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**FISCAL YEAR 2007  
CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM  
OPERATIONAL MEMO #3**

**TO:** Child and Adult Care Food Program Institutions

**FROM:** Mary Ann Chartrand, Director  
Grants Coordination and School Support

**DATE:** October 20, 2006

**SUBJECT: Mealtime Memo for Child Care**

Attached are four issues of the *Mealtime Memo for Child Care*. The titles are, "Be Prepared in an Emergency," "Family Style Dining in Child Care," "Feeding Infants Right from the Start," and "Using Cycle Menus."

Developed by the National Food Service Management Institute, these publications reinforce the importance of the Food Guide Pyramid and emphasize that physical activity will help children grow healthy. Subsequent issues of the *Mealtime Memo for Child Care* will be provided when published.

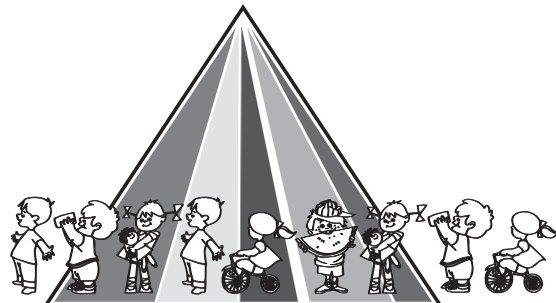
If you have any questions regarding this publication, you may contact the Child and Adult Care Food Program staff at (517) 373-7391.

**Please keep this memo on file or in a notebook for quick and easy reference.**

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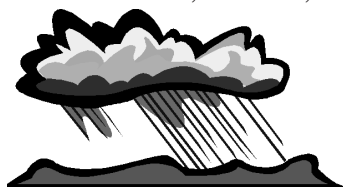
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## Be Prepared in an Emergency

Emergencies often happen with little warning and little time to prepare.

Some natural disasters, like thunderstorm, tornado, or hurricane, can be forecast for hours or even days before they strike, but some emergencies, particularly manmade emergencies such as gas or electrical outages, water line break, or telephone or computer services interruption, can happen without any warning.



You can't predict when an emergency will happen, but you can be prepared with an emergency readiness plan.

### Think of emergencies that could affect you.

Is your community subject to tornadoes? Flooding? Blizzards or ice storms?

What would you do if you lost electricity, gas service, or telephone and computer service?

How will you communicate with families and staff during a crisis?

Decide where you will go and how you will transport the children if you must get away. Locate the safest areas of the building for shelter.

Write your emergency readiness plan with these events in mind, but make it flexible in case of other emergencies.

### A well-designed emergency readiness plan will

- identify who will do what in the event of an emergency.
- tell how to contact all staff members.
- identify community and State resources such as police, fire, and utility departments.
- identify who will implement the emergency readiness plan.
- provide standard operating procedures. Give written descriptions for tasks.
- identify who has keys to the building, storage rooms, or equipment that are locked.
- take into account the needs of the staff as much as possible.
- consider the special needs of babies and children in your care.
- include emergency menus and a three-day inventory of food, water, and other basic supplies. The American Red Cross Web site has information on building a disaster supplies kit ([www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)).



Teach your staff how to use the emergency readiness plan. Share details of the plan with the children's parents or caretakers.

Practice emergency readiness drills. Update your plan as needed.

For more information on developing an emergency readiness plan, see NFSMI's *Emergency Readiness Plan: Guides and Forms for School Foodservice Operation* available at [www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org)



# Mealtime Memo FOR CHILD CARE

## Blueberry Month

The U. S. Department of Agriculture proclaimed July National Blueberry Month. Blueberries are grown in 35 states in the United States. North America produces over 90% of all of the blueberries in the world. Blueberries are rich in antioxidants and high in vitamin E. (North American Blueberry Council, [www.nabcb blues.org](http://www.nabcb blues.org))

### Blueberry Muffins A-03\*

Enriched, all purpose flour	2 ¼ cups + 1 Tbsp
Whole wheat flour	1 ⅓ cups
Sugar	1 cup
Baking powder	1 Tbsp + 2 tsp
Salt	1 tsp
Low fat 1% milk	1 ½ cups
Fresh large eggs	3 each
Vegetable oil	1 ½ cups
Frozen blueberries or fresh blueberries (9 oz)	1 ½ cups



Combine flours, sugar, baking powder, and salt in a mixing bowl. Mix until blended. Slowly add milk, eggs, and oil. Mix for 30 seconds on medium speed until smooth. Remove bowl from mixer. Using a rubber spatula, gently fold blueberries into batter. Using a No. 24 scoop (2 ⅔ Tbsp), portion batter into muffin cups that have been lined with paper baking cups. Bake until golden brown: conventional oven 425°F for 12 minutes; convection oven 375°F for 13 minutes.

Number of servings: 25

Serving size: 1 muffin provides the equivalent of 1 ¼ slices of bread.

\* USDA Recipes for Child Care. Available online at [www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org).



## Events in July, August, and September

July	August	September
National Blueberry Month	Family Meal Month	Baby Safety Month
Fourth of July	Elvis Week 8/8-16	National 5-a-day Month
National Ice Cream Day 7/16	Best Friends Day 8/15	First Day of Fall 9/23
Parent's Day 7/23	Children's Day 8/26	Grandparent's Day 9/10

### Sources:

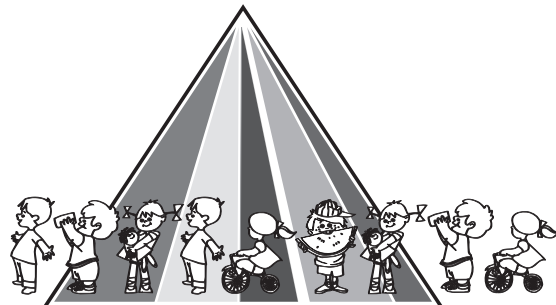
National Food Service Management Institute. (2003). *Emergency Readiness Plan: Guide and Forms for School Foodservice Operation*. University, MS: Author. Available online at [www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org).

U. S. Department of Agriculture, Food Nutrition Service. (2005). *USDA Recipes for Child Care*. Washington, D.C.: Author. Available online at [www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org).

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## Family Style Dining in Child Care

In family style dining, all food is placed in serving bowls on the table and children are encouraged to serve themselves or serve themselves with help from an adult. The adult child care givers sit at the table with the children. Children and child care givers practice good manners in a pleasant mealtime setting.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) supports family style dining in the child care setting.

### What are the Benefits of Family Style Dining for the Children?

Children can learn and practice many social skills, such as taking turns, passing food to others, saying please and thank you, and helping to set the table.



Children can serve themselves with carefully chosen serving dishes. Bowls with wide lips are most easily handled by young children. Plastic serving bowls are light-weight and don't conduct heat.

Children often want to try new foods when they see the other children and adults eating them.

Children enjoy eating with adults and practicing good table manners.

### What are the Benefits of Family Style Dining for the Child Care Provider?

Child care givers benefit by being able to sit and eat with the children. Because all of the food for the

meal is placed on the table at the beginning of the meal, the child care giver does not have to act as server, unless more food is needed for second servings.

Children and care givers can enjoy quiet conversation and a relaxed meal together.

Care givers can use the opportunity to talk with the children about nutrition and about the foods that they are enjoying together.



### Points to Remember

- Be prepared! Talk with the children about what will happen. You may wish to have a "meal" set up in the play area so that children can practice.
- Provide child-size plates, cups, utensils, and serving bowls that children can use comfortably.
- Have all foods on the table at the beginning of the meal. Have enough food available to meet meal pattern requirements and to allow for seconds. Some food may spill as children learn to serve themselves. Allow for this.
- Think about each child's ability to serve himself. For some children, you may need to start with only one or two foods as self-serve, then serve them the other foods that are required in the meal pattern.
- Some children may need more help than others. Seat these children near an adult.
- Expect spills. Children are learning and accidents will happen. Wipe up spills without a fuss.



# Mealtime Memo FOR CHILD CARE

## Mexican Pizza D-13\*

Enriched flour tortillas	12
Canned tomato paste	1/3 cups
Salsa (C-03*)	2 1/4 cups
Refried beans (I-13*)	1 qt 2 1/4 cups
Reduced fat mozzarella cheese, shredded	3 cups



Place 4 tortillas in a single layer on each half-sheet pan (13" x 18" x 1"), which has been lightly coated with pan release spray. For 24 servings, use 3 pans. In a bowl, combine tomato paste and salsa. Spread each tortilla with 1/2 cup of refried beans, 2 2/3 Tbsp of the salsa mixture, and 1/4 cup of cheese. Bake until thoroughly heated and cheese is melted: Conventional oven 375°F for 9 minutes; convection oven 350°F for 9 minutes. Cut each pizza into 4 pieces.

Number of servings: 25

Serving size: 2 pieces (1/2 pizza) provide the equivalent of 1 1/2 oz of cooked lean meat, 1/8 cup of vegetable, and the equivalent of 1/2 slice of bread.

## A Week of Family Style Meals

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Chicken Nuggets – D-09B* Mashed potatoes Kiwi Milk 2%	Tuna Salad Sandwich – F-11* Oven baked potato wedges Peaches, sliced, canned Milk 2%	Mexican Pizza – D-13* Mexicali corn Strawberries, fresh Milk 2%	Ham slice Green beans Fresh fruit cup Milk 2%	Spaghetti & meat sauce Lettuce and tomato salad Pineapple tidbits, canned Milk 2%

\*USDA Recipes for Child Care. Available online at [www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org).

## Events in August, September, and October

August	September	October
Family Meal Month	Baby Safety Month	Fire Prevention Week 10/8-15
Elvis Week 8/8-16	National 5-a-day Month	National Book Month
Best Friends Day 8/15	First Day of Autumn 9/23	Halloween 10/31

### Sources:

National Food Service Management Institute. (1997). *CARE Connection*. University, MS: Author. Available online at <http://www.nfsmi.org>.

National Food Service Management Institute. (2003). *Happy Mealtimes for Healthy Kids*. University, MS: Author. Available online at <http://www.nfsmi.org>.

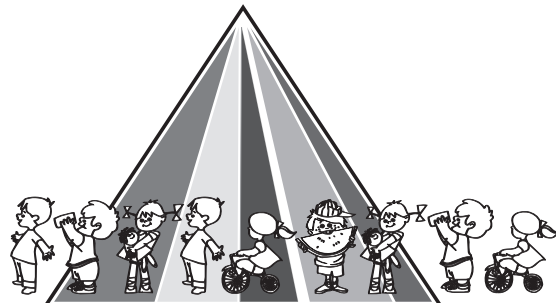
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## Feeding Infants Right from the Start

An infant's first year is a time of rapid growth and development. Providing infants with the right foods at the right times will promote good health and good eating habits for a lifetime.

It is the responsibility of the infant's parents and health care provider to decide

- whether to use breast milk or formula.
- if using formula, what kind.
- when to introduce solid foods.
- what solid foods to introduce.



### **Breast milk is ideal for infants.**

Breast milk provides the most easily digested food for the infant. It has the perfect balance of nutrition with the right amount of fat, sugar, water, and protein that is needed for an infant's growth and development, and it offers protection against common illnesses and allergies.

Getting an infant off to a good start means supporting mothers who want to breastfeed. If a mother stops breastfeeding before the child is 1 year old or decides not to breastfeed, the infant can be fed iron-fortified, commercially available formula.

Consult the CACFP guidelines or your sponsor for information on offering breast milk. Refer to the CACFP Infant Meal Pattern.

### **Be sure formula is prepared according to package directions.**

Iron-fortified infant formula is specified in the CACFP Infant Meal Pattern. Formula must be prepared as directed. Mixing formula with too much or too little water can cause serious health problems or even death.

### **Do not add cereal to the infant's bottle.**

Adding cereal means that the infant will not be getting the breast milk or formula needed. Cereal in a bottle can cause choking in young infants. There is no proof that adding cereal will help an infant sleep longer or reduce fussiness.

### **Do not offer juice or other sweetened drinks in the infant's bottle.**

Infants should not be given sweetened drinks. Juice and sweetened drinks take the place of the more nutritious breast milk or formula that infants need for growth and good health.

### **Feed whenever the infant lets you know she is hungry – about every two hours.**

Do not try to put an infant on a schedule. The infant's growth and activity level will let her know when she is hungry and full.

### **Hold the infant while feeding him.**

Holding the infant lets you watch for signs that he has had enough to eat. Holding him gives him the warm, comforting relationship so important to an infant's well-being.



# Mealtime Memo FOR CHILD CARE

## When is an infant ready to start semi-solid foods?

An infant is ready to start semi-solid foods between **4 and 7 months** when he can

- sit on his own,
- turn his head from side to side showing he has had enough to eat, and
- accept food from a spoon without the tongue pushing the food out of his mouth.

Consult with parents on the introduction of semi-solid foods. The decision to feed specific foods should be made in consultation with the parents.

Begin feeding solid foods with iron-fortified infant cereal. Most infants like the taste of cereal, it is easy to digest, and it provides an important source of the iron infants need until after 1 year of age.

After cereal, start feeding vegetables, then fruits, and finally meats.



Use single ingredient baby foods such as carrots, peas, or applesauce. Avoid combination foods and

fruit desserts.

Combination baby foods cannot be counted in the

CACFP Meal Pattern because it is hard for you to know how much of each food the infant is being offered.

## Introduce whole milk at the right time.

Health care providers advise against giving an infant cow's milk until the child is at least 1 year old. Breast milk or formula is recommended for infants until then.

## Safety Practices in Feeding Infants

- **Wash hands often.**  
Wash your hands before preparing food and before feeding infants. Wash the infant's hands before each feeding. Wash your hands after feeding infants, too.
- **Keep dishes, equipment, and food preparation areas clean and sanitized.**
- **Be careful when warming food.**  
Mix food thoroughly and check temperature to avoid hot spots. Heat bottles in warm water either in a container or under running water.
- **Do not feed infants directly from baby food jars or food containers.**  
Serve baby food in a bowl. Throw away leftover food in the bowl after the meal.
- **Keep food, formula, and breast milk refrigerated, labeled, and dated.**



## Events in September, October and November

September	October	November
Baby Safety Month	National Book Month	American Diabetes Month
National 5-A-Day Month	Fire Prevention Week 10/8-15	Veteran's Day 11/11
First Day of Autumn 9/23	World Food Day 10/16	Thanksgiving 11/23

## Sources:

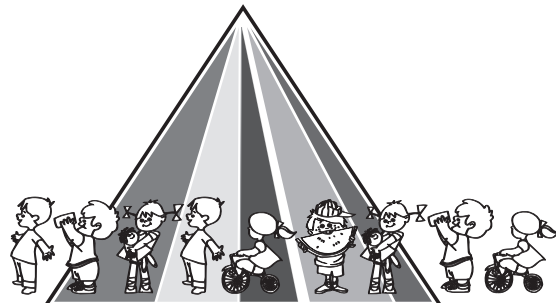
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## Using Cycle Menus

Planning meals that meet the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Patterns, that are healthy, that look and taste good, and that please the children in your care can be overwhelming.



You can make it easier by planning your menus in advance and taking advantage of cycle menus, such as the ones in the *Mealtime Memos*.

### Get Ready to Plan

When you plan menus ahead of time

- You can make sure each menu meets the CACFP Meal Pattern requirements.
- You can save money by buying foods in season, taking advantage of food bargains, and buying in bulk.
- You can make an organized shopping list and save time at the store.
- You can prevent last minute trips to buy forgotten items.
- You can plan food items for children with special needs.

### How Cycle Menus Help

A cycle menu is a series of menus planned for a specific period of time, for example, 3 weeks. The menu is different for each day during the cycle. At the end of the cycle (i.e., 3 weeks), repeat the menus in the same order. Because the series of menus start again, it is called a cycle menu.

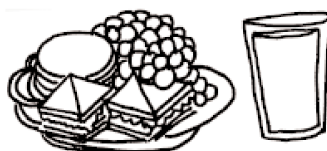
Using a cycle menu can help you

- save time. It takes less menu planning and recipe preparation time because they are repeated.
- shop smart when you buy food since you know what you will use and know how much you will need of each food ahead of time.

### Planning a Cycle Menu

Set aside a time and place to plan.

- Gather your menu planning materials including the CACFP Meal Pattern requirements and your recipes.
- Decide the number of weeks your cycle menus will include. A cycle menu for child care should be at least 3 weeks, so the children will not be served the same combination of foods too often.
- Plan the main dishes first. The main dish is your Meat/Meat Alternate. Foods such as pasta, rice, and vegetables may also be a part of the main dish.
- Add foods to go with the main dish. Be sure you include all of the CACFP Meal Pattern components.
- Plan menus for breakfast and snacks.
- Do not repeat any one food too often.
- Include a variety of foods to meet the nutrient needs of the children.



- Plan nutritious meals that look appealing and taste good.
- Include some of the children's favorite foods.





# Mealtime Memo FOR CHILD CARE



## A Week of Sample Menus

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
<b>Breakfast</b>				
Scrambled eggs Whole wheat toast Grape Juice Milk 2%	Cereal, variety Banana chunks Milk 2%	Pancakes – A-12* w/butter & syrup Peaches Milk 2%	Cinnamon toast Apricots Milk 2%	Biscuit Jelly Fresh orange slices Milk 2%
<b>Lunch</b>				
Chicken Nuggets – D-09B* Mashed potatoes Kiwi Milk 2%	Beef Vegetable Stew– D-16* Cornbread Peaches, sliced, canned Milk 2%	Tuna Patties – D-10* Oven Fries – I-05* Pineapple tidbits, canned Milk 2%	Macaroni & Cheese w/Ham – D-20A* Green peas Pears, canned Milk 2%	Fish Nuggets – D-09A* Steamed broccoli spears Strawberries, fresh Milk 2%
<b>Snacks</b>				
Graham crackers Peanut Butter** Dip – G-01* Milk 2%	Oatmeal cookie Peaches, diced, canned Milk 2%	Cheese toast Kiwi slices Water	Banana Bread Square – A-13* Milk 2%	Soft pretzel Low-fat strawberry yogurt Water

\*USDA *Recipes for Child Care*. Available online at [www.nfsmi.org](http://www.nfsmi.org).

\*\*Sunflower butter may be substituted for peanut butter.



## Events in October, November, and December

October	November	December
Fire Prevention Week 10/8-15	Family Stories Month	Kwanzaa 12/26 – 1/1
National Book Month	National Family Literacy Day 11/1	Hanukkah/Chanukah 12/16-23
Columbus Day 10/9	Thanksgiving 11/23	Christmas 12/25
World Food Day 10/16	American Diabetes Month	New Year's Eve 12/31

### Sources:

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