

# Mealtime Memo

*for Child Care*

## Good Nutrition is Important!

As COVID-19 continues to affect us, you must be cautious to protect yourself, your family, and children in your care. One of the best ways to stay healthy and keep your immune system strong is through good nutrition as well as following the guidelines set forth by USDA/CACFP. Proper nutrition is equally important for adults and children—after all, adults need to be healthy to take care of children! According to the [World Health Organization](#), eating fresh, unprocessed foods daily, drinking 8–10 cups of water, and limiting your daily salt and sugar intake are ways to practice good nutrition. As a parent or provider, you also choose what food to serve to the children in your care. Choose foods rich in nutrients that help strengthen the body's immune system.



## What can you do to prepare your child care home or center for nutritious mealtimes?

- Follow the latest guidelines using the [updated CACFP meal patterns](#), by offering:
  - Greater variety of vegetables and fruits
  - More whole grains
  - Less added sugar
  - More protein options
  - Age-appropriate meals and portion sizes



Due to COVID-19, USDA has granted additional meal pattern and service waivers. You can find that information at the end of this newsletter.



- [Food planning during the coronavirus](#) will help save time at the grocery store and is an essential tool of good nutrition. [Check out ICN's Child Nutrition Recipe Box](#) featuring nutritious, kid-friendly child care recipes for home.



- Food safety is always important, but in the age of COVID-19, it's more important now than ever. Be sure to [wash your hands](#) before and after food preparation and service. Keep up with the [latest FDA information](#) regarding food safety!



**WASH**



**SOAP**



**RINSE**



**DRY**

- Read about [adjustments to normal foodservice protocol and various other actions](#) the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Food Nutrition Services has taken to help keep organization operations safe during COVID-19.
- Please see the [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Meal Pattern Flexibility](#) and the [Nationwide Waiver to Allow Meal Service Time Flexibility](#) in the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program.

## References

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