

Nutrition, Breastfeeding Support and Physical Activity

Best Practices for Early Care and Education Programs

Healthy Eating Best Practices

1. A variety of fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits, with no added sugar, syrup or sweeteners, are offered 2 or more times per day.
2. A variety of fresh, frozen or canned vegetables, cooked or raw, with no added salt or fat, are offered 2 or more times per day.
At least one serving of each, once per week, dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables and other vegetables.
3. Fried, pre-fried or high-fat foods are offered less than once per week or never.
4. Snacks or foods high in salt/sodium are offered less than once per week or never.
5. High-sugar snacks or dessert foods are offered less than once per week or never.
6. Meals are served family style: children are allowed to serve all or most foods, with limited help from adults.
7. Caregivers model healthy eating behaviors by sitting with the children at meal times AND eating and drinking the same foods and beverages.
8. There is a written policy that includes current healthy eating practices.
9. The healthy eating policy is generally communicated to current and prospective families both in writing and verbally.

Breastfeeding Best Practices

1. All infant caregivers receive training (or a refresher) on promoting and supporting breastfeeding, including the benefits of breastfeeding and proper labelling and handling of breast milk, on a regular basis, at least every 3 years.
2. A quiet, comfortable and private place (other than a bathroom) is available for mothers and staff to breastfeed or pump and its location is marked or otherwise made known to families.
3. Educational materials and information about breastfeeding resources are available and all enrolled and prospective families are made aware of these resources.
4. There is a written policy that includes current breastfeeding practices.
5. The breastfeeding policy is communicated to current and prospective families both in writing and verbally.

Physical Activity Best Practices

1. Babies (0-12 months old) should get short, supervised periods of tummy time two or three times a day. (Some babies do not initially like tummy time, so begin with only 3-5 minutes at one time. Gradually increase the time when you see the baby enjoying it more.
1. Toddlers (12-24 months old) Active play time, including both indoors and outdoors, is provided daily for 60 minutes or more.
2. Preschoolers (2-5 years old) Active play time, including both indoors and outdoors, is provided daily for 120 minutes or more.
3. Outdoor play time is offered 2 or more times per day, except when weather makes it unsafe.
4. Indoor play space is available and used when going outdoors is not possible for the same amount of time as would have been spent outdoors.
5. Portable play equipment is always available to children during active play time both indoors and outdoors.
6. Adult-led/structured physical activity, in periods of at least 10 minutes, is offered either indoors or outdoors 2 or more times per day.

NUTRITION, BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BEST PRACTICES
FOR EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

7. During active play times, both indoors and outdoors, caregivers/teachers supervise, verbally encourage, and often join children in active play.
8. Active play time is rarely, if ever, withheld for more than 5 minutes at a time, for discipline.
9. There is a written policy that includes current physical activity practices.
10. The physical activity policy is communicated to current and prospective families both in writing and verbally.

Based on Caring for Our Children, National Health and Safety Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs (a joint collaborative project of the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, and the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care), Nemours Children's Health System, Let's Move Child Care.

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