



Continue your learning

Taking Steps to Healthy Success: Healthy Eating

These resources include additional tools, information, and methods to implement the strategies you learned in this lesson. You may want to save an electronic copy of this handout (hyperlinks for each resources are included) for future reference or to pass on to co-workers or families



Off-the-shelf curricula and toolkits

[Growing Minds: Farm to Preschool Toolkit](#) –

A comprehensive toolkit of farm to preschool resources including lesson plans, developing sensory gardens for infants and toddlers, a plant list for preschool gardens, and weekly “This Week in the Garden” activity sheets.

[Grow It, Try It, Like It!](#) – A garden-themed nutrition education kit with seven lessons that introduces three fruits and three vegetables. Each lesson includes hands-on activities, planting activities, and nutrition education activities that introduce MyPlate.

[How's it Growing?](#) – Lesson plans on planning, planting, maintaining, and cooking from a preschool garden. Includes a list of 50 garden-themed books.

[Food for Thought](#) – A five-unit nutrition education curriculum for preschoolers that covers Fall Fruits and Vegetables, Winter Fruits and Vegetables, Go-Grains, Power Up with Proteins, and Spring Snacking. There are 32 lessons that feature a nutrition activity and integrate educational domains such as language arts, mathematics, and science concepts.

[Harvest of the Month](#) – Curriculum offers 12 months worth of creative and engaging activities aimed at introducing children to fruits and vegetables through sensory exploration while learning about the health benefits of fresh produce.

[Harvest for Healthy Kids](#) – Developed by child care providers, this resource provides eight free, downloadable activity kits, each designed around a particular fruit or vegetable. Each kit includes an activity plan, picture cards, teacher bites newsletter, family newsletter, and recipes.

Activities are aligned with early learning standards. Available in Spanish, and some in Russian.

KidsHealth – [Junior Salad Bar](#) – An activity to help children make their own salad.

Sesame Street Workshop – [Healthy Habits for Life Toolkit](#) – Includes resources for ECE providers and families on nutrition and active play.

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) –

- [The Two Bite Club](#) – This educational storybook, available in English and Spanish, was developed to help parents or caregivers introduce new foods to children. The storybook includes fun activities for children, like a coloring page and an activity page.
- [Nutrition Education: Resources for Preschool](#) – This website has a collection of curricula, grab and go lessons, and resources to teach children about healthy nutrition.

[Got Dirt? Garden Toolkit for Implementing Youth Gardens](#) – Use this easy-to-use toolkit to help you start a fruit and vegetable garden. Learn the basic steps of starting and maintaining a garden and ways to engage adults and children in the process.



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Videos

Harvest for Healthy Kids - [“A Critical Head Start for Pre-Schoolers: Eating Healthy Foods”](#) (video) – Highlights Harvest for Healthy Kids, a program to introduce children to new foods, especially fruits and vegetables, and encourage better eating habits.

[Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition](#) – The Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition developed several instructional videos for ECE providers and families on how to engage children in active play and teach children about nutrition. Videos are available on their YouTube channel.

Videos on healthy eating:

[“Teaching Nutritional Benefits of Eating Healthy Foods”](#) (video) – Shares a few examples of how caregivers can teach children about the nutritional benefits of healthy eating.

[“Teaching Taste, Texture, and Color”](#) (video) – Shares a few examples of how caregivers can educate children about taste, texture, and color through conversations during mealtimes.

[“Teaching Portion Size”](#) (video) – Highlights tips on how to figure out appropriate portion sizes for children based on age and a three-step process for teaching children about portion size during meals.

[“Putting it All Together”](#) (video) – Features several different ways an adult can teach children about healthy nutrition during a single meal (for example, verbal praise, portion sizes, color, and nutritional benefits of healthy food).

eXtension: Families, Food and Fitness – [“Helping Kids Listen to Their Eating Cues”](#) (video) – Learn about children’s appetites and key strategies to help keep kids’ eating habits healthy.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – [“Making Health Easier: Healthy Changes Start in Preschool”](#) (video) – Highlights the efforts of a preschool educator to keep kids healthy at an early age through healthy nutrition, gardening, cooking, and fun physical activities, such as yoga. [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

Healthy recipes

U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) – Recipes for Healthy Kids – Recipes created specifically for child care programs to offer more fruits and vegetables and foods prepared in a healthy way.

- [Recipes for Healthy Kids: Cookbook for Child Care Centers](#) – The recipes feature foods both children and adults should consume more of, such as dark green and orange vegetables, dry beans and peas, and whole grains. All recipes are standardized for 25, 50, and 100 servings!
- [Recipes for Healthy Kids: Cookbook for Homes](#) – The recipes feature foods both children and adults should consume more of, such as dark green and orange vegetables, dry beans and peas, and whole grains. The recipes are kid tested and kid approved!
- [What’s Cooking? USDA Mixing Bowl](#) – Healthy, easy-to-make recipes available for families and ECE programs. Recipes are available in English and Spanish.
- [USDA Standardized Recipes](#) – These recipes provide Child Nutrition Program operators with delicious new dishes that meet meal pattern requirements. The recipes are standardized to provide updated crediting information, including vegetable subgroups.

Texas Department of Agriculture – [Multicultural Recipes for Child Care Centers, Family Day Care Homes, and Adult Daycare Centers](#) – Check out these multicultural recipes that fit into the new Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal patterns. Recipes for chicken chalupas, Veracruz bean tortillas, tuna chow mein casserole, Hungarian goulash, plus more!

Penn State Extension – [Healthy Food Options for Group Meetings](#) – Check out these fresh ideas for healthy eating at staff meetings and program events.



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Menus: Planning and prepping

Gather inspiration from sample menus! Plan meals ahead of time—it's a great way to ensure children get a wide variety of food throughout the month, and helps with budgeting. Check out the links below!

[Association for Child Development's Menu Planning Guide](#) – Includes 4-week cycle menus for Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter and loads of resources to help child care centers and homes plan and serve healthy meals. Check out this resource for menu planning tips and best practices. Bonus: All menus meet the Child and Adult Care Food Program meal patterns (CACFP)!

[Twist & Sprout® Menus](#) – Check out these 4-week cycle menus that correspond with the four seasons! Each day has breakfast, lunch, and snack with crediting for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (also known as CACFP, Child Food Program, or Food Program).

[Tip Sheets and Menus from the Texas Department of Agriculture](#) – 4-week cycle menus you can use as examples or that can be modified to meet your program's needs. Be sure to review the Tip Sheet when planning, preparing, and serving your menus. Menus indicate recipes that are Whole Grain-Rich, Multicultural Standardized Recipes, and USDA Standardized Recipes.

[Idaho Menu Planning Toolkit](#) – This menu toolkit includes best practices, tips and strategies for successful meal planning, 3-week menu cycles, resources, and more than 60 recipes to choose from.

[Institute for Child Nutrition](#) – Tips that suggest ways to save time and effort. For more grab-and-go lessons to help your food program, visit the Institute for Child Nutrition website.

- [Time Saving Tips](#) – Tips that help you organize and cut down on food preparation time.
- [Using Standardized Recipes in Child Care](#) – Take the guesswork out of preparing meals for children in your care. A standardized recipe identifies the exact amount of ingredients, preparation methods, and the required equipment to prepare the recipe. In addition, standardized recipes are prepared the same way each time, aiding in food and labor cost control.

Shop \$mart

While the tip sheets listed below are not specific to child care providers, the key points and take away messages about strategies to shop smart and save money are applicable to everyone.

[Eat Right When Money's Tight](#) – Strategies to stretch your food dollars by planning ahead, budgeting, making smart food choices, and preparing low-cost recipes.

[30 Ways in 30 Days to Stretch your Food Dollars](#) – Learn 30 ways to stretch your fruit and vegetable budget.

[Storing Fruits and Vegetables for Better Taste](#) – Learn how to maintain freshness and flavor of the produce you buy at the market or grow in your garden.

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP, Child Food Program, Food Program)

[Child and Adult Care Food Program \(CACFP\)](#) – The food program provides financial assistance and resources for ECE programs to serve nutritious meals and snacks. Even if your program does not participate in CACFP, there are great resources that can support you as you serve healthy food. See below for a few examples.

- [“Growing A Healthier Future with the CACFP”](#) – Infographic with important information about fruits & vegetables, whole grains, how to reduce added sugars, and feeding infants. [English](#) | [Spanish](#)
- [“Serve Tasty and Healthy Foods in the Child and Adult Care Food Program, Sample Meals for Children Ages 3-5”](#) [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

[New Meal Pattern Reminders](#) – The National CACFP Sponsors Association developed a one-page summary of the new meal patterns reminders. This is a great “at-a-glance” resource, perfect to post on a refrigerator or bulletin board.

For more CACFP training resources, check out the [Team Nutrition's website](#).

Hunger cues for preschoolers

University of Nevada, Cooperative Extension – [Tummy Talks](#) is a short, fun book that helps you teach children about hunger and fullness by listening to their own bodies.

eXtension: Families, Food and Fitness – [“Teaching Children to Listen to their Bodies”](#) – Learn more about children’s eating cues and how caregivers can help kids regulate their eating habits.

[Tummy Talk Interactive Game for Preschool Children](#) (from Temple University) – Online game that leads children to awareness of their bodies’ eating cues.

Self-Assessment tools

[Go NAP SACC](#) – Go NAP SACC self-assessments help early care and education programs compare their nutrition and physical activity practices to best practice standards. Each assessment tool includes how-to instructions, making it easier for providers to assess their program.

[C.H.O.I.C.E Toolkit & Self-Assessment Questionnaire](#) – This questionnaire will show you how your child care home or center compares with recommended nutrition and physical activity guidelines.

[Healthy Kids, Healthy Future Child Care Checklist Quiz](#) – This simple checklist quiz will help you assess your program’s physical activity, nutrition, and screen time practices.

[National Smarter Mealtimes for Child Care Settings](#) – Smarter Mealtimes in Child Care Settings is a self-assessment tool with 20 simple, inexpensive strategies to improve healthy eating in half- or full-day programs that serve young children.

Other resources

First 5 Santa Clara County – [Potter the Otter](#) – A Tale About Water is a short, fun book that helps you teach children about drinking water and being healthy.

[ChooseMyPlate.gov](#) – Preschoolers web page can help your preschooler eat well, be active, and grow up healthy.

Young children need your help to develop healthy eating and physical activity habits for life. There are several helpful resources listed on this website.

“Get Moving Today Activity Calendar” – Check out this annual calendar with 365 days of fun and creative ideas to get kids moving! [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

HealthyKidsHealthyFuture.org – Resources and information for ECE providers to help you promote healthy habits with young children. [Healthy eating](#) | [Healthy beverages](#)

[KidsHealth.org](#) – Articles for families on health topics.



Additional learning opportunities from Better Kid Care

On Demand modules:

- Childhood Obesity Prevention: LMCC – Offer Healthy Beverages
- Childhood Obesity Prevention: LMCC – Serve Healthy Food

Research-to-Practice Tip Pages:

Check out these quick tips for healthy eating at your program.

[MyPlate for Preschoolers](#) – A helpful nutrition resource for caregivers

[Picky eaters](#)

[Savory sensory learning](#)

[The best drinks for children](#)

The digital version of this PDF has clickable links to the resources. If you have this PDF in printed form, you can search the terms online to find the resources.



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