Healthier CACFP Award Application

Recognizing Excellence in
Nutrition and Physical Activity in Child Care

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General Information

What is it?

The Healthier Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Award is a recognition system that supports the wellness efforts of child care centers participating in CACFP. Child care centers taking steps to improve the nutrition, physical activity, nutrition education and/or environment for children in their care can apply to win an award in one or more of these categories. Three award levels are offered: Honors, High Honors and Highest Honors

Why is it important?

With one in five children being overweight or obese by the age of 6, child care centers play an essential role in the prevention of childhood obesity. Child caregivers have an opportunity to positively impact children's healthy development by encouraging children to develop healthy habits at a young age.

Am I eligible to apply?

Participation in the CACFP and compliance with CACFP regulations is required to be eligible for the award. Meeting the award criteria and winning an award does not replace CACFP requirements. Applicants are required to be in good standing with the CACFP, defined as having completed and implemented all corrective actions from the previous compliance review and having not been seriously deficient in the past two years, at the time of application.

How do I apply?

The program application includes criteria in four categories: Menus, Physical Activity, Nutrition Education, and Environment. Applicants can choose which category(ies) they would like to apply for and at which level, and then submit the application to their State Child Nutrition Agency. Applications must include submission of the requested support documentation as listed in the "Evaluation" columns in the application. Instructions should be read carefully in each category to determine which criteria need to be met to achieve the different award levels. It is highly recommended that applicants utilize the Healthier CACFP Award Resource Book, which explains "why" and "how to" for each criterion and provides guidance and tools to assist with implementing the criteria.

What do I win?

Winners are recognized with awards issued jointly by the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, and State agency that showcase the child care center's achievement in the community. Specific awards are based on the award level achieved and include banners, certificates, letters to parents, and logo stickers that can be posted to announce the high wellness priority of the center. At the highest award level, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, officials will send an individualized congratulatory award presentation to the winners. Contact your State Child Nutrition agency to find out more about the specific awards being offered to Healthier CACFP Award winners.

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Application Cover Sheet

Award level applying for:

☐ Honors ☐ High Honors ☐ Highest Honors

Application for (check all categories applying for):

☐ Menus ☐ Nutrition Education ☐ Physical Activity ☐ Environment

Child Care Center Name: _____

Child Care Center Address: _____

City _____ State_____ Zip _____

Age range of children in care: _____

Contact Person's Name & Title: _____

Contact Person's Phone Number & Email: _____

Date Submitted to State Agency: _____

State

Approved by State Child Nutrition Director: _____
Signature Date

Regional Office

Reviewed by: _____

Approved by Child Nutrition Director: _____
Signature Date

Award Issue Date:_____

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Category 1: Menus	Award Level General Requirements			Evaluation
	Honors	High Honors	Highest Honors	
MENUS for children over the age of one year				
Reimbursable meals meet the USDA standards. All meals for one month submitted menus meet the USDA meal patterns. Institution had a review within the last three years and all corrective actions have been completed.	√	√	√	**Submit one month menus for meals claimed.**
Reviewed menus meet the criteria below:				
Different fruits[1] and different vegetables every day of the week at lunch[2] ○ Good, better, best source of vitamin A three or more times per week[3] ○ Good, better, best source of vitamin C each day[3] ○ Fresh and/or frozen fruit or vegetables must be served each week ○ Fried, breaded or high fat vegetables are limited (i.e., tater tots, French Fries) to:	√ Total 2x/week ≤ 3x/month	√ √ Total 3x/week ≤ 2x/month	√ √ √ Total 5x/week Not on menu	• **Describe on menu as canned, fresh or frozen.** • **Identify vegetables as home-made and baked, if applicable.**
Only low-fat (1% or less) and/or fat-free (skim) milk are served to participants over age 2. Only whole milk is served to participants between the ages 1 and 2.	√	√	√	**Identify type of milk and age groups served on menu.**
Water is served as an extra item when two non-beverage creditable food items are served at snack.	√	√	√	**Identify when served on menu.**
Cooked dry beans[4] or split peas must be served each week; snacks count (includes canned beans and canned split peas)[5].	Total 1x/week	Total 2x/week	Total 3x/week	• **Identify on menus.** • **Submit purchase receipt.**

[1] Fruit may be fresh, frozen, canned or dried. Dried fruit must have no added sweetener; canned fruit must be packed in juice or light syrup.

[2] Fruits and vegetables must be of appropriate texture based on the child's development to prevent choking.

[3] Vitamin A & C fruits and vegetables identified as good, better and best sources in Appendix B of Building Blocks for Fun and Healthy Meals (http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/buildingblocks.html).

[4] Includes but is not limited to black beans, kidney beans, lentils, refried beans, pinto beans, navy beans, and great northern beans.

[5] Does not include green beans and green peas.

100% fruit juice is limited to:	≤ 1x/day	≤ 3x/week	≤ 2x/week	**Identify when served on menu.**
Whole grain foods[6] are served each week (not the same each day). ○ Dry cereal is served at least once each week. Whole grain cereal may be counted toward the weekly whole grain servings. ○ Sweet grain/breads[7] are limited at breakfast and snack to:	At least 3x/week Any dry cereal ≤ 2x/week	At least 5x/week Dry cereal with sugar limited to 6 gm/oz. ≤ 1x/week	At least 7x/week Dry cereal with sugar limited to 6 gm/oz. and has at least 2 gm fiber/oz ≤ 2x/month	**• Identify whole grain items on menus. • Submit ingredient list for whole grain items. • Submit recipe for center-made items.**
Higher fat meats and entrees that are processed and preserved[8] are limited to: Fried meats are limited to:	≤ 1x/week ≤ 1x/week	≤ 2x/month ≤ 2x/month	≤ 1x/month Not on menu	**Identify on menu if the items are home-made and baked.**
Locally grown foods are purchased and served:	1x/month	2x/month	≤ 3x/month	**Identify locally grown items on menus.**
Seasonal fruits and vegetables are included on menus:	√	√	√	**Identify seasonal items on menus.**

[6] A serving of whole grain food is equal to a serving of Grains/Breads as defined in the Food Buying Guide (http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/resources/foodbuyingguide.html), pages 3.15-3.16 according to the child's age. To count as a whole grain, the food products served must have whole grain listed first on the ingredient statement. Scratch recipes must have whole grain as the primary ingredient by weight or measure.

[7] Sweet grains and breads are noted with a footnote of 3 or 4 as defined on the grains/breads chart in the Food Buying Guide, pages 3.15-3.16

[8] Includes hot dogs, bologna, commercially prepared combination foods, sausages, salami, and breaded commercially-prepared meats such as fish sticks and chicken nuggets.

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Category 2: Physical Activity	Award Level General Requirements			Evaluation
	Honors	High Honors	Highest Honors	
Television, DVD and video watching and computer use is prohibited for children under the age of 2.	√	√	√	**Submit written policy.**
Screen time* of educational/movement material is limited to:	No more than 60 minutes/day	No more than 45-60 minutes/day	No more than 30-45 minutes/day	**Submit copies of daily schedules.**
Moderate to vigorous physical activity is provided during each full day of care (8 to 9 hour day) for at least:	45-60 minutes (3/4 to 1 hour)	60-90 minutes (1 to 1½ hours)	90-120 minutes (1½ to 2 hours)	**Submit copies of daily schedules.**
Periods of inactivity (at one time), excluding nap time and meal times, are limited to:	≤ 30 minutes on 2 occasions/day; **or** ≤ 60 minutes on 1 occasion/day	≤ 30 minutes on 1 occasion/day	≤ 15 minutes at a time	**Submit copies of daily schedules.**
The physical activity provided includes: ○ Both indoor and outdoor activities, ○ Unstructured physical activity (free play), and ○ Structured physical activity (age appropriate activities guided by the caregiver)	√ At least 20 minutes At least 20 minutes	√ At least 30 minutes At least 30 minutes	√ At least 45 minutes At least 45 minutes	**Submit written policy and indicate the types of activity on daily schedules.**
Active play time is not restricted as punishment.	√	√	√	**Submit written policy.**
Physical activity curriculums, which encourage a variety of basic movement and manipulative skills, are utilized at least weekly.		√	√	**Submit copies of physical activity curriculums utilized.**
Physical activity ideas and resources are sent home with parents at least monthly.			√	**Submit copies of the parent newsletters which contain this information.**

*Television, DVD, and video watching and computer use.

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Category 3: Nutrition Education	Award Level General Requirements			Evaluation
	Honors	High Honors	Highest Honors	
Directions specific to this section: All checked criteria are required according to each award level.	**Complete all checked items**	**Complete all checked items**	**Complete all checked items**	
Caregivers participate in CACFP family-style meals and a caregiver is seated at each dining table with the children. Caregivers eat the CACFP meals with children and serve as role models at mealtime.	√	√	√	**Submit photo of family-style meal and submit policy for family-style meal service.**
Parents have knowledge of center's participation in CACFP and the CACFP meal pattern is shared with parents.	√	√	√	**Submit sample of parent communication.**
Breastfeeding resources are promoted and available to parents.	√	√	√	**Submit sample of breastfeeding resources.**
Quantities of foods served are enough to meet children's appetite and energy needs.	√	√	√	**Submit one week of food production records.**
New foods are introduced with familiar foods or familiar foods are prepared in new ways.	√	√	√	**Submit written narrative describing new food examples and/or submit recipes.**
Children are taught to eat appropriately for age and developmental ability.	√	√	√	**Submit written examples of adapting mealtime to developmental readiness.**
Nutrition education is woven into activities throughout the day and provided through standardized curriculum (i.e. Team Nutrition; Choose MyPlate; Grow it, Try it, Like it; Healthy Habits for Life Resource Kit).	At least 1x/month	At least 2x/month	At least 1x/week	**Submit written narrative describing how nutrition education is woven into curriculum.**
Caregivers have completed: • Training provided by the State agency on the CACFP meal pattern and reimbursable/creditable meals • The NFSMI CARE Connection Nutrition Education webinars, http://www.nfsmi.org/ • Iowa CACFP On-line Learning Module, http://ilopd.iowa.gov/login/index.php, temporary password "wholegrains."	√ √	√ √ √	√ √ √	**Submit copies of current caregiver training records.**

Ellyn Satter's “Division of Responsibility in Feeding” is communicated with parents.		√	√	**Submit sample of parent communication.**
Policies for nutrition education are written for caregivers and parents, and are reviewed annually.		√	√	**Submit nutrition education policy with a current review date.**
Written documentation shows that all nutrition education policies are presented to caregivers and caregivers have opportunities to learn and practice the policies. Policies are shared with parents.		√	√	**Submit nutrition education policies and caregiver training records.**
Parents are encouraged to volunteer/participate in mealtimes.		√	√	**Submit volunteer policy.**
Visible support for good nutrition is provided in classrooms, and common areas through posters, pictures, and displayed books. Nutrition education involves multiple channels of communication, including the classroom and home/parents.		√	√	**Submit list of visible support of nutrition education.**
Nutrition education is presented to parents at a minimum, two times per year.			√	**Submit two samples of nutrition education provided to parents.**
Caregivers receive additional training opportunities on nutrition-related topics two times per year.			√	**Submit caregiver training records.**
Children have the opportunity to see, identify, taste and enjoy a variety of foods that are culturally significant and commonly available in local markets, such as fruits, vegetables, breads, grains, milk, meats, fish, beans, eggs, etc.			√	**Submit written narrative of cultural food activities and submit a photo.**
Children are learning interactively about food and nutrition through books and by using food as a hands-on context for learning math, science and social concepts.			√	**Submit written narrative with examples of interactive food activities.**

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Category 4: Environment	Award Level General Requirements			Evaluation
	Honors	High Honors	Highest Honors	
Directions specific to this section: All checked criteria are required, then add your choice of additional criteria according to the award level:	**All checked plus 3 additional**	**All checked plus 4 additional**	**All checked plus 5 additional**	
The daily schedule promotes a relaxed and adequate period for meals and snacks. Children have ample time to eat and practice social interaction skills, such as having a conversation.	√	√	√	**Submit a daily schedule of activities including meal beginning and end times.**
Food is not used as incentive or punishment and children are not punished or rewarded for what they choose to eat. Certain food is not withheld as punishment and children are not forced to eat foods as a prerequisite to receiving an item or completing an activity.	√	√	√	**Submit written policy and explain what techniques are used to punish or reward.**
Children are instructed in hand washing techniques and both children and staff wash their hands before meals and snack.	√	√	√	**Submit written policy and provide details of the hand washing techniques taught to children.**
Children, including picky eaters (able to eat food but resisting), are gently encouraged by staff to try new or less favorite foods. Staff are role models for tasting new foods, and food is never forced.	√	√	√	**Submit policy or employee handbook that explains process for gently encouraging picky eaters.**
Menus are available and posted for staff and parents. Children and parents have opportunities to provide input on the food and menus.	√	√	√	**Submit parent handbook, policy, or newsletter showing that parents are encouraged to provide input.**
Children serve themselves during meals and snacks with adult supervision. Some or all foods are served family style to the maximum extent possible at each meal. Children help set the table and/or clear dishes after the meal is finished.	At least 1 food item is served family style at breakfast, lunch/supper and snack	At least 2 food items are served family style at meals, and 1 at snack.	All food items are served family style at all meals	**Submit written policy specifying the number of food items served family style. Submit photos of the meal service.**
Both children and staff wash hands before and after meals.				**Submit written policy specifying that hand washing takes place both before and after meals.**

Children and staff sit down together for meals. Adults sit at the table and eat the same foods served to the children.				**Submit policy or employee handbook indicating staff roles during meal time. Submit photos of meal time.**
Staff show visible support for healthy nutrition and physical activity habits via posters, pictures, or books about nutrition and physical activity in every room.				**Submit photos and/or examples of materials posted or available in each room.**
Child-sized eating and serving utensils are available and used.				**Submit written policy and a photo of children using utensils.**
Parents are encouraged to bring non-food items for celebrations. Holidays are celebrated with mostly healthy foods or with non-food treats, such as stickers.				**Submit parent handbook or policy regarding foods provided for celebrations.**
Fundraising activities, if applicable, involving children/families are supportive of physical activity and healthful eating. If foods are sold, including snack bars and any foods sold to the children, they are nutritious.				**Submit a list of items used to fundraise.**
Food and vending machines, if present, are located in areas no visible or accessible to children.				**Submit a description and photo of where vending machines are located.**
If infant care is provided, breastfeeding is encouraged.				**Submit breastfeeding policy or parent handbook addressing breastfeeding.**
If infant care is provided, breastfeeding mothers are accommodated with a separate area to breastfeed and/or pump breast milk.				**Submit a photo of the breastfeeding area.**

Application Verification Form

Please read the following and obtain the signatures listed below, as applicable*:

We attest to the accuracy of the information provided in this application. We agree to maintain the nutrition excellence and physical activity standards and procedures indicated in this application in accordance with our certification as Honors, High Honors, or Highest Honors awardees. Furthermore, we agree to cooperate with USDA and other organizations upon request to publicize our efforts.

Authorized Representative _____

Board President/Owner _____

Grant Director/Applicant _____

*If you are unsure which signature(s) must be included, please contact your State agency.

Please submit your completed application and documentation to your State Child Nutrition Agency.

Thank you for applying for the Healthier CACFP Award!

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