don't say anything positive or negative about it. You can say something non-judgmental such as, "These carrots are orange." or "What shape are these carrot slices?"</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. www.ellynsatter.com 2. <i>Setting the Stage: Policies and Best Practices for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Early Childhood Settings</i>, Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/iowa/Setting%20the%20Stage%20Child%20Development%20Homes.pdf
How Often	Encouragement and role modeling are provided at all meals.
Evaluation Method	Submit a policy or employee handbook that explains the process for gently encouraging picky eaters.

Criterion 5	Menus are available and posted for staff and parents. Children and parents have opportunities to provide input on the food and menus.
Why	Families should know what their children are eating in child care and have the chance to make suggestions about what is served. Families can also plan their home meals better if they know what is on the menu at child care.
How To/ Resources	<p>Make posted menus eye catching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Parents don't need to know the details of the meal pattern and where each food goes. ■ Send a copy of the menu home with parents.
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Menus must be posted. ■ Opportunities for staff and parent input are ongoing.
Evaluation Method	Submit a parent handbook, policy, or newsletter showing that parents are encouraged to provide input.

Criterion 6	Children serve themselves during meals and snacks with adult supervision. Some or all foods are served family-style to the maximum extent possible at each meal. Children help set the table and/or clear dishes after the meal is finished.
Why	Family-style meals create an opportunity for children to practice their independence by practicing pouring, spooning, and passing skills; and table manners. Modeling and practicing such behavior at child care facilities can foster habits that carry into other environments, including the home. Also, allowing children to choose their own portions may help prevent children from overeating or feeling pressured to eat food they do not want. Chores, such as setting the table, help build children's identities and self-confidence. When children are involved in the meal in any way, they are more likely to want to eat it.
How To/ Resources	<p>Definition: <i>In family-style meal service, adults place each meal component on the table in serving dishes. The children serve themselves with assistance from supervising adults who set the example. There must be enough food at the table for each child to have a full portion; however, the child may choose not to take it. Providers can meet this recommendation by passing a bowl with the vegetable or grain item or having each child pour their own milk as they are able.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Start with easily served items. ■ Practice passing, serving, and pouring skills before starting family-style meal service. Have children pass bowls of uncooked beans or rice and pour small pitchers of water. <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i>, http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/buildingblocks.html 2. University of Idaho Feeding Young Children in Group Settings, Building Mealtime Environments and Relationships, http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/feeding/ 3. NFSMI CARE Connection Curriculum, http://www.nfsmi.org/Templates/TemplateDivision.aspx?q=cEIEPTIo
How Often	At least one (1) food item is served family-style at breakfast, lunch/supper, and at snacks.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a written policy specifying the number of food items served family-style. ■ Submit photos of the meal service.

Of the following, choose 3 additional criteria:

Criterion 1a	Both children and staff members wash hands before and after meals.
Why	Keeping hands clean is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of infection and illness. Washing hands before meals is especially important, since hands will come into contact with the mouth and with food that will be consumed. After meals, hands have just come into contact with the mouth, and washing hands can prevent the spread of these germs to others.
How To/ Resources	Centers for Disease Control hand-washing techniques: http://www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing/
How Often	Both children and staff wash hands before and after all meals.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy specifying that hand-washing takes place both before and after meals.

Criterion 2a	Children and staff members sit down together for meals. Adults sit at the table and eat the same foods served to the children.
Why	This practice allows the staff to serve as good role models. Children are always watching their teachers, especially during mealtime. This time together provides many openings for teachers or staff members to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teach children about healthy foods. ■ Talk about the foods served and where they came from. ■ Encourage proper table manners. ■ Engage children in pleasant discussion to build communication skills. ■ Teach children about the tastes, smells, textures, and different colors and shapes of foods. If staff members eat or drink less healthy foods in front of the children, they are sending negative messages to children.
How To/ Resources	Teachers should be willing to try new foods and adopt the same behaviors that they are trying to teach children. When a new food is served, teachers can greatly influence the children's acceptance through their own enthusiasm for trying new things. Adults do not have to eat an entire meal, just a bite or two of each food served. The goal is to have children see adults they admire eating and drinking healthy foods and drinks. Staff members will be more likely to be on-board with this activity if they are also given a scheduled break for their meals.
How Often	Teachers sit with children and eat the same foods at every meal.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a policy or employee handbook indicating staff members' roles during mealtime. ■ Submit photos of mealtime.

additional criteria

Criterion 3a	The staff shows visible support for healthy nutrition and physical activity habits by using posters, pictures, or books about nutrition and physical activity in every room.
Why	Environmental factors can influence healthy eating behaviors; therefore, it is important to design children’s environments to include objects that help support good nutrition. Simple acts such as displaying posters with pictures of healthy foods, discussing and asking questions, showing enthusiasm about food, and being happy during mealtimes will show children that this part of their day is valuable to them and others.
How To/ Resources	Free or low-cost posters can be found online. In addition, children can create their own posters or pictures of healthy eating habits to hang in their classroom or throughout the facility. (See resources at http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/library.html and www.choosemyplate.gov .)
How Often	Posters and other additional visible support should be available in each room.
Evaluation Method	Submit photos and/or examples of materials posted or available in each room.

Criterion 4a	Child-sized eating and serving utensils are available and used.
Why	Children need to develop their independence by practicing pouring, spooning, and passing skills and table manners when provided with the appropriate serving and eating utensils and in coordination with a family-style meal service. Participation in mealtime rituals imparts feelings of responsibility, social connectedness, and food appreciation, and also imparts important gross and fine motor skills.
How To/ Resources	To help young children scoop food more easily, use small spoons, plates with edges, or small shallow bowls. Tongs and smaller serving spoons and scoops are examples of serving utensils that are easier for children to handle.
How Often	Proper serving utensils are available and used for all applicable meals.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a written policy. ■ Submit a photo of children using utensils.

additional criteria

Criterion 5a	Parents are encouraged to bring non-food items for celebrations. Holidays are celebrated with mostly healthy foods or with non-food treats, such as stickers.
Why	A healthy nutrition environment is created by serving nutritious foods during regular meals and snacks, as well as at special occasions. Typical celebrations usually include calorie-dense foods of limited nutritional value, such as cookies, cakes, and candy. On occasion, this may not pose a problem, but it sends a message to children that eating such foods is the only way to celebrate.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This criterion encourages facilities to celebrate with mostly healthy foods (facility-provided) or in non-food ways. Child care facilities can let parents know gently but firmly that the facility supports a healthier approach to celebrations. This can easily be done by including the facility policy in your parent handbook. Everyone benefits from healthy choices, and it sends a message to families that good nutrition is important to the facility. Offer a suggested snack list for parents to decide what special snack will be served on their child's birthday. See <i>Healthy Foods for Celebrations</i>. http://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/eatsmartguidelines/resources.php ■ Another way to make the celebration fun is to serve something the children can help make, like mini-pizzas.
How Often	Parents are encouraged to bring healthy foods or non-food treats for all celebrations.
Evaluation Method	Submit a parent handbook or policy regarding foods provided for celebrations.

Criterion 6a	Fundraising activities, if applicable, involving children and families are supportive of physical activity and healthful eating. Foods sold should be nutritious, including snack bars and any foods sold to children.
Why	Fundraising is a common practice for many child care facilities. Even if the money raised is used to support things the facility really needs, the message becomes unclear when sales of unhealthy food items are used to raise funds. Also, remember that families and staff members buy much of the food that is sold. Having extra candy and sweets around the house makes it that much harder to encourage healthier eating for children.
How To/ Resources	See Nonfood Fundraising Ideas: http://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/eatsmartguidelines/pdf/NonfoodFundraisingIdeas.pdf
How Often	This criterion applies to all applicable fundraising activities.
Evaluation Method	Submit a list of items used for fundraising.

additional criteria

Criterion 7a	Food and vending machines, if present, are located in areas not visible or accessible to children.
Why	Vending machines provide opportunities for staff members to buy soda, other sweetened beverages, and foods often high in fat and sugar. Having them on-site increases the likelihood that staff members will eat and drink these items in front of children in the facility. Vending machines on-site, especially if located in a public area, also send a message to families that these foods and beverages are “okay” for children to consume.
How To/ Resources	If vending machines are in your building, place them in areas that are not visible or accessible to the children. In addition, if the vending machines must be on-site, you may want to work with the vendor to offer healthier items.
How Often	This criterion applies to any vending machines present.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a description of where vending machines are located. ■ Submit a photo showing where vending machines are located.

Criterion 8a	If infant care is provided, breastfeeding is encouraged.
Why	Breast milk is, in most cases, the healthiest choice for infants. It also prevents excess weight gain. Caregivers’ support significantly influences parents’ decisions to continue breastfeeding. Mothers who feel strong social support to breastfeed are more likely to continue with it for at least six (6) months (the minimum recommended time).
How To/ Resources	<p>Include breastfeeding information in center policies and in the enrollment packet. Discuss with the parents when they enroll an infant.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WIC handouts, http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/publications.htm 2. WIC Breastfeeding, Anytime, Anywhere (poster), http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/publications.htm 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo for Childcare, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Feeding Infants: A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs</i>, http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	Breastfeeding is encouraged for all infants.
Evaluation Method	Submit a breastfeeding policy or parent handbook addressing breastfeeding.

additional criteria

Criterion 9a	If infant care is provided, breastfeeding mothers are accommodated with a separate area to breastfeed and/or pump breast milk.
Why	This gives working mothers the opportunity to continue to provide their infant with the best nutrition, breast milk, when they return to work after childbirth. Providing working mothers with a breastfeeding room gives them the opportunity to extend the bonding period.
How To/ Resources	A bathroom is not an appropriate lactation area. Ideally, a breastfeeding room or area should be equipped with an electrical outlet, contain comfortable seating, be near a sink with hot water and soap for hand-washing and cleaning of equipment, and be near a refrigerator for storage of expressed breast milk.
How Often	Accommodations are made for all mothers who want to breastfeed and/or pump breast milk.
Evaluation Method	Submit a photo of the breastfeeding area.



ENVIRONMENT CRITERIA

Directions specific to Environment Criteria:

The first six (6) categories are required for all levels.

Add your choice of four (4) ADDITIONAL CRITERIA for the High Honors level beginning on page 59 and running through page 63.

Criterion 1	The daily schedule promotes a relaxed and adequate period for meals and snacks. Children have ample time to eat and practice social interaction skills, such as having a conversation.
Why	Children need to have enough time to practice table skills. Younger children tend to need a longer amount of time to eat a meal. They are less coordinated and are still developing the fine motor skills that help them use silverware effectively. If they feel rushed they may be less likely to eat well.
How To/ Resources	While every child is different and caregivers should individualize based on children's needs, at least ten (10) minutes for a snack and at least 20 minutes for a meal should be an appropriate amount of time for most children.
How Often	This criterion is required on a daily basis.
Evaluation Method	Submit a daily schedule of activities including meal beginnings and end times.

Criterion 2	Food is not used as an incentive or punishment, and children are not punished or rewarded for what they choose to eat. Certain food is not withheld as punishment, and children are not forced to eat foods as a prerequisite to receiving an item or completing an activity.
Why	Offering food to encourage or reward behavior places unnecessary importance on food and may have negative effects. This action teaches children to eat when they are not hungry and can alter their internal hunger and fullness cues. Foods commonly used to encourage positive behavior, such as candy or cookies, are often high in fat or sugars with little nutrition. These foods offer little to support proper growth and development. As children become older, rewarding them with food may lead to emotional overeating and excessive weight gain.
How To/ Resources	Reward children with non-food choices like praise, stickers, a favorite game or story, a chance to be a classroom helper, etc.
How Often	This criterion is required on a daily basis.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy and explain what techniques are used to punish or reward.

Criterion 3	Children are instructed in hand-washing techniques, and both children and staff wash their hands before meals and snacks.
Why	Keeping hands clean is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of infection and illness. Washing hands before meals is especially important, since hands will come into contact with the mouth and with food that will be consumed.
How To/ Resources	Centers for Disease Control hand-washing techniques: http://www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing/ .
How Often	All children should be instructed in hand-washing, and all children and staff should wash their hands before all meals and snacks.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy and provide details of the hand-washing techniques taught to children.

Criterion 4	Children, including picky eaters (able to eat food but resisting), are gently encouraged by the staff to try new or less favorite foods. Staff members act as role models for tasting new foods, and food is never forced.
Why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If encouragement is too strong, it may cause a child to eat for reasons other than hunger. Children may learn to overeat if they are made to eat everything or clean their plates, which can lead to weight problems later in life. Interfering with their internal hunger and fullness cues could lead to unhealthy eating patterns. ■ Learning food efficacy is an important part of development. Children need to know that they can choose what foods to eat and how much. When given these choices, they are likely to try a wider variety of foods. This also helps them learn hunger/satiated cues their bodies give them.
How To/ Resources	<p>Staff members can help children learn to listen to their bodies to decide whether they are hungry, full, or eating out of habit. Children should never be forced to eat if they are full, and should be given more food if they are still hungry. If you don't like a food, don't say anything positive or negative about it. You can say something non-judgmental such as, "These carrots are orange." or "What shape are these carrot slices?"</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. www.ellynsatter.com 2. <i>Setting the Stage: Policies and Best Practices for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Early Childhood Settings</i>, Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/iowa/Setting%20the%20Stage%20Child%20Development%20Homes.pdf
How Often	Encouragement and role modeling are provided at all meals.
Evaluation Method	Submit a policy or employee handbook that explains the process for gently encouraging picky eaters.

Criterion 5	Menus are available and posted for staff and parents. Children and parents have opportunities to provide input on the food and menus.
Why	Families should know what their children are eating in child care and have the chance to make suggestions about what is served. Families can also plan their home meals better if they know what is on the menu at child care.
How To/ Resources	<p>Make posted menus eye catching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Parents don't need to know the details of the meal pattern and where each food goes. ■ Send a copy of the menu home with parents.
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Menus must be posted. ■ Opportunity for staff and parent input are ongoing.
Evaluation Method	Submit a parent handbook, policy, or newsletter showing that parents are encouraged to provide input.

Criterion 6	Children serve themselves during meals and snacks with adult supervision. Some or all foods are served family-style to the maximum extent possible at each meal. Children help set the table and/or clear dishes after the meal is finished.
Why	Family-style meals create an opportunity for children to practice their independence by practicing pouring, spooning, and passing skills; and table manners. Modeling and practicing such behavior at child care facilities can foster habits that carry into other environments, including the home. Also, allowing children to choose their own portions may help prevent children from overeating or feeling pressured to eat food they do not want. Chores such as setting the table help build children's identities and self-confidence. When children are involved in the meal in any way, they are more likely to want to eat it.
How To/ Resources	<p>Definition: <i>In family-style meal service, adults place each meal component on the table in serving dishes. The children serve themselves with assistance from supervising adults who set the example. There must be enough food at the table for each child to have a full portion; however, the child may choose not to take it. Providers can meet this recommendation by passing a bowl with the vegetable or grain item or having each child pour their own milk as they are able.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Start with easily served items. ■ Practice passing, serving, and pouring skills before starting family-style meal service. Have children pass bowls of uncooked beans or rice and pour small pitchers of water. <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i>, http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/buildingblocks.html 2. University of Idaho Feeding Young Children in Group Settings, Building Mealtime Environments and Relationships, http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/feeding/ 3. NFSMI CARE Connection Curriculum, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=199
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ At least two (2) food items are served family-style at breakfast and at lunch/supper. ■ At least one (1) food item is served family-style at snacks.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a written policy specifying the number of food items served family-style. ■ Submit photos of the meal service.

Of the following, choose 4 additional criteria:

Criterion 1a	Both children and staff members wash hands before and after meals.
Why	Keeping hands clean is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of infection and illness. Washing hands before meals is especially important, since hands will come into contact with the mouth and with food that will be consumed. After meals, hands have just come into contact with the mouth, and washing hands can prevent the spread of these germs to others.
How To/ Resources	Centers for Disease Control hand-washing techniques: http://www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing/
How Often	Both children and staff wash hands before and after all meals.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy specifying that hand-washing takes place both before and after meals.

Criterion 2a	Children and staff members sit down together for meals. Adults sit at the table and eat the same foods served to the children.
Why	This practice allows the staff to serve as good role models. Children are always watching their teachers, especially during mealtime. This time together provides many openings for teachers or staff to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teach children about healthy foods. ■ Talk about the foods served and where they came from. ■ Encourage proper table manners ■ Engage children in pleasant discussion to build communication skills ■ Teach children about the tastes, smells, textures and different colors and shapes of foods If staff members eat or drink less healthy foods in front of the children, they are sending negative messages to children.
How To/ Resources	Teachers should be willing to try new foods and adopt the same behaviors that they are trying to teach children. When a new food is served, teachers can greatly influence the children's acceptance through their own enthusiasm for trying new things. Adults do not have to eat an entire meal, just a bite or two of each food served. The goal is to have children see adults they admire eating and drinking healthy foods and drinks. Staff members will be more likely to be on-board with this activity if they are also given a scheduled break for their meals.
How Often	Teachers sit with children and eat the same food for every meal.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a policy or employee handbook indicating staff roles during mealtime. ■ Submit photos of mealtime.

additional criteria

Criterion 3a	The staff shows visible support for healthy nutrition and physical activity habits by using posters, pictures, or books about nutrition and physical activity in every room.
Why	Environmental factors can influence healthy eating behaviors; therefore, it is important to design children’s environments to include objects that help support good nutrition. Simple acts such as displaying posters with pictures of healthy foods, discussing and asking questions, showing enthusiasm about food, and being happy during mealtimes will show children that this part of their day is valuable to them and others.
How To/ Resources	Free or low-cost posters can be found online. In addition, children can create their own posters or pictures of healthy eating habits to hang in their classroom or throughout the facility. (See resources at http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/library.html and www.choosemyplate.gov .)
How Often	Posters and other additional visible support should be available in each room.
Evaluation Method	Submit photos and/or examples of materials posted or available in each room.

Criterion 4a	Child-sized eating and serving utensils are available and used.
Why	Children need to develop their independence by practicing pouring, spooning, and passing skills and table manners when provided with the appropriate serving and eating utensils and in coordination with a family-style meal service. Participation in mealtime rituals imparts feelings of responsibility, social connectedness, and food appreciation, and also imparts important gross and fine motor skills.
How To/ Resources	To help young children scoop food more easily, use small spoons, plates with edges, or small shallow bowls. Tongs and smaller serving spoons and scoops are examples of serving utensils that are easier for children to handle.
How Often	Proper serving utensils are available and used for all applicable meals.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a written policy. ■ Submit a photo of children using utensils.

additional criteria

Criterion 5a	Parents are encouraged to bring non-food items for celebrations. Holidays are celebrated with mostly healthy foods or with non-food treats, such as stickers.
Why	A healthy nutrition environment is created by serving nutritious foods during regular meals and snacks as well as at special occasions. Typical celebrations usually include calorie-dense foods of limited nutritional value, such as cookies, cakes, and candy. On occasion, this may not pose a problem, but it sends a message to children that eating such foods is the only way to celebrate.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This criterion encourages facilities to celebrate with mostly healthy foods (facility-provided) or in non-food ways. Child care facilities can let parents know gently but firmly that the facility supports a healthier approach to celebrations. This can easily be done by including the facility policy in your parent handbook. Everyone benefits from healthy choices, and it sends a message to families that good nutrition is important to the facility. Offer a suggested snack list for parents to decide what special snack will be served on their child's birthday. See <i>Healthy Foods for Celebrations</i>. http://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/eatsmartguidelines/resources.php ■ Another way to make the celebration fun is to serve something the children can help make, like mini-pizzas.
How Often	Parents are encouraged to bring healthy foods or non-food treats for all celebrations.
Evaluation Method	Submit a parent handbook or policy regarding foods provided for celebrations.

Criterion 6a	Fundraising activities, if applicable, involving children/families are supportive of physical activity and healthful eating. If foods are sold, they must be nutritious, including snack bars and any foods sold to the children.
Why	Fundraising is a common practice for many child care facilities. Even if the money raised is used to support things the facility really needs, the message becomes unclear when sales of unhealthy food items are used to raise funds. Also, remember that families and staff members buy much of the food that is sold. Having extra candy and sweets around the house makes it that much harder to encourage healthier eating for children.
How To/ Resources	See Nonfood Fundraising Ideas: http://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/eatsmartguidelines/pdf/NonfoodFundraisingIdeas.pdf
How Often	This criterion applies to all applicable fundraising activities.
Evaluation Method	Submit a list of items used for fundraising.

additional criteria

Criterion 7a	Food and vending machines, if present, are located in areas not visible or accessible to children.
Why	Vending machines provide opportunities for staff members to buy soda, other sweetened beverages, and foods often high in fat and sugar. Having them on-site increases the likelihood that staff members will eat and drink these items in front of children in the facility. Vending machines on-site, especially if located in a public area, also send a message to families that these foods and beverages are “okay” for children to consume.
How To/ Resources	If vending machines are in your building, place them in areas that are not visible or accessible to the children. In addition, if the vending machines must be on-site, you may want to work with the vendor to offer healthier items.
How Often	This criterion applies to any vending machines, if present.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a description of where vending machines are located. ■ Submit a photo of showing where vending machines are located.

Criterion 8a	If infant care is provided, breastfeeding is encouraged.
Why	Breast milk is, in most cases, the healthiest choice for infants. It also prevents excess weight gain. Caregivers’ support significantly influences parents’ decisions to continue breastfeeding. Mothers who feel strong social support to breastfeed are more likely to continue with it for at least six (6) months (the minimum recommended time).
How To/ Resources	<p>Include breastfeeding information in center policies and in the enrollment packet. Discuss with the parents when they enroll an infant.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WIC handouts, http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/publications.htm 2. WIC Breastfeeding, Anytime, Anywhere (poster), http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/publications.htm 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo for Childcare, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=87 4. <i>Feeding Infants: A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs</i>, http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	Breastfeeding is encouraged for all infants.
Evaluation Method	Submit a breastfeeding policy or parent handbook addressing breastfeeding.

additional criteria

Criterion 9a	If infant care is provided, breastfeeding mothers are accommodated with a separate area to breastfeed and/or pump breast milk.
Why	This gives working mothers the opportunity to continue to provide their infant with the best nutrition, breast milk, when they return to work after childbirth. Providing working mothers with a breastfeeding room gives them the opportunity to extend the bonding period.
How To/ Resources	A bathroom is not an appropriate lactation area. Ideally, a breastfeeding room or area should be equipped with an electrical outlet, contain comfortable seating, be near a sink with hot water and soap for hand-washing and cleaning of equipment, and be near a refrigerator for storage of expressed breast milk.
How Often	Accommodations are made for all mothers who want to breastfeed and/or pump breast milk.
Evaluation Method	Submit a photo of the breastfeeding area.



ENVIRONMENT CRITERIA

Directions specific to Environment Criteria:

The first six (6) categories are required for all levels.

Add your choice of five (5) ADDITIONAL CRITERIA for the Highest Honors level beginning on page 67 and running through page 71.

Criterion 1	The daily schedule promotes a relaxed and adequate period for meals and snacks. Children have ample time to eat and practice social interaction skills, such as having a conversation.
Why	Children need to have enough time to practice table skills. Younger children tend to need a longer amount of time to eat a meal. They are less coordinated and are still developing the fine motor skills that help them use silverware effectively. If they feel rushed they may be less likely to eat well.
How To/ Resources	While every child is different and care givers should individualize based on children's needs, at least ten (10) minutes for a snack and at least 20 minutes for a meal should be an appropriate amount of time for most children.
How Often	This criterion is required on a daily basis.
Evaluation Method	Submit a daily schedule of activities including meal beginnings and end times.

Criterion 2	Food is not used as an incentive or punishment, and children are not punished or rewarded for what they choose to eat. Certain food is not withheld as punishment, and children are not forced to eat foods as a prerequisite to receiving an item or completing an activity.
Why	Offering food to encourage or reward behavior places unnecessary importance on food and may have negative effects. This action teaches children to eat when they are not hungry and can alter their internal hunger and fullness cues. Foods commonly used to encourage positive behavior, such as candy or cookies, are often high in fat or sugars with little nutrition. These foods offer little to support proper growth and development. As children become older, rewarding them with food may lead to emotional overeating and excessive weight gain.
How To/ Resources	Reward children with non-food choices like praise, stickers, a favorite game or story, a chance to be a classroom helper, etc.
How Often	This criterion is required on a daily basis.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy and explain what techniques are used to punish or reward.

Criterion 3	Children are instructed in hand-washing techniques, and both children and staff wash their hands before meals and snack.
Why	Keeping hands clean is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of infection and illness. Washing hands before meals is especially important, since hands will come into contact with the mouth and with food that will be consumed.
How To/ Resources	Centers for Disease Control hand-washing techniques: http://www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing .
How Often	All children should be instructed in hand-washing, and all children and staff should wash their hands before all meals and snacks.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy and provide details of the hand-washing techniques taught to children.

Criterion 4	Children, including picky eaters (able to eat food but resisting), are gently encouraged by the staff to try new or less favorite foods. Staff members act as role models for tasting new foods, and food is never forced.
Why	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If encouragement is too strong, it may cause a child to eat for reasons other than hunger. Children may learn to overeat if they are made to eat everything or clean their plates, which can lead to weight problems later in life. Interfering with their internal hunger and fullness cues could lead to unhealthy eating patterns. ■ Learning food efficacy is an important part of development. Children need to know that they can choose what foods to eat and how much. When given these choices, they are likely to try a wider variety of foods. This also helps them learn hunger/satiated cues their bodies give them.
How To/ Resources	<p>Staff members can help children learn to listen to their bodies to decide whether they are hungry, full, or eating out of habit. Children should never be forced to eat if they are full, and should be given more food if they are still hungry. If you don't like a food, don't say anything positive or negative about it. You can say something non-judgmental such as, "These carrots are orange." or "What shape are these carrot slices?"</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. www.ellynsatter.com 2. <i>Setting the Stage: Policies and Best Practices for Nutrition and Physical Activity in Early Childhood Settings</i>, Team Nutrition Learning Tools, http://healthymeals.nal.usda.gov/hsmrs/iowa/Setting%20the%20Stage%20Child%20Development%20Homes.pdf
How Often	Encouragement and role modeling are provided at all meals.
Evaluation Method	Submit a policy or employee handbook that explains the process for gently encouraging picky eaters.

Criterion 5	Menus are available and posted for staff and parents. Children and parents have opportunities to provide input on the food and menus.
Why	Families should know what their children are eating in child care and have the chance to make suggestions about what is served. Families can also plan their home meals better if they know what is on the menu at child care.
How To/ Resources -	<p>Make posted menus eye catching.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Parents don't need to know the details of the meal pattern and where each food goes. ■ Send a copy of the menu home with parents.
How Often	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Menus must be posted. ■ Opportunity for staff and parent input are ongoing.
Evaluation Method	Submit a parent handbook, policy, or newsletter showing that parents are encouraged to provide input.

Criterion 6	Children serve themselves during meals and snacks with adult supervision. Some or all foods are served family-style to the maximum extent possible at each meal. Children help set the table and/or clear dishes after the meal is finished.
Why	Family-style meals create an opportunity for children to practice their independence by practicing pouring, spooning, and passing skills; and table manners. Modeling and practicing such behavior at child care facilities can foster habits that carry into other environments, including the home. Also, allowing children to choose their own portions may help prevent children from overeating or feeling pressured to eat food they do not want. Chores such as setting the table help build children's identities and self-confidence. When children are involved in the meal in any way, they are more likely to want to eat it.
How To/ Resources	<p>Definition: <i>In family-style meal service, adults place each meal component on the table in serving dishes. The children serve themselves with assistance from supervising adults who set the example. There must be enough food at the table for each child to have a full portion; however, the child may choose not to take it. Providers can meet this recommendation by passing a bowl with the vegetable or grain item or having each child pour their own milk as they are able.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Start with easily served items. ■ Practice passing, serving, and pouring skills before starting family-style meal service. Have children pass bowls of uncooked beans or rice and pour small pitchers of water. <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals</i>, http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/buildingblocks.html 2. University of Idaho Feeding Young Children in Group Settings, Building Mealtime Environments and Relationships, http://www.cals.uidaho.edu/feeding/ 3. NFSMI CARE Connection Curriculum, http://www.nfsmi.org/ResourceOverview.aspx?ID=199
How Often	All food items are served family-style at all meals.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a written policy specifying the number of food items served family-style. ■ Submit photos of the meal service.

Of the following, choose five (5) additional criteria:

Criterion 1a	Both children and staff members wash hands before and after all meals and snacks.
Why	Keeping hands clean is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of infection and illness. Washing hands before meals is especially important, since hands will come into contact with the mouth and with food that will be consumed. After meals, hands have just come into contact with the mouth, and washing hands can prevent the spread of these germs to others.
How To/ Resources	Centers for Disease Control hand-washing techniques: http://www.cdc.gov/features/handwashing/
How Often	Both children and staff wash hands before and after all meals and snacks.
Evaluation Method	Submit a written policy specifying that hand-washing takes place both before and after meals.

Criterion 2a	Children and staff members sit down together for meals. Adults sit at the table and eat the same foods served to the children.
Why	This practice allows the staff to serve as good role models. Children are always watching their teachers, especially during mealtime. This time together provides many openings for teachers or staff to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Teach children about healthy foods. ■ Talk about the foods served and where they came from. ■ Encourage proper table manners ■ Engage children in pleasant discussion to build communication skills ■ Teach children about the tastes, smells, textures and different colors and shapes of foods If staff members eat or drink less healthy foods in front of the children, they are sending negative messages to children.
How To/ Resources	Teachers should be willing to try new foods and adopt the same behaviors that they are trying to teach children. When a new food is served, teachers can greatly influence the children's acceptance through their own enthusiasm for trying new things. Adults do not have to eat an entire meal, just a bite or two of each food served. The goal is to have children see adults they admire eating and drinking healthy foods and drinks. Staff members will be more likely to be on-board with this activity if they are also given a scheduled break for their meals.
How Often	Teachers sit with children and eat the same food for every meal.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a policy or employee handbook indicating staff roles during mealtime. ■ Submit photos of mealtime.

additional criteria

Criterion 3a	The staff shows visible support for healthy nutrition and physical activity habits by using posters, pictures, or books about nutrition and physical activity in every room.
Why	Environmental factors can influence healthy eating behaviors; therefore, it is important to design children’s environments to include objects that help support good nutrition. Simple acts such as displaying posters with pictures of healthy foods, discussing and asking questions, showing enthusiasm about food, and being happy during mealtimes will show children that this part of their day is valuable to them and others.
How To/ Resources	Free or low-cost posters can be found online. In addition, children can create their own posters or pictures of healthy eating habits to hang in their classroom or throughout the facility. (See resources at http://teamnnutrition.usda.gov/library.html and www.choosemyplate.gov)
How Often	Posters and other additional visible support should be available in each room.
Evaluation Method	Submit photos and/or examples of materials posted or available in each room.

Criterion 4a	Child-sized eating and serving utensils are available and used.
Why	Children need to develop their independence by practicing pouring, spooning, and passing skills and table manners when provided with the appropriate serving and eating utensils and in coordination with a family-style meal service. Participation in mealtime rituals imparts feelings of responsibility, social connectedness, and food appreciation, and also imparts important gross and fine motor skills.
How To/ Resources	To help young children scoop food more easily, use small spoons, plates with edges, or small shallow bowls. Tongs and smaller serving spoons and scoops are examples of serving utensils that are easier for children to handle.
How Often	Proper serving utensils are available and used for all applicable meals.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a written policy. ■ Submit a photo of children using utensils.

additional criteria

Criterion 5a	Parents are encouraged to bring non-food items for celebrations. Holidays are celebrated with mostly healthy foods or with non-food treats, such as stickers.
Why	A healthy nutrition environment is created by serving nutritious foods during regular meals and snacks as well as at special occasions. Typical celebrations usually include calorie-dense foods of limited nutritional value, such as cookies, cakes, and candy. On occasion, this may not pose a problem, but it sends a message to children that eating such foods is the only way to celebrate.
How To/ Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ This criterion encourages facilities to celebrate with mostly healthy foods (facility-provided) or in non-food ways. Child care facilities can let parents know gently but firmly that the facility supports a healthier approach to celebrations. This can easily be done by including the facility policy in your parent handbook. Everyone benefits from healthy choices, and it sends a message to families that good nutrition is important to the facility. Offer a suggested snack list for parents to decide what special snack will be served on their child's birthday. See <i>Healthy Foods for Celebrations</i>: http://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/eatsmartguidelines/resources.php ■ Another way to make the celebration fun is to serve something the children can help make, like mini-pizzas.
How Often	Parents are encouraged to bring healthy foods or non-food treats for all celebrations.
Evaluation Method	Submit a parent handbook or policy regarding foods provided for celebrations.

Criterion 6a	Fundraising activities, if applicable, involving children/families are supportive of physical activity and healthful eating. If foods are sold, they should be nutritious, including snack bars and any foods sold to the children.
Why	Fundraising is a common practice for many child care facilities. Even if the money raised is used to support things the facility really needs, the message becomes unclear when sales of unhealthy food items are used to raise funds. Also, remember that families and staff members buy much of the food that is sold. Having extra candy and sweets around the house makes it that much harder to encourage healthier eating for children.
How To/ Resources	See Nonfood Fundraising Ideas: http://health.mo.gov/living/wellness/nutrition/eatsmartguidelines/resources.php
How Often	This criterion applies to all applicable fundraising activities.
Evaluation Method	Submit a list of items used for fundraising.

additional criteria

Criterion 7a	Food and vending machines, if present, are located in areas not visible or accessible to children.
Why	Vending machines provide opportunities for staff members to buy soda, other sweetened beverages, and foods often high in fat and sugar. Having them on-site increases the likelihood that staff members will eat and drink these items in front of children in the facility. Vending machines on-site, especially if located in a public area, also send a message to families that these foods and beverages are “okay” for children to consume.
How To/ Resources	If vending machines are in your building, place them in areas that are not visible or accessible to the children. In addition, if the vending machines must be on-site, you may want to work with the vendor to offer healthier items.
How Often	This criterion applies to any vending machines, if present.
Evaluation Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Submit a description of where vending machines are located. ■ Submit a photo of showing where vending machines are located.

Criterion 8a	If infant care is provided, breastfeeding is encouraged.
Why	Breast milk is, in most cases, the healthiest choice for infants. It also prevents excess weight gain. Caregivers’ support significantly influences parents’ decisions to continue breastfeeding. Mothers who feel strong social support to breastfeed are more likely to continue with it for at least six (6) months (the minimum recommended time).
How To/ Resources	<p>Include breastfeeding information in center policies and in the enrollment packet. Discuss with the parents when they enroll an infant.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WIC handouts, http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/publications.htm 2. WIC Breastfeeding, Anytime, Anywhere (poster) 3. NFSMI Mealtime Memo, http://www.nfsmi.org/ 4. <i>Feeding Infants: A Guide for Use in the Child Nutrition Programs</i>, http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/feeding_infants.html
How Often	Breastfeeding is encouraged for all infants.
Evaluation Method	Submit a breastfeeding policy or parent handbook addressing breastfeeding.

additional criteria

Criterion 9a	If infant care is provided, breastfeeding mothers are accommodated with a separate area to breastfeed and/or pump breast milk.
Why	This area gives working mothers the opportunity to continue to provide their infant with the best nutrition, breast milk, when they return to work after childbirth. Providing working mothers with a breastfeeding room gives them the opportunity to extend the bonding period.
How To/ Resources	A bathroom is not an appropriate lactation area. Ideally, a breastfeeding room or area should be equipped with an electrical outlet, contain comfortable seating, be near a sink with hot water and soap for hand-washing and cleaning of equipment, and be near a refrigerator for storage of expressed breast milk.
How Often	Accommodations are made for all mothers who want to breastfeed and/or pump breast milk.
Evaluation Method	Submit a photo of the breastfeeding area.



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