

Proposed Support Materials and Resources Wellness Policy Development and Sample Policies for RCCIs

The following 8-step process for developing wellness policies is recommended as a best practice. This has been adapted from the USDA's Team Nutrition website.

1. Homework: At a minimum, your Child Nutrition Program's new wellness policies must be in compliance with the Federal statute requirements, plus all relevant state and district requirements. **NOTE: If you are licensed through Department of Inspections and Appeals, JCAHO or CARF accredited, you may find policies that meet the requirements below.**
2. Form a team: The law requires (1) parents, (2) participants, (3) representatives of the facility food authority, (4) the governing board, (5) administrators, and (6) the public to be involved in the process. If these representatives are not available make sure you involve everyone that will be affected by the policy.
3. Assessment: Determine the program's needs.
4. Draft a policy*: The law says the policy must address:
 - nutrition education,
 - physical activity,
 - other school-based activities that promote participant wellness,
 - nutrition guidelines for all foods available on each campus,
 - and a plan for measuring implementation.***If policies for these areas are already in place, please cite where they may be found.**
5. Build awareness and support: Educate and inform stakeholders (staff, administrators, participants, community) and use media where possible.
6. Adopt the policy: Approval by your Board with wide support.
7. Implement the policy: The policy can be phased in or put in place all at once.
8. Maintain, Measure, Evaluate: a plan and a person for evaluation, sustained effort, document impact on meals and other food served, survey participants, and staff regarding satisfaction with the policy.

Sample Policies

The following sample policies are the policies divided among the five categories required by the wellness policy legislation: (1) Nutrition Education, (2) Physical Activity, (3) Other Facility-based Activities that Promote Wellness, (4) Nutrition Guidelines for All Foods Available at each facility, and a (5) Plan for Measuring Implementation. (Child Nutrition Programs may decide to implement or revise all sample policies from each section to meet local needs or may create their own policies.) Be sure to choose or address one or more policies from each category. **There are a variety of situations within residential programs and you should tailor the policy to meet the unique needs of your facility and participants.**

I. Nutrition Education

Nutrition Education and Promotion	<p>_____ (program name)_____ aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by participants. Programs should provide nutrition education and engage in nutrition promotion that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is offered and is designed to provide participants with the knowledge and skills necessary to promote and protect their health; • includes enjoyable, developmentally-appropriate, culturally-relevant, participatory activities to the extent possible, such as taste testing, farm visits, and on-site gardens when possible; • promotes fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health-enhancing nutrition practices; and • emphasizes caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/exercise).
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II. Physical Activity

Daily Physical Education	All participants including those with disabilities, special health-care needs, and in alternative educational settings, will receive daily physical education (or its equivalent of 150 minutes/week for elementary age participants and 225 minutes/week for middle and high school age participants) for the entire year. Participants will spend at least 50 percent of physical education class time participating in moderate to vigorous physical activity.
Physical Activity Opportunities After School	After-school enrichment programs will provide and encourage – verbally and through the provision of space, equipment, and activities – daily periods of moderate to vigorous physical activity for all participants.
Physical Activity and Punishment	Teachers and other staff will not use physical activity (e.g., running laps, pushups) or withhold opportunities for physical activity (e.g., recess, physical education) as punishment.

III. Other activities to promote participant wellness

Integrating Physical Activity into Classroom Settings	For participants to receive the nationally-recommended amount of daily physical activity (<i>i.e.</i> , at least 60 minutes per day) and for participants to fully embrace regular physical activity as a personal behavior, participants need opportunities for physical activity beyond physical education class. Toward that end health education will complement physical education by reinforcing the knowledge and self-management skills needed to maintain a physically-active lifestyle and to reduce time spent on sedentary activities, such as watching television.
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Staff Wellness	<p>_____ (program name)_____ highly values the health and well being of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Each facility should establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, health council member, local hospital representative, dietitian or other health professional, recreation program representative, union representative, and employee benefits specialist. (The staff wellness committee could be a subcommittee of the facility health council.) The committee should develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among staff. The staff wellness committee should distribute its plan to the health council annually.</p>
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VI. Nutrition guidelines for all foods available at each facility

Child Nutrition Program Meals	<p>Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be appealing and attractive to participants; • be served in clean and pleasant settings; • offer a variety of fruits and vegetables; • serve a variety of milk (low-fat or fat free) or nutritionally-equivalent non-dairy alternatives (to be defined by USDA).
Breakfast	<p>Ensure that all participants have breakfast, in order to meet their nutritional needs and enhance their ability to learn.</p>
Foods offered outside the meal times (e.g., vending, a la carte, sales)	<p>If available, foods and beverages sold or offered individually should be limited to low-fat and non-fat milk, fruits, and non-fried vegetables.</p> <p><u>The Facility should discourage or limit:</u> soft drinks containing caloric sweeteners; sports drinks; iced teas; fruit-based drinks that contain less than 50% real fruit juice or that contain additional caloric sweeteners; beverages containing caffeine, excluding low-fat or fat-free chocolate milk (which contain trivial amounts of caffeine).</p>
Rewards	<p>Use of food or beverages as rewards for academic performance or good behavior, will be evaluated for appropriateness in the individuals treatment plan. Other alternatives to food should be considered.</p>

Food Safety	<p>All foods adhere to food safety and security guidelines.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All foods made available on campus comply with the state and local food safety and sanitation regulations. Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and guidelines are implemented to prevent food illness in schools. • For the safety and security of the food and facility access to the food service operations are limited to Child Nutrition staff and authorized personnel. For further guidance see the US Department of Agriculture food security guidelines.
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V. Monitoring, Evaluation and Review Monitoring

	<p>The designee will ensure compliance with established district-wide nutrition and physical activity wellness policies. In each program, the designee will ensure compliance with those policies in his/her program and will report on the compliance to the board.</p> <p>Facility food service staff will ensure compliance with nutrition policies within facility food service areas and will report on this matter to the administrator. In addition, the facility will report on the most recent USDA School Meals Initiative (SMI) review findings and any resulting changes.</p> <p>The designee will develop a summary report every three years on program-wide compliance with the organization’s established nutrition and physical activity wellness policies, based on input from staff from within the program. That report will be provided to the board and also distributed to all stakeholders in the organization.</p>
Policy Review	<p>To help with the initial development of the program's wellness policies, each program may conduct a baseline assessment of the existing nutrition and physical activity environments and policies. The results of those assessments will be compiled to identify and prioritize needs. Assessments will be repeated every three years to help review policy compliance, assess progress, and determine areas in need of improvement.</p>