



# **Nutrition**

## Early Learning and Care Assessment for Quality Improvement

**1. Meal/Menu Planning**

**Intent:** Children are being offered nutritional well-balanced meals. The menus reflect *Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)* standards and are reviewed by a trained nutrition professional to ensure the food is meeting each child's nutritional needs.

**Inspiring Pedagogy:** "There is a variety of ways in which early years programs can have a positive influence on child health and well-being, such as: providing nutritious food and beverages that incorporate family and cultural preferences; creating positive eating environments with foods and portion sizes that are responsive to children's cues of hunger and fullness; increasing children's physical activity and decreasing the amount of time spent in sedentary activities; respecting and finding ways to support each child's varied physiological and biological rhythms and needs for active play, rest, and quiet time." (*How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (HDLH)*, p. 29)

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p><b>Menus are not planned in accordance with the CCEYA standards:</b> Menus are not planned to include the required servings from the food groups below:</p> <p><b>One serving of Grain products</b> <b>Two servings from the Vegetables and Fruits food group</b> <b>One serving of Milk and Alternatives</b> <b>One serving of Meat and Alternatives</b></p> <p><b>Menu for the current and following week are not posted</b> There is no menu for the current and following week posted in a place that is accessible to families.</p> <p><b>Food is not offered to the children in accordance with the CCEYA standards</b> Food is not offered to the children in accordance with CCEYA standards.</p>	<p><b>Children are offered food in proportion to their time in care</b> A child in care for six hours or longer is offered both a meal and two snacks.</p> <p><b>Menus provide a clear description of food served, detailing the main ingredients</b> Ingredients are listed for families to see. For example, three bean vegetable soup, whole grain rolls with butter, carrot and pepper sticks with greek yogurt ranch dip, cantelope and milk.</p> <p><b>Fruits served are identified on a daily basis</b> All fruits served throughout the day, including snacks and lunch, are posted in a place that is accessible to families, documented and retained for minimum of 30 days.</p>	<p><b>Agency has visited caterer's food preparation location</b> Agency has visited caterer location, toured the facility and received a copy of the Toronto Public Health inspection report of the facility. <b>(Sub-item potentially not applicable)</b></p> <p><b>Three or more types of foods are offered weekly</b> Menu does not restrict children to the same types of food throughout the week. Children are exposed to different textures, tastes and smells. For example, pasta, roti and stir fry.</p> <p><b>A dark green or orange vegetable is offered in a meal and/or snacks daily</b> Meals and/or snacks include a dark green or orange vegetable daily. For example, orange peppers with hummus for snack or bok choy in a stir fry for lunch.</p>

<p><b>25% of food is not described on the Menu</b> 25% of the ingredients for the main meal are not listed on the menu.</p>	<p><b>Water is available at all times</b> Water is always available in the room for children. This can be a written statement on the menu, or a water jug or water bottles are available in the room during the assessment.</p> <p><b>Menu planned according to age group</b> Infant and toddler menus are adapted to meet the needs of the children when necessary. For example, carrots are cooked in such a way that they are soft and easier to eat.</p>	<p><b>Menus reviewed annually by registered dietitian or member of CSNM</b> Menus are reviewed annually by a registered dietitian or by a member of the Canadian Society of Nutrition Management (CSNM) to ensure that the children's nutritional needs are being met.</p> <p><b>Current letter from registered dietitian or CSNM accessible for viewing</b> A letter received from the registered dietician or CSNM within the past year is posted in a place that is accessible to families.</p> <p><b>Evidence that recommendations made by registered dietitian or member of CSNM are implemented</b> Menu revision is available for viewing to indicate that recommendations were taken and put into practice. Changes are implemented into the current menu. <b>(Sub-item potentially not applicable)</b></p>
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**2. Centre Meal Requirements**

**Intent: Planned menus are being implemented to provide children with food in accordance with the *Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA)*. Portions are planned and offered according to the developmental stage and age of the children. Families are provided with resources to guide them in providing their children with nutritional well-balanced meals.**

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p><b>Meal does not meet requirements described in the introduction</b>            Meal does not include all CCEYA requirements.</p> <p><b>Meal contains a high content in sugar, fat and/or salt</b>            Three or more meals in one week are high in sugar, fat and salt. For example, chicken nuggets, fish sticks, hot dogs.</p> <p><b>Amount of food offered to children is not developmentally-appropriate</b>            Food portions offered to children do not match their developmental needs. For example, only two meatballs are served for a school age child.</p>	<p><b>Food is available for children who request more</b>            There is enough food available for children to have at least one additional serving.</p> <p><b>Amount of food offered to children respects individual needs</b>            The amount of food offered respects children's individual needs.</p> <p><b>The main meal offered on the day of assessment consists of at least the following requirements:</b>            The main meal offered on the day of the assessment must include all of the food groups listed below:</p> <p><b>One serving of Grain products</b>  <b>Two servings from the Vegetables and Fruits food group</b>  <b>One serving of Milk and Alternatives</b>  <b>One serving of Meat or Alternatives</b></p>	<p><b>Centre offers alternate menu(s)</b>            Menu(s) offer a choice to meet individual needs when three or more children require the same dietary need. For example, Vegetarian, Halal or lactose-free.  <b>(Sub-item potentially not applicable)</b></p> <p><b>Current Canada’s Food Guide is posted in a public area</b>            Canada’s Food Guide is posted in a place that is accessible to families.</p> <p><b>Healthy meal resources are accessible to parents</b>            Healthy meal resources are accessible so that families may take them home. For example, newsletters, pamphlets.</p>

### 3. Snack Planning and Requirements

**Intent: Snacks planned and offered to children are of nutritional value and are reviewed by a trained nutritional professional. The snacks are varied throughout the week so that the children are not eating the same thing every day. Children's individual needs are also being met and snack times are both developmentally- and age-appropriate.**

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p><b>No snack provided to children</b> Children in care are not offered a snack.</p> <p><b>Snack menus for current and following week are not posted</b> There is no snack menu for the current and following week posted in a place that is accessible to families.</p> <p><b>Snack contains a high content in sugar, fat and/or salt</b> Three or more snack items offered in one week are high in sugar, fat and salt. For example, pretzels, frosted flakes, bear paws and ice cream.</p> <p><b>Snack does not consist of at least two different food groups</b> Children are not offered food from at least two food groups. For example, only carrots and celery are offered for snack.</p>	<p><b>Snack consists of foods that promote and contribute to a child's nutritional needs</b> Snack foods promote children's nutritional needs. For example, yogurt with apple slices.</p> <p><b>Snacks are timed to meet the needs of the majority of the children</b> Snacks are offered to children depending on the needs of the group.</p> <p><b>Weekly snack menu offers three or more types of food</b> Three or more different types of snacks offered throughout the week. For example, cheese and crackers, hummus and pita, and pea butter and whole grain bread.</p> <p><b>Food is available for children who request more</b> There is enough food available for children to have at least one additional serving.</p>	<p><b>Third snack is planned and documented</b> The third snack offered must be documented and may consist of one food group. Documentation can be done through a general statement listing the foods the children are offered. Note: Not applicable for half-day nursery school programs or kindergarten and school-age programs during the school year. <b>(Sub-item potentially not applicable)</b></p> <p><b>Morning and afternoon snacks include three food groups</b> There are three food groups included in the morning and afternoon snacks. For example, cereal, milk and apples.</p> <p><b>Evidence that water or milk is offered with all snacks daily</b> Snacks offered throughout the day are accompanied with the choice of water or milk. This is documented on the menu.</p> <p><b>Snack menus reviewed annually by registered dietitian or member of CSNM</b> Menus are reviewed annually by a registered dietitian or member of Canadian Society of Nutrition Management (CSNM) to ensure that the children's nutritional needs are being met.</p>

<p><b>Juice offered is not made from 100 per cent real fruit</b> Juice offered is not made from real fruit. For example, apple juice with added sugar is served instead of 100 per cent apple juice. 100 per cent fruit juice from concentrate must contain only the juice and water to be considered equivalent to 100 per cent pure fruit juice. <b>(Sub-item potentially not applicable)</b></p>		<p><b>Evidence that recommendations made by registered dietitian or member of CSNM are implemented</b> Menu revision is available for viewing, to indicate that recommendations were taken and put into practice. Changes are implemented into the current snack menu. <b>(Sub-item potentially not applicable)</b></p>
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**4. Menu and/or Snack Adaptations**

**Intent: Children who have allergies, special diets, food intolerance, special needs, medical needs, parental preferences or observances are provided with nutritional adaptations. These adaptations are up-to-date and identified throughout the centre in each room. Adaptations are labeled to ensure that all staff coming in and out of the room are aware of the changes.**

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p><b>Menu and/or snack adaptations for the current and following week are not posted in the food preparation area</b> Menu adaptations for the current and following week are not posted in a place that is accessible to families.</p> <p><b>Listing of children's individual dietary requirements are not posted in each room</b> A full centre list of all the children at the centre with individual dietary requirements is not accessible in each playroom and food preparation area.</p> <p><b>Consistency of foods are not modified to meet the feeding skills of the child</b> Menu items are not adapted to meet the needs of the children. For example, infants are not provided with a smoother consistency of the menu item, when necessary.</p>	<p><b>Menu and/or snack plans are adapted with appropriate and varied changes to accommodate children</b> All meals are adapted for children with individual diets due to allergies, intolerances, special needs, medical needs or observances. The adaptations are not always the same. For example, veggie burger, tofu, lentils.</p> <p><b>Food and beverage adaptations are labeled with child's name to ensure food is served to the correct child</b> Food and beverage items are labeled with the child's name to ensure all staff are aware of who should receive it. Items need to be labeled until they are served to the child. If more than one child receives the same adaptation then all children should be listed on the item. Staff can also use a list attached to a tray or trolley as long as it is directly beside them and the food item is labeled with the adaptation. For example, bowl is labeled "Halal" and staff has a list of children who receive that adaptation.</p> <p><b>A record of menu and/or snack adaptations is posted and retained for 30 days</b> Menu adaptations are posted in a place that is accessible to families and retained for 30 days.</p>	<p><b>Menu and/or snack adaptations appear similar to the food that is served to other children</b> Consideration is made when adapting menus to try to make food look similar to the menu items that are offered to the rest of the children. For example, a child who can't eat ground beef is offered ground chicken.</p> <p><b>Evidence that children's individual dietary requirements are reviewed and updated quarterly</b> Each classroom has the full allergy/food restriction list posted with the date. There is evidence that each posting is updated as the individual needs of the children change, when new children are enrolled or at minimum every four months.</p> <p><b>Centre provides beverage adaptations when required</b> Children with special dietary needs are offered beverage adaptations.</p>

	<p><b>Centre provides food adaptations when required</b> Children with special dietary needs are offered food adaptations.</p> <p><b>Menu and/or snack adaptations are similar in nutritional value</b> Adaptations are similar in nutritional value as other items served.</p> <p><b>A list of enrolled children's individual diets are posted and includes:</b> The individual dietary requirement listing is updated as the individual needs of the children change and when new children are enrolled and includes the following:</p> <p><b>Name of child</b></p> <p><b>Description of dietary restriction</b></p> <p><b>Listing by group</b> For example, all children from the same age group or same program room should be listed together and not scattered throughout the list.</p> <p><b>Date list was last updated</b></p> <p><b>What medical attention or action to be taken after exposure to food allergies and/or restrictions</b></p> <p><b>Updated semi-annually</b></p>	
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**5. Food Substitutions**

**Intent:** The centre provides the children with a variety of nutritional alternatives when the planned food and/or beverage items are not available.

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p><b>No substitution provided for the group when the planned food is not available</b>            Children are not given an alternative choice if the food item is not available for the main group.</p> <p><b>No substitution provided for an individual child when the planned food is not available</b>            An alternative choice is not given if the food item is not available for individuals with food allergies/restrictions.</p> <p><b>Food substitutions are always similar</b>            The children are constantly eating the same food when a substitution is required.</p>	<p><b>All food substitutions for the group are posted and retained for 30 days</b>            Food substitutions are posted in a place that is accessible to families and retained for 30 days.</p> <p><b>Individual food substitutions are posted and retained for 30 days</b>            Individual food substitutions are posted in a place that is accessible to families and retained for 30 days.</p> <p><b>Centre provides substitutions for food and beverages</b>            The centre provides food and beverage substitutions when items are not available.</p>	<p><b>Food substitutions are similar in nutritional value</b>            When a substitution is offered due to planned item not being available, the item offered is similar in nutritional value. For example, if bananas are not ripe enough to eat, apples are offered instead.</p> <p><b>Food substitutions are varied</b>            Food items offered as substitution change from day to day.</p> <p><b>Non-perishable food items are available at the centre in case of emergencies</b>            There are non-perishable food items stored in the centre as back-up in the event lunch does not arrive or the meal and/or snack has spoiled. For example, canned beans or canned vegetables. The items do not have to meet all the food group requirements however there should be enough food for all the children.</p>

**6. Preparation, Handling and Transportation of Food**

**Intent: The handling of food is done in a healthy, safe and sanitary manner and some of the staff are trained in safe food preparation regardless of their position within the centre. Children are provided with food that is free of any pesticides and contaminants.**

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p><b>Food handling is not sanitary</b> Staff do not follow policies and procedures that adhere to sanitary food handling.</p> <p><b>Food and beverages are heated in plastic bottles or melamine</b> Food and beverages are being heated up in plastic container and/or melamine dishes.</p> <p><b>Food contact surfaces, including cutting boards, are not cleaned and sanitized to eliminate cross-contamination</b> Surfaces are not being sanitized after every use.</p> <p><b>Baby formula is being served more than two hours after being heated</b> Staff feed an infant their formula that had been heated more than two hours before. <b>(Sub-item potentially not applicable)</b></p> <p><b>Hand hygiene area in the food preparation area is not equipped with hand soap, paper towels.</b> Food preparation area does not have sufficient supply of hand soap and paper towels.</p>	<p><b>Fruits and vegetables are washed before being served to children</b> Fruits and vegetables are washed to eliminate contaminants and pesticides.</p> <p><b>Food is wrapped or covered during transportation from the food preparation area</b> Food is protected during transportation. For example, by using plastic wrap, tin foil, container with a lid.</p> <p><b>Current Regional Public Health hand washing procedure is posted</b> Hand washing procedures are posted and followed as per Regional Public Health.</p> <p><b>Food preparers complete training on safe food preparation at least every five years</b> Staff who are handling food have completed their Food Handlers Certification within the past five years.</p>	<p><b>Supervisor annually reviews best practices for food handling with food preparer(s)</b> Supervisor reviews expectations of food handling with all food preparers to ensure that best practices are being followed.</p> <p><b>More than one staff trained in Food Handlers Course</b> More than one staff is trained in the Food Handlers Certification program regardless of their position within the centre.</p> <p><b>Food Handlers Certification is posted and accessible for viewing</b> Food Handlers Certification is posted in a place that is accessible to families.</p> <p><b>Food temperatures are documented daily</b> Staff record the temperature of the food on a daily basis to ensure food is stored and served to the children at the correct temperature.</p>

**7. Health and Safety Kitchen and/or Food Preparation Area**

**Intent: Kitchen and food preparation area is safe for staff and free of any hazards. All areas are hygienically maintained to prevent any cross-contamination. Open food is stored in sealed containers to control rodent/bug infestations.**

Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations
<p><b>Hazards observed</b>            Kitchen is not maintained in a state of safe repair.            For example, slippery floor, broken cupboard door, improper storage of both knives and dish washing soap.</p> <p><b>The following are not hygienically maintained:</b>            Each item listed is not maintained in a hygienic manner:</p> <p><b>Kitchen preparation area</b>  <b>Food storage area</b>  <b>Kitchen equipment</b></p>	<p><b>All kitchen and/or food preparation areas and equipment are:</b></p> <p><b>Kept in a state of good repair</b></p> <p><b>Organized</b></p> <p><b>Open food is stored in sealed containers</b>            For example, using sealed plastic containers, zippered storage bags that are properly sealed or bag clips that seal the entire opening of the item.</p> <p><b>Cupboards are labeled</b>            The outsides of cupboards are labeled to assist with locating utensils.</p>	<p><b>Cleaning/sanitizing checklist posted, dated and signed by staff weekly</b>            There is a checklist detailing what has been cleaned. The checklist is signed and/or initialed by the staff and clearly dated.</p> <p><b>Regional food recalls and/or allergy alerts are posted</b>            Staff post Regional food recall/allergy alert information in a place that is accessible to families.</p> <p><b>Food preparation area is separated from the program</b>            When a food preparation area is located in a classroom, it is separated from the program so children do not access it. It is acceptable to use a safe barricade or gate. The food preparation area is used only for this purpose.  <b>(Sub-item potentially not applicable)</b></p>