Date: March 22, 2007

Reference: # CACFP CCC 2007-5

To: Child and Adult Care Food Program-Child Care Centers (CACFP-CCC) Contractors

Subject: Healthy Snacks - Benefits of Serving Fruits and Vegetables

Purpose
As one of the partners for better Texas health, Special Nutrition Programs (SNP) is inviting you to participate in a Statewide call to action to improve the health of our children. The Strategic Plan for the Prevention of Obesity in Texas: 2005-2010 published findings that recommend offering a greater variety and quantity of fruits and vegetables to children in child care settings.

Recommendation
Offer a fruit or vegetable item as one of the two required components on your reimbursable snack menu each day.*

*Although we are just recommending that you begin using more fruits and vegetables in preparing your snacks, this may become a requirement in the future.

Reason
Child care centers are valuable partners in the challenge to improve the health of Texans, prevent obesity, and model better eating habits for Texas children.

Here are some facts that support our recommendation:

- Unhealthy eating contributes to many of the current leading causes of death in Texas.

- More than one in three Texas children are overweight, increasing their chance of becoming obese adults by 25 to 50 percent.

- A diet high in fruits and vegetables can help reduce the risk of heart disease, cancer and stroke, the three leading causes of death.

- Children are establishing poor fruit and vegetable eating habits at an early age. Research shows 45 percent of kids eat no fruit and 20 percent eat less than one vegetable per day, falling short of the 4 cups or 8 servings they need each day.

- Snacks play a major role in children’s diets and serving healthy snacks is important to providing good nutrition and improving lifelong healthy eating habits.
Resources

Below are a variety of resources to assist you with planning healthy snacks and incorporating fruits and vegetables into your menus.

• Healthy Snacks for Young Children from Team Nutrition Iowa. Iowa Public Television at http://www.iptv.org/kids/grownups/resources/downloads.cfm. A collection of recipes for healthy snacks for young children. Each card provides a book title appropriate for young children relevant to the specific foods in the recipe. The recipes provide either a fruit, vegetable or bread/grain serving for snacks for 1 to 5 year olds according to the Child and Adult Care Food Program guidelines.

• Illinois Learning Project Tip Sheet – “Say Yes to Healthy Snacks” at http://www.illinoisearlylearning.org/tipsheets/healthysnacks.htm


• Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2005 at http://www.healthierus.gov/dietaryguidelines/

• SNP Nutrition Lending Library (recipe books and resources) at www.snpnutritionlibrary.org

Attached are additional suggestions for healthy school snacks.

Authority


Contact

If you have any questions please contact your Area Program Office.

ATTACHMENT