

# MODEL Health!

Promoting Nutrition and Physical Activity in Children



Maryland State Department of Education  
2007 Team Nutrition Training Grant

**Promising Practices**

**Nancy S. Grasmick**  
State Superintendent of Schools

**James H. DeGraffenreidt, Jr.**  
President, Maryland State Board of Education

**Martin O'Malley**  
Governor

---

Maryland State Department of Education  
School and Community Nutrition Programs Branch  
200 West Baltimore Street  
Baltimore, Maryland 21201  
410-767-0199 (p)  
410-333-2635 (f)  
MarylandPublicSchools.org

---

For more information about the contents of  
this publication, please contact:

Anna Arrowsmith, RD  
Project Director for Maryland's Team Nutrition Grants  
Email: [aarrowsmith@msde.state.md.us](mailto:aarrowsmith@msde.state.md.us)



Maryland State Department of Education

# Child and Adult Care Food Program Promising Practices



Funding for this publication was provided through a 2007 USDA Team Nutrition Grant administered by the Maryland State Department of Education, School and Community Nutrition Programs Branch.

## **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank the following individuals for their commitment and support in implementing a successful Team Nutrition Training Grant:

### **Anna Arrowsmith**

Specialist, Nutrition Education and Training  
Maryland State Department of Education

### **Annie Calderón**

Spanish Language Training Coordinator  
Maryland Committee for Children

### **Cheryl De Atley**

Judy Center Partnerships Specialist  
Maryland State Department of Education

### **Judy Dzimiera**

Specialist, Nutrition Education and Training  
Maryland State Department of Education

### **Stewart Eidel**

Chief, Professional Development and Technical Assistance  
Maryland State Department of Education

### **Cheryl Hall**

Division of Early Childhood Development  
Maryland State Department of Education

### **Michele Mahoney**

Technical Assistance Coordinator  
Maryland Family Network

### **Shannon Svihart**

Specialist, CACFP Program Administration  
Maryland State Department of Education

### **Carolyn Thompson**

Specialist, Nutrition Education and Training  
Maryland State Department of Education

### **About Team Nutrition**

USDA's ***Team Nutrition*** is an integrated, behavior based, comprehensive plan for promoting the nutritional health of the Nation's children. This plan involves schools, parents, and the community in efforts to continuously improve school meals, and to promote the health and education of 50 million school children in more than 96,000 schools nationwide.

The goal of ***Team Nutrition*** is to improve children's lifelong eating and physical activity habits through nutrition education based on the principles of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and *MyPyramid*.

### **About Maryland's 2007 Team Nutrition Grant**

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) administers several of the USDA Child Nutrition Programs, including the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The target audience for Maryland's 2007 Team Nutrition Grant was CACFP child care providers. MSDE has partnered with the Judith P. Hoyer Early Child Care and Family Education Centers ("Judy Centers") and the Maryland Committee for Children to implement a statewide strategy to encourage parents, caregivers, foodservice staff, and others to serve as role models for children in practicing healthy eating and being physically active, both in the child care center and at home.



# Table of Contents

Introduction.....	1
Caroline County Judy Center Early Head Start.....	2
Carroll Child Care Center.....	3
Critchlow Adkins Children's Center.....	4
Dasher Green Head Start.....	5
Garrett County Community Action Committee Head Start.....	6
Hagerstown Community College Children's Learning Center.....	7
Herring Run Head Start.....	8
Kings Kids Child Development Center.....	9
Metro Delta Head Start.....	10
Mexico Farms Child Care and Learning Center.....	11
Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee Head Start.....	12
YMCA of Frederick County.....	13



# Introduction

Maryland's Team Nutrition grant activities were kicked off with three days of training for CACFP providers, part of which included conducting an assessment of the current nutrition and physical activity practices in their centers. North Carolina's Nutrition and Physical Activity Self Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) tool was used to conduct the assessment. The overall goals of the training were to assist CACFP providers to create an environment in the child care setting that provides positive role models for children for healthy eating and physical activity. The training covered nutrition and physical activity guidelines and recommendations, how to apply those recommendations into their daily routines, parent/family outreach, and how providers and family members can model healthy behaviors to the children in their care. Mini-grant proposals were written based on knowledge gained from the training and needs identified in the NAP SACC assessment results.

CACFP providers were also strongly encouraged to develop a wellness policy, focused primarily on nutrition and physical activity, for their centers. They received training and were provided with templates and worksheets to create wellness policies for their centers, based on a toolkit developed by the Contra Costa Child Care Council in California's Contra Costa County.

Mini-grants were available in amounts up to \$3,000. Highlights from mini-grant activities are in the pages that follow.

# Caroline County Judy Center Early Head Start

**Number of sites:** 2

**Number of enrolled children:** 77

**Total mini-grant award:** \$6,000

**Mini-grant Goals:**

- 1) Increase children's appreciation for a wider variety of fruits, vegetables, beans and lean meats, and whole grain foods from a variety of cultures.
- 2) Increase knowledge and practices of parents and staff through nutrition and physical activity training and activities.
- 3) Expand nutrition and physical education to children through the utilization of a standardized curriculum.



Caroline County Judy Center staff conducted the NAP SACC assessment of the nutrition and physical activity environment in their centers to identify their strengths and weaknesses. Goals for their mini-grant were based on the areas identified as needing improvement in their assessment.

**Activities:**

The Caroline County Judy Center used a multi-pronged approach to expand children's knowledge and intake of healthier foods. Activities included twice weekly taste-testing accompanied by nutrition education for the children; monthly parent education; classroom gardens; and a new curriculum for nutrition and physical activity.



**For more information, contact:**

Tearesa French  
Federalsburg Judy Center  
323 S. University Avenue  
Federalsburg, MD 21632  
410-754-2467

# Carroll Child Care Center

**Number of sites:** 1

**Number of enrolled children:** 67

**Total mini-grant award:** \$3,000

**Mini-grant Goals:**

- 1) Promote healthier lifestyles for children;
- 2) Implement nutrition lesson plans in the classrooms;
- 3) Increase parental involvement through educational parent-child events.



## **Activities:**

Carroll Child Care purchased several nutrition education materials for circle time, indoor play, and outdoors. Nutrition education activities include regular participation in healthy snack preparation; tending and harvesting a classroom garden; and "Nutrition with a Twist," which is physical activity modified to include a nutrition education component. One example of Nutrition with a Twist is a MyPyramid relay race; instead of carrying a baton, children carry food models and must place them in the correct food group before completing the relay.

The center offered a seminar, conducted by a nutritionist, to provide training to parents on role modeling, healthy eating habits, and physical activities for the entire family.

At the end of the mini-grant period, the center compiled all of the healthy recipes served to and/or prepared by the children and sent them home to all of the families.



## **For more information, contact:**

Esther Baldwin  
Carroll Child Care Center, Inc.  
224 North Center Street,  
Westminster MD 21157  
410-848-0644

# Critchlow Adkins Children's Center

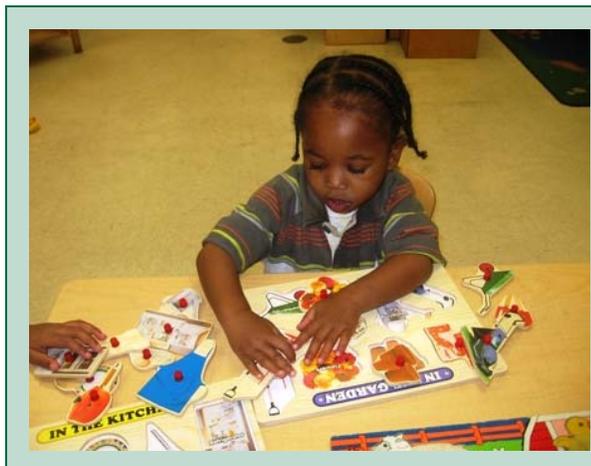
Number of sites: 1

Number of enrolled children: 84

Total mini-grant award: \$2,998

Mini-grant Goals:

- 1) Provide an engaging nutrition and fitness curriculum to enrolled children;
- 2) Provide a variety of family involvement opportunities to promote healthy lifestyles.



Critchlow Adkins Children's Center supplemented their existing health curriculum with additional nutrition and physical activity materials for the classrooms. Grant funds were used to purchase materials such as storybooks, games, posters, and music to enhance the healthy messages the children were receiving and to reinforce them throughout the day.

Take-home back packs containing nutrition information and activities for families to do together were provided through a lending library and sent home on weekends. Backpack contents include children's storybooks with nutrition themes, healthy recipes for parents and children to prepare together, games and activities for families to do together, and tips for parents to help them serve as healthy role models to their children. The backpacks were a big success with the Critchlow Adkins families and will continue on past the grant period.

Critchlow Adkins staff devised a clever way to engage the parents in their grant activities. It is always a challenge for child care providers to elicit active participation from parents during the day due to their work schedules. Chat and Chew Coffee Stop for parents is an opportunity for parents to take a few moments when they drop their children off to communicate with their child care provider, see what is happening in the classroom that week, and receive nutrition education. Nutrition updates were also included in the weekly parent newsletters.

## For more information, contact:

Tara O'Barsky  
Critchlow Adkins Children's Center  
P.O. Box 2950  
Easton, MD 21601  
410-822-8061

# Dasher Green Head Start

**Number of sites:** 1

**Number of enrolled children:** 126

**Total mini-grant award:** \$3,000

**Mini-grant Goals:**

- 1) Expand classroom lessons to incorporate nutrition and physical activity throughout the curriculum;
- 2) Promote healthy role modeling through parent and child activity nights.



Dasher Green used their mini-grant funds to incorporate nutrition education and physical activity into their existing curriculum.

Classroom kits with nutrition and fitness materials and activities were provided to each of the classrooms. Activities included container gardens, cooking experiences, quarterly family nights, nutrition education games, books, and music. Parent classes were then held to educate parents and reinforce the classroom messages in the home.



**For more information, contact:**

Myrtice Hoskin  
Dasher Green Head Start  
6680 Cradlerock Way  
Columbia, MD 21045  
410-313-6210

# Garrett County Community Action Committee

## Head Start

**Number of sites:** 1

**Number of enrolled children:** 40

**Total mini-grant award:** \$3,000

**Mini-grant Goals:**

- 1) Model healthy behaviors through the development and implementation of a center celebration policy;
- 2) Promote healthy food choices to children and families;
- 3) Promote physical activity to children and families.



As a Head Start center, Garrett County

Community Action Committee (CAC) already had several policies in place that were addressed in the wellness policy templates they received at training. In addition to their existing policies, they added one that addresses how classroom celebrations are conducted. Classroom celebrations can be birthday parties where parents send in treats for their child's birthday, or holiday celebrations initiated by the center. As a result of celebration policy, fruits and vegetables, pretzels, crackers, and angel food cake are being served at celebrations instead of candy and cupcakes.

The CAC's biggest success in reaching parents was through a series of backpack trainings. Backpacks were sent home with children on Fridays, with activities for the children and parents to do together. Activities included recipes, games, books, and physical activities for the family to enjoy together. These were very well received and the CAC hopes to continue these indefinitely.

In addition to the celebration policy and the backpack trainings, CAC enhanced the nutrition and physical activity environment in their center by purchasing children's storybooks with nutrition themes for circle time, food models and utensils for dramatic play, games that included both nutrition education and physical activity, and additional structured physical activity each day.

### For more information, contact:

Amanda Reckart  
Nutrition Manager, Garrett County  
Community Action Committee  
104 East Center Street  
Oakland, MD 21550  
301-334-9431

# Hagerstown Community College

## Children's Learning Center

**Number of sites:** 1

**Number of enrolled children:** 75

**Total mini-grant award:** \$3,000

**Mini-grant Goals:**

- 1) Enhance healthy nutrition choices for children every day.
- 2) Increase the quality of movement experiences and time spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity throughout the day.



The Children's Learning Center (CLC) has developed and implemented a nutrition policy for all staff and enrolled children to follow. Staff received training on nutrition, physical activity, and role modeling and then integrated all of those principals into the daily routine in the center.

**Activities included:**

- Nutrition workshops for parents, followed by parent-child activities;
- "Family Fitness Fun" day, which included games and activities for children and parents to do together;
- Compilation of a CLC cookbook, with recipes from classroom menus and classroom cooking activities; and
- Weekly classroom nutrition education activities, including reading, cooking projects, taste testing, and gardening projects.

The nutrition policy and activities were very well received by staff, families, and most importantly, the children. With the exception of minor costs for disposables, all activities are sustainable and will be continued indefinitely.

**For more information, contact:**

Terry Kitchen  
Director, HCC Children's Learning Center  
11400 Robinwood Drive  
Hagerstown, MD 21742  
301-790-2800

# Herring Run Head Start

**Number of sites:** 3

**Number of enrolled children:** 161

**Total mini-grant award:** \$9,000

**Mini-grant Goals:**

- 1) Promote wellness within the Herring Run community through a year-long series of events that will encompass staff training, parent training, and classroom activities;
- 2) Strengthen formal policies on nutrition and physical activity.



Herring Run Head Start (HRHS) held quarterly family nights where parents and children interacted together with the HRHS staff. The first family night, "Let's Celebrate!" introduced HRHS' wellness policy, with a focus on how they celebrate special events such as birthdays and holidays. Additional family night topics included food safety, physical activity, H<sub>2</sub>O to Go, Role Modeling, and Family Meals.

HRHS then reinforced the messages from the family nights with classroom activities for the children and newsletters sent home to the families. Each HRHS site purchased books, play food, children's music promoting nutrition and physical activity, games, and materials for cooking experiences for the children. Each month throughout the grant period, the children participated in the preparation of a healthy snack, followed by educational activities related to a monthly theme.

Messages related to nutrition, physical activity, and positive role modeling were included in the annual calendar and handbook issued to families each year.



**For more information, contact:**

Nancy Thomas  
Herring Run Head Start  
5010 Bowley's Lane  
Baltimore, MD 21206  
410-485-1010

# King's Kids Child Development Center

**Number of sites:** 1

**Number of enrolled children:** 17

**Total mini-grant award:** \$3,000

**Mini-grant Goals:**

- 1) Enhance the nutrition and physical activity aspects of the curriculum through staff training, increased nutrition education for children and families, and development of a nutrition policy.



King's Kids collaborated with their local YMCA and county health department to host two "Family Fun Nights" for the center's children and families. A nutritionist from the health department provided nutrition education to the families, with activities for them to follow up with at home. The YMCA staff conducted physical activities with the families and provided suggestions for age-appropriate activities that they could do at home. The family nights were so successful that the center plans to continue them in the future.

In addition to the family nights, new fruits and vegetables were introduced through regular cooking activities and taste tests. Once the new foods were introduced, they were ultimately added to the center's menus, significantly increasing the variety of fruits and vegetables consumed by the children during mealtimes.

King's Kids added a supermarket checkout, shopping cart, and play foods to the dramatic play area. This allowed the children to practice going to the supermarket and choosing healthy foods with their parents.

Several nutrition and physical activity curriculum materials were purchased to enable staff to incorporate and model healthy behaviors throughout the day. Games, books, posters, were all purchased to reinforce the healthy messages during circle time and free play.



## For more information, contact:

Dauida Washington

Director, King's Kids Child Development Center

P.O. Box 216

Snow Hill, MD 21863

410-632-1580

# Metro Delta Head Start

**Number of sites:** 3

**Number of enrolled children:** 210

**Total mini-grant award:** \$9,000

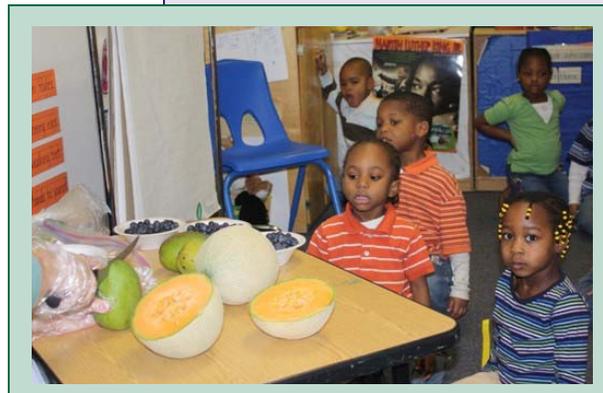
**Mini-grant Goals:**

- 1) Staff will promote and model healthy nutrition and physical activity choices for children and families;
- 2) Parents will participate in training activities to promote healthy lifestyles for their families;
- 3) Teachers will model healthy choices and encourage children to eat a variety of foods.

Metro Delta Head Start (MDHS) used their grant funds to enhance their existing curriculum, "I am Moving, I am Learning," whose goals are aligned with those of Maryland's 2007 Team Nutrition grant: to improve healthy nutrition choices of children every day, and to increase the quantity of time spent in moderate to vigorous physical activity every day.

MDHS brought in a nutritionist to train staff on how to conduct nutrition education and cooking activities with the children. The children then participated in at least two cooking activities per month, with a nutrition education topic related to the food being prepared.

Recipes and nutrition information were compiled in a cookbook and shared with the families, who were encouraged to prepare them at home with their children. Parents also received training at family nights to enable them to implement and model the same healthy behaviors in the home.



**For more information, contact:**

Lynne Coven  
Metro Delta Head Start  
2001 Park Avenue  
Baltimore, MD 21217  
410-225-0035

# Mexico Farms Child Care and Learning Center

**Number of sites:** 2

**Number of enrolled children:** 87

**Total mini-grant award:** \$6,000

**Mini-grant Goals:**

- 1) Develop a wellness policy to enhance the nutrition and physical activity environment in the centers, while offering a variety of opportunities for family involvement;
- 2) Increase the nutritional quality and variety of choices of children's meals and snacks;
- 3) Provide an engaging nutrition and fitness curriculum for the children.

Mexico Farms is fortunate to have a group of parents who are very active and supportive of the mini-grant goals. Staff and families met to review the components of a wellness policy and provide input regarding what they would like included. A rough draft was created by center staff, provided to families for feedback, and then finalized and distributed to all families.

The center collaborated with their local Area Health Education Center (AHEC) for the kick-off of the grant activities in their centers. AHEC brought high school service-learning students to assist the children in a variety of nutrition education, physical activity, and food preparation activities. The event was so well received that they intend to continue with similar activities in the future.

Toolkits with nutrition education and fitness materials were created and distributed to all of the classrooms so the children would be receiving consistent messages in all of the classrooms. Posters, storybooks, and games supplemented and reinforced the messages from the toolkits for the children throughout the day.



## For more information, contact:

Rose Greber  
Mexico Farms Child Care and Learning  
Center  
P.O. Box 876  
Cumberland, MD 21502  
301-722-3600

# Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee

## Head Start

**Number of sites:** 12

**Number of enrolled children:** 314

**Total mini-grant award:** \$36,000

**Mini-grant Goals:**

- 1) Expand the healthy food choices and provide nutrition education for Head Start children and their families;
- 2) Increase the amount of time children spend engaged in structured physical activity;
- 3) Develop and implement a wellness policy for all SMTCCAC sites.



**For more information, contact:**

Damarys Fletcher  
SMTCCAC Head Start  
P.O. Box 280  
Hughesville, MD 20637  
301-274-4474

SMTCCAC kicked off their mini-grant activities with training for all staff, including foodservice staff and classroom teachers. Topics covered included healthy food preparation and presentation, incorporating nutrition education throughout the day, facilitating structured physical activity within the daily routine, and role modeling healthy behaviors.

SMTCCAC uses Head Start's "I am Moving, I am Learning" curriculum and has supplemented it with the Choosy Kids Health Initiative materials. Each classroom has 10 Choosy backpacks that are checked out by families. The backpacks contain activities for parents and children to do together while at home. Parents complete a checklist when they complete an activity and children receive small incentives when all activities are completed. Both parents and children gave the backpacks rave reviews. The Choosy backpacks have become a regular part of the SMTCCAC curriculum and will continue to be used for years to come.

Center staff and interested families have always participated in menu planning, so those parents also received training. Classroom teachers and foodservice staff led the children in regular cooking activities, with some of the popular items being incorporated into the menu. Children often made their own afternoon snacks as part of an activity.

SMTCCAC also enhanced their classroom materials with additional nutrition education games, music, books, and dramatic play materials to reinforce the messages the children were receiving during their structured activities.

SMTCCAC Head Start operates on the public school calendar and is closed during the summers. They wrapped up their school year with a Model Health Field Day, where all 12 sites came to one location for games and activities with an underlying theme of promoting good nutrition and physical activity.



# YMCA of Frederick County

The YMCA Child Development Center created

**Number of sites:** 4

**Number of enrolled children:** 143

**Total mini-grant award:** \$10,700

Each of the YMCA's four sites wrote their own mini-grant proposals, all with the same goals. This is compilation of all of their activities combined.

## Mini-grant Goals:

- 1) To improve the eating habits of the staff, the children, and their families;
- 2) To increase the amount of structured physical activity the children receive every day.



nutrition education and physical activity boxes for each classroom. Several boxes were created, with different topics, to be rotated through the classrooms. Contents of the boxes included books about nutrition or fitness, plastic food models, materials for cooking activities, flannel board stories or activities, art projects related to nutrition or physical activity, music CD with songs related to the topic, and more.

Children went on field trips to the grocery store and to a dairy farm, and followed up with cooking activities using foods they learned about on their field trips. Classroom gardens complemented the field trips, giving the children an opportunity to learn where fruits and vegetables come from before they arrive at the supermarket.

The Lincoln Elementary Judy Center established a lending library for families to borrow backpacks that contained books and activities related to nutrition and physical activity for the parents to do with their children. Children had sticker charts as incentives to complete the activities in all of the backpack.

Materials, such as books, toy food models, MyPyramid models, and small cooking utensils for cooking activities, were purchased for the classrooms to enhance lesson plans on nutrition. The children often participated in the preparation of their morning or afternoon snacks; even the pickiest eaters sampled the foods that they helped prepare themselves! Classroom teachers were also able to incorporate nutrition into other areas of the curriculum such as math, science, reading, and of course, physical activity.

## For more information, contact:

Kim Simmons  
Director of Preschool Child Care  
YMCA of Frederick County  
1000 North Market Street  
Frederick, MD 21701  
301-663-5131

A reminder as to why we do this...





In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410, or call, toll free, (800) 795-3272 (Voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

*The Maryland State Department of Education does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability or sexual orientation in matters affecting employment or in providing access to programs. For inquiries related to Department policy, please contact: Equity Assurance and Compliance Branch, Office of the State Superintendent, Maryland State Department of Education, 200 West Baltimore Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21201-2595 - 410-767-0433 Voice - 410-767-0431 FAX - 410-333-6442 TTY/TD.*

