

Mealtime Minutes

Inspiring Success:

Illinois Child Care Wellness Team Nutrition Training Sub-grants

Illinois State Board of Education Nutrition and Wellness Programs

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INTRODUCTION

Illinois Child Care Wellness: Team Nutrition Training Sub-grants

This bonus Mealtime Minutes highlights Work Plans submitted by child care facilities that received an Illinois Child Care Wellness—Team Nutrition Training Sub-grant.

These sub-grant activities were conducted between July 1, 2014, and June 30, 2015, and awardees submitted quarterly reports to describe the progress of their sub-grant activities.

Many great examples of nutrition and wellness education activities were shared through those reports, which are now being shared throughout this newsletter.

We encourage you to use this as a resource (and be inspired by it) to enhance health and wellness efforts at your own child care facilities.

Award Details:

- ◆ 15 sub-grants were planned for funding by the Illinois State Board of Education
- Award amounts were determined based on the number of child care centers under each sponsoring organization
- 12 eligible applications were received and awarded:
 - Six sub-grants for sponsors with two or three sites, up to \$6,700
 - Five sub-grants for sponsors with between four and nine sites, up to \$16,700
 - One sub-grant to a sponsor with ten or more sites, up to \$26,700

Eligibility & Purpose:

Sub-grants were used to assist with the cost of conducting staff training on nutrition and wellness, and to implement programs that create and maintain a healthier child care center environment.

Training and activities were to focus on one or more "Key Strategies" of nutrition and wellness, based on guidance from the <u>Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children Provider Handbook for the CACFP</u>. These Key Strategies are:

- 1. Build a Healthy Plate
- 2. Increase Consumption of Healthy Beverages
- 3. Increase Active Play
- 4. Limit Screen Time
- 5. Focus on Food Safety

Recommendations for each of these Key Strategies are outlined on the next page.



KEY STRATEGIES & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Build a Healthy Plate	 A variety of different fruits and/or vegetables are served at every meal (not including juice)
	 Dark-green, red and orange vegetables, and dry beans and peas are often incorporated into meals
	◆ At least half of all grains served are whole grains
	◆ Low-sodium foods are served
	Options low in solid fats are served
	◆ Foods with few added sugars are served
	◆ Fried foods are rarely served
	Meals are served family style
2. Increase Consumption of Healthy Beverages	Water is freely accessible both indoors and outdoors
	♦ Water has no added sweeteners
	♦ 100% juice is limited to 4-6 oz. daily
	 Sugar-sweetened beverages including sports drinks are never served
	 Milk served to children age 2 years and older is nonfat or low-fat (1%) milk
3. Increase Active Play	◆ For children 12 months to 3 years old, at least 60 - 90 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity is provided per 8-hour day
	◆ For children 3 to 6 years old, at least 90 - 120 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity is provided per 8-hour day
	◆ Activities are varied between structured play and free play
	◆ Active play is promoted through written policies and practices
4. Limiting Screen Time (time spent using videos, television, computers, or video games)	No screen time is provided for children under the age of 2
	◆ For children age 2 and over, only 30 minutes total screen time per week and no more than 15-minute increments of computer use is provided while in child care.
	 For all ages, no screen time is provided during meals or snack times
	 Screen time is only for educational or physical activity programs, and has no commercials or advertising
5. Focus on Food Safety	Training on the basics of food safety to prevent foodborne illness is provided
	Training for choking prevention is provided
	Food allergy training is provided

A-KARRASEL CHILD CARE CENTER

Child Care Centers—Chicago

Work Plan:

- A Wellness Team leader will mentor classroom teachers in using nutrition materials to promote a healthy food group curriculum and healthy choice discussions for the children.
- As children become more aware of the food groups, Family Style food service will be introduced, allowing the children to serve themselves.
- Other opportunities to practice making healthy food choices will be provided for children during dramatic play time and food group activities.
- Garden activities will be conducted on the playground.
- Bulletin boards, special announcements, and monthly newsletters will help keep parents informed of the center progress in making Better Choices.

Inspiring Successes:

Food Groups Activities:

"We received play food that was representative of all the food groups. This has been so successful! The children have begun to use the correct names of the food groups when they talk about the foods. They are now aware that eating from the food groups will help them be healthy and build strong bones and muscles."



Family Style Meals:

Family Style Meal service was introduced. "The children are proud of themselves when they are able to do the serving for themselves. We have noticed that the children are taking longer to eat at mealtime, they are talking more with each other as they eat, and we have been encouraged by the children trying new foods!"

⇒ For more tips on Family Style dining, check out "Supplement E: Support Family Style Meals" coming soon to the Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children—Provider Handbook for the CACFP.

ALLISON'S INFANT & TODDLER CENTER

Child Care Centers—Chicago

Work Plan:

- Gardening boxes will be created to increase access to whole foods, natural resources, and to teach children how to make healthier food choices.
- The maintenance of the gardening boxes will also be utilized as an alternative activity to screen time.
- A nutritionist will conduct a two-hour workshop for center staff to train on the benefits of healthy eating and physical activity.
- Categories for "Active Play" and "Visual Media" will be added to "All About My Day" sheets that are sent home with parents to show the activities the child participated in, and the amount of time spent on them.
- Active Play supplies will be purchased, and field trips to farms will be conducted to increase nutrition and physical activity messages taught to the children.

Inspiring Successes:

Gardening Activities:



The children planted gardens and were able to watch their gardening projects grow, including growing fresh vegetables inside the classroom using garden boxes and flower pots.

The purchase of smocks and sanitizer wipes came in handy during gardening activities.

Physical Activity:

Children were encouraged to do gross motor play for 30 minutes in the morning and 30 minutes in the afternoon. "We have been discussing healthy lifestyles and the components of good nutrition."

⇒ Check out the Active Play tip sheets in the Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children—Provider Handbook for the CACFP



THE CHILDREN'S CENTER OF CICERO/BERWYN

Child Care Centers and Head Start Programs—Cicero, IL

Work Plan:

- The online curriculum, Learning About Nutrition Through Activities (LANA), will be utilized.
- A classroom shopping cart will be created to practice shopping for healthy food.
- Quarterly nutrition workshops will be held for parents, followed by a parent and child activity.
- Activity stations will be created for active play with hula hoops, resistance tubes, cones, jump ropes, and an assortment of balls.
- A weather-ready plan for outdoor active time will be implemented.

Inspiring Successes:

Staff Communication:

It was important to "communicate project goals to all stakeholders clearly both in writing and verbally. Identify key staff personnel and engage them in initial planning."

"Initially, not all staff members were excited about the grant activities, but as the grant objectives progressed, unanimously staff valued the grant goals and activities. Interestingly, staff members have been requesting to continue similar nutrition wellness goals this new school year."

Cooking Experiences:



Children prepared various recipes using picture stories to follow. Five-layer dip was one of the recipes, and used ingredients including avocado, cheese, and salsa.

The ingredients were set out. After the children washed their hands, they mashed the avocado and layered the ingredients. Tortilla chips were used to taste the dip.



CHURCH OF PEACE

At-Risk Afterschool Meals Programs—Rock Island, IL

Work Plan:

- Meal services will be switched from pre-plated to Family Style to help encourage children to eat more of what they enjoy and try new foods they might not have tasted before.
- A "Foodie of the Month" program to highlight a food that is new to most children will be incorporated at all facilities.
- Family Fun Nights will be held quarterly to share information about healthy foods and physical activity with parents and children together.
- Three workshops will be held during the year so that the Wellness Team can review goals and progress.

Inspiring Successes:

Food Safety:



Educational information was provided at family fun nights to explain the importance of food safety.

A local school food service director talked to families about food temperature safety, and the parish nurse was on hand to talk about choking prevention, and food allergies.

⇒ Check out "Supplement A: Practice Choking Prevention" and "Supplement B: Care for Children With Food Allergies" in the Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children—Provider Handbook for the CACFP.

Healthy Beverages:

Water is made accessible to children both indoors and outdoors.

To encourage the children to drink more water, teachers explained that water has no added sweeteners.

Active Play:

Dance time to music was incorporated as a fun free time exercise for all children.



COMMUNITY ACTION PARTNERSHIP OF LAKE COUNTY

Head Start Programs—Waukegan, IL

Work Plan:

- Classroom teachers and foodservice staff will receive nutrition and wellness training through in-service and collaboration with community resources.
- Teachers will integrate hands-on food experiences with other kindergarten readiness skills activities.
- Classroom posters, food items, and food-themed picture storybooks will be purchased for the monthly food experiences, along with song/music books for movement activities.
- Children will make picture recipes from each food experience in their own My Fun Food Experiences Scrapbook.

Inspiring Successes:

Nutrition Education and Parent Outreach:

The University of Illinois Extension held a 4-week nutrition class with teachers and children in the classroom. They talked about "whoa" foods and "go" foods.

They also participated in activities with parents at the centers' parent meetings. At each parent meeting, the University made a healthy recipe with the parents.

Food Experience Scrapbooks:



Each month a food experience was held in the classroom. "It was a learning experience for the teachers as well as the children. After each food experience, children were able to draw what they

learned or what they made and tasted for their own scrapbook. The scrapbooks were put together at the end of the year. Children were able to decorate the scrapbooks with stickers and take them home."

⇒ Find a variety of ideas for how to "Make Food Fun" in the Nutrition tip sheets in the Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children—Provider Handbook for the CACFP.

KNOWLEDGE UNIVERSE EDUCATION

Child Care Centers—Multi-state

Work Plan:

- Teachers will receive training for nutrition and food safety.
- An outdoor planter-centered garden will be created at all participating centers to provide hands-on learning experiences for children.
- Community partnerships with the University of Illinois Extension and University of Illinois Master Gardeners will provide center hosted visits and activities with the children to teach better choices regarding nutrition and physical fitness.

Inspiring Successes:

Garden Share Program:

One center "provided a location for teachers and parents who had a garden and excess produce to bring it to the Center, and invited families that did not have a garden to take the fresh produce."





Gardening Activities:

All sub-grant locations participated in a variety of gardening activities. The sponsor noted that "due to each center having different center facilities for outdoor play, it was necessary to evaluate/customize the garden to each unique center location."

Garden activities included planting raised-bed gardens with radishes, carrots, peppers, toma-

toes, cucumber, basil, and thornless berries; and planting classroom herb gardens in miningreenhouses. "A wonderful lesson that occurred while the children were growing their seedlings was a realization by some of the children that plants are fragile and can be damaged by weather and being handled roughly."

Some centers created a garden library, with books about plants and vegetables, and cookbooks for children. "Some of the centers reached out to their local library to bring gardening and cookbooks to the center for the children to read and use to prepare simple recipes."

PEORIA CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Head Start Programs—Peoria, IL

Work Plan:

- Monthly nutrition workshops and activities will be provided for the children, with the opportunity to participate in preparation of a healthy snack and a taste test.
- Classroom container gardening projects will also be a part of the program.
- Parents, caregivers and staff will be given the opportunity to attend fun and interactive workshops in the evening, with a focus on healthy eating and physical activity.

Inspiring Successes:

Family Wellness Events:

For PCCEO's Building Healthy Families initiative, monthly sessions were held for both parents and their children.

Each session included a nutrition topic and active play activities. Members of the Dietetic Program at Bradley University in Peoria were instrumental in development of the nutrition lessons, and presented them at the sessions.

One of the physical activities was Bitty Basketball. Six Bitty Basketball teams were established with a total of 71 students participating. Each team had two to three parents serve as volunteer coaches.



PLCCA INC.

Child Care, Head Start, and At-Risk Afterschool Meals Programs—Peoria, IL

Work Plan:

- Children will learn through play and intentional learning about food choices, food categories, portion control, and food nutrition.
- Activities will include cooking experiences and making stick puppets of their favorite healthy foods.
- Gross motor activities will be increased for toddlers and preschoolers.
- Nutrition-related workshops will be provided for parents.

Inspiring Successes:

MyPlate Activities:

The MyPlate mat was incorporated into circle time and story telling in the class-room. Children learned about the items that make a healthy plate.

Children also made healthy lunch boxes using pretend food. Children learned about various food items that could be selected to make healthy food choices.

Children also learned color recognition and participated in a sorting activity using food items.

⇒ A wide variety of MyPlate nutrition education resources and activities are available online at www.choosemyplate.gov.



SMART LEARNING CENTER

Child Care Centers—Chicago, IL

Work Plan:

- Stories, dramatic play, arts and crafts activities, and role play will be used to teach positive messages about nutrition and physical activity.
- Families and children will participate in a field trip to a farm and learn about nutrition standards.
- A Smart Garden Management Team will be formed to care for a center garden.
- Active play time will be increased, including daily Music & Movement activities.
- The consumption of water will be encouraged, with the purchase of water pitchers and drinking time included in the active play schedule.
- Food safety training will also be provided for staff.

Inspiring Successes:

Supermarket Tours:

Children were taken on field trips to a nearby supermarket to have a real experience shopping for healthy food for their families using pretend money.

Three trips were taken, bringing one class every-other month. During the trips, teachers showed them what healthy foods are, such as fruits, vegetables and grains.



For the third trip, the manager made a special arrangement: Two staff from the store gave the group a tour around the supermarket, and introduced all kinds of fruit and vegetables with food tasting. This was "one of the best field trips," says the sponsor.

TAZEWELL WOODFORD HEAD START

Head Start Programs—East Peoria, IL

Work Plan:

- Training on the I Am Moving, I Am Learning curriculum and resources from Head Start Body Start will be provided for classroom teachers.
- Children will participate in cooking experiences using the book More Than Mud Pies and food tastings called "What's This Wednesday" as part of educational nutrition activities.
- A field trip will be taken to the Hult Center for Healthy Living in Peoria, where the children will be introduced to My Plate using friendly puppets the "Food Groupies."
- A Choosy Event, featuring the Choosy character as the ambassador for healthy children, will be held in the fall to introduce parents to healthy eating and physical activities.

Inspiring Successes:

MyPlate Activities:

All children attended an educational program called "MyPlate and Me" at the Hult Center for Healthy Living.

They learned about the inside of the body, each component of MyPlate, and which foods are "go" foods and which foods are "whoa" foods.



Cooking Experiences:



Totes that contain cooking materials were purchased for classrooms to share. Teachers provided simple cooking experiences with the children using recipes from the book, "More Than Mud Pies."

⇒ The "More Than Mud Pies" book can be found on the Institution of Child Nutrition website.

YOUTH ORGANIZATION UMBRELLA INC.

At-Risk Afterschool Meals Programs—Evanston, IL

Work Plan:

- The campaign will incorporate nutrition and physical activity education for youth through evidence-based CATCH Kids Club curriculum and Cooking Group endeavors.
- Gardening activities, training and support for staff and parents, and popular family nights also will be held.
- Field trips will be taken to community gardens or farmers' markets that incorporate positive messages about nutrition.

Inspiring Successes:

Health and Wellness Events:

A "Health is for Y.O.U." week was held in April 2015. "The week included activities to engage youth and families in new ways of looking at health and taking action toward health goals."



Interactive games, yoga workshops, cooking demonstrations, and tips for stress reduction were offered.

"A highlight of the week was when Y.O.U. partnered with an array of health organizations to organize a Health(y) Communications Night. At the event, caregivers and youth learned how to share their health stories and advocate for themselves with healthcare providers."

⇒ Many of the Nutrition and Active Play tip sheets in the <u>Nutrition and Wellness Tips for Young Children Handbook</u> offer ways to connect with parents and the community. Check them out!



Gardening:

Weekly gardening group activities included cooking, and used healthy ingredients harvested from the centers' gardens.

Healthier Meals Cooking Classes

A full list of Healthier Meals Cooking Class dates and online registration is available at www.isbe.net/nutrition, by scrolling to workshops and clicking the CACFP Healthier Meals Cooking Classes link.

The Level 1 Healthier Meals Cooking Class was introduced by the Illinois State Board of Education in the spring of 2015. Participants were invited to advance their skills and learn the latest techniques and methods of cooking healthier.

Participants prepared and taste-tested nutritious snack and menu items that appeal to children, while using more whole grains, fresh fruits, and vegetables, and lowering fat, sugar and sodium content. In addition to cooking, the class included scaling and adapting recipes, knife skills, proper produce storage and a chef demonstration. All recipes used were from the "Recipes for Healthy Kids: Cookbook for Child Care Centers."

Level 1 classes will continue to be offered, in addition to Level 2 and Level 3 classes. All classes are held in state-of-theart culinary labs at LLCC's Workforce Careers Center in Springfield, Kendall College in Chicago, and Kaskaskia College of Culinary Arts in Centralia.

Space for each class is limited, and early registration is recommended.



Illinois Child Care Wellness Kits

As part of the USDA's 2013 Team Nutrition Training Grant, ISBE's Nutrition and Wellness Programs Division offered an Illinois Child Care Wellness Kit to all eligible independent institutions participating in the CACFP.

The Wellness Kit program was designed to enhance nutrition and physical activity education for children in fun and creative ways, and included a variety of nutrition-related storybooks, activities, and educational curriculum that emphasize the importance of eating fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

Distribution of the kits began in June 2015, and applicants agreed to submit a brief report to highlight how the Wellness Kit resources were used to enhance nutrition and physical activity education in fun and creative ways.

The following are some of the responses we received:

Blueberries for Lunch

Tiny Town of Lansing Nursery School Inc., Lansing, IL



"During lunch, the children had a choice of fresh blueberries. Some of the children dug right in while others said they didn't like them, they don't want to try them, they look gross, etc.

We looked up the benefits of blueberries on the internet. It recommended that even if you do not like blueberries you should try to eat $\frac{1}{2}$ cup, two to three times a week.

The article stated that eating blueberries as a child can be very beneficial in preventing certain cancers in adults. The children knew about cancer. Needless to say the blueberries were gone within a few minutes."



Creative Curriculum

Community Mennonite Early Learning Center, Markham, IL

"The toddlers and twos got into the swing of healthy foods and healthy eating by making a food collage. As the teachers encouraged the children to find and pick out foods they like to

eat, they spoke about the food groups they belonged to.

The children were very excited during the search for the food they liked and naming them as the teacher asked questions about the foods picked, while the children glued them to construction paper."

Illinois Child Care Wellness Kits

Daily Exercise

Debra T Thomas Learning Center 2, Bloomington, IL



"The activity that has become part of our daily routine is exercise. The children have been learning how exercise is very important to keep our bodies healthy.

We learned how the blood pumps through our heart to the rest of the body. Eating foods from the different food groups together with exercising helps us grow healthy bodies."

Fun with Food Groups

Kiddie Garden Little Angels, Chicago, IL



The teachers focused on one food group each, and taught about different food in each food group. The children had the opportunity to explore examples of foods from each food group individually, and also had opportunities to express what they learned new and make connections with the foods they both eat at home and learned about in the classroom.

The children enjoyed creating their own plate with the foods they enjoy eating, and learned that those foods belong to separate food groups.







Illinois Child Care Wellness Kit

Grocery Store Excursion

Asian Human Services, Chicago, IL



"After reading The Very Hungry Caterpillar, we talked about foods that are particularly healthful, such as whole, fresh vegetables and fruits. We then created a shopping list that included some fresh fruits (apples), whole-wheat bread, and broccoli.

Additionally, we planned a field trip to a nearby grocery store in the neighborhood. Finally, we had a discussion

about how to get to the store. Several children suggested that we walk, and we talked about why walking is a healthful activity.

On the day of the field trip, the children were excited about some of the different fruits and vegetables that they saw at the store. After our walking excursion to the grocery store, our project culminated in an impromptu picnic in our Dramatic Play Center, and we talked about all of the tasty and healthy foods that we enjoyed for lunch."

Parachute Play

Archway Inc., Carbondale, IL



"We are enjoying our activities that were included in our Child Care Wellness Kit and will continue to do so!

...One of the children's favorite activities was the parachute. They have enjoyed many activities with it so far. They loved putting leaves on it and making them fly off."

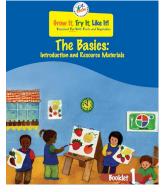
Team Nutrition has a variety of free resources that are available to all facilities participating in the Federal Child Nutrition Programs, including CACFP. You can order them online at www.teamnutrition.usda.gov, and click on "Resource Order Form."

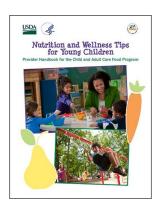
The Team Nutrition resources available for child care facilities include:

- ◆ Two Bite Club -- a storybook that introduces children to MyPlate
- Grow It! Try It! Like It! Nutrition Education Kit featuring MyPlate
- The Nutrition and Wellness Provider Handbook for the CACFP
- Recipes for Healthy Kids Cookbooks, and
- Make Today a Try Day sticker set and poster

Printed copies of these are available for FREE, or you can download them to view online. Some items are also available in Spanish.













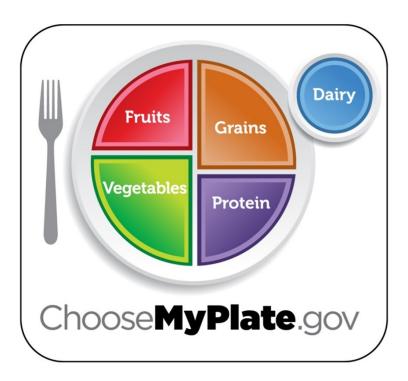
CHILD NUTRITION RESOURCES

Choose MyPlate Website

MyPlate is the federal government's food icon, using a place setting image for a well-balanced meal. It illustrates the five food groups that are the building blocks for a healthy diet: fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy groups.

The Choose MyPlate website is a wonderful resource for practical information about building a healthier diet. It can be accessed at www.choosemyplate.gov to find a variety of resources, such as:

- Videos and printable materials for nutrition education
- MyPlate Kids' Place
- Healthy Eating on a Budget
- SuperTracker lessons
- Recipes, cookbooks and menus
- 10 Tips Nutrition Education Series.



CHILD NUTRITION RESOURCES

What's Cooking—USDA Mixing Bowl

www.whatscooking.fns.usda.gov

Houses a variety of household and large-quantity recipes, as well as recipes in Spanish.



Institute of Child Nutrition (Formerly NFSMI)

www.nfsmi.org

Provides information and services that promote the continuous improvement of child nutrition programs, including training opportunities and resources such as the book, "More than Mud Pies."

Farm to Preschool

www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/farm-preschool

Works to connect early child care and education settings to local food producers with the objectives of serving locally-grown, healthy foods to young children, providing related nutrition education, and improving child nutrition.



Let's Move Child Care

www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org

Gives child care and early education providers the tools to help children develop healthy habits for life.

Child and Adult Care Food Program

www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program

Provides an overview of how CACFP fits into the FNS safety net to improve access to food and a healthful diet.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

hank you to the staff, students, and families of the Child Care Centers in Illinois that participated in the Illinois State Board of Education's Team Nutrition Training Activities.

A special thank you goes to the following organizations that have shared their stories for this newsletter:

- A-Karrasel Child Care Center, Chicago
- Allison's Infant & Toddler Center, Chicago
 - Archway Inc., Carbondale, IL
 - Asian Human Services, Chicago, IL
- The Children's Center of Cicero/Berwyn, Cicero, IL
 - ◆ Church of Peace, Rock Island, IL
- Community Action Partnership of Lake County, Waukegan, IL
- Community Mennonite Early Learning Center, Markham, IL
 - Debra T Thomas Learning Center 2, Bloomington, IL
 - Kiddie Garden Little Angels, Chicago, IL
 - Knowledge Universe Education Holding LLP, Multi-state
- Peoria Citizens Committee for Economic Opportunity, Peoria, IL
 - PLCCA Inc., Peoria, IL
 - Smart Learning Center, Chicago, IL
 - Tazewell Woodford Head Start, East Peoria, IL
 - Tiny Town of Lansing Nursery School Inc., Lansing, IL
 - Youth Organization Umbrella Inc., Evanston, IL

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