

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

This tool is intended to help child care programs assess current nutrition and physical activity practices and identify areas in need of improvement, based on the policy recommendations of the Connecticut State Department of Education’s (CSDE) *Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies*. This document is the third of six self-assessment tools, available on the CSDE Web site at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&Q=322596>.

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

NUTRITION EDUCATION	IMPLEMENTATION			
<i>Standards-Based Nutrition Education</i>	Full	Partial	None	NA
▶ The child care program provides standards-based nutrition education that reflects current science and national guidelines and is focused on children’s eating behaviors. Nutrition education aligns with state standards, such as the CSDE’s <i>Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework</i> , <i>A Guide to Early Childhood Program Development</i> and <i>Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework</i> .				
▶ Nutrition education is offered at least once per week as part of a planned comprehensive health education program designed to provide children with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health.				
▶ Nutrition education activities are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and emphasize the appealing aspects of healthy eating. They promote nutrient-rich foods, healthy food preparation methods, good nutrition practices and include enjoyable, developmentally appropriate and culturally relevant participatory activities, e.g., cooking, taste-testing and farm visits.				
<i>Appropriateness of Nutrition Materials</i>	Full	Partial	None	NA
▶ The child care program reviews all nutrition education lessons and materials for accuracy, completeness, balance, cultural relevancy and consistency with the state’s and child care program’s educational goals and curriculum standards.				
▶ The child care program does not use nutrition education materials with corporate logos or advertising.				
<i>Connecting with Planned Learning Experiences</i>	Full	Partial	None	NA
▶ Nutrition education is a part of comprehensive health education and is included in other content areas, such as language and literacy development, mathematics, science and music.				
▶ The child care program encourages instructional staff members to incorporate nutrition themes from the CSDE’s <i>Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework</i> and <i>A Guide to Early Childhood Program Development</i> into planned learning experiences, when appropriate, to reinforce and support health messages.				
▶ Nutrition concepts are integrated into daily routines whenever possible, such as mealtimes and transitions.				
▶ Afterschool programs integrate nutrition activities throughout the learning environment.				
<i>Nutrition Promotion</i>	Full	Partial	None	NA
▶ The child care program conducts nutrition education activities and promotions that involve children, families and the community.				
▶ The nutrition education program is coordinated with Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meals and snacks and other foods and beverages available in the child care environment, such as parties, meetings and other events.				
▶ Whenever possible, nutrition education activities involve the entire child care program and are linked to health-related community initiatives, services and programs.				
▶ The child care program collaborates with agencies and groups conducting nutrition education in the community to send consistent health messages to children and their families.				

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NUTRITION EDUCATION, continued	IMPLEMENTATION			
<i>Professional Development</i>	Full	Partial	None	NA
▶ Staff members responsible for nutrition education are adequately prepared and regularly participate in professional development activities to effectively deliver the nutrition education program as planned. The child care program includes relevant nutrition training at least twice a year for teachers, assistant teachers and other staff members, as appropriate.				
▶ Professional development includes orientation to appropriate state standards and curriculum frameworks, such as the CSDE’s <i>Connecticut Preschool Curriculum Framework, A Guide to Early Childhood Program Development</i> and <i>Healthy and Balanced Living Curriculum Framework</i> .				
▶ The child care program builds awareness among teachers, food service personnel, consultants and other staff members about the importance of nutrition, physical activity, decreased screen time and positive body image to academic success and lifelong wellness.				
▶ Nutrition and physical activity information shared with children, families and staff members is based on current science and national health recommendations.				

**Step 2 — Prioritize Areas for Change.** Review the areas rated “none” or “partial” and identify the priority areas for change in your child care program. For implementation strategies and resources, see the CSDE’s *Action Guide for Child Care Nutrition and Physical Activity Policies* at <http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2678&Q=322562>.

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