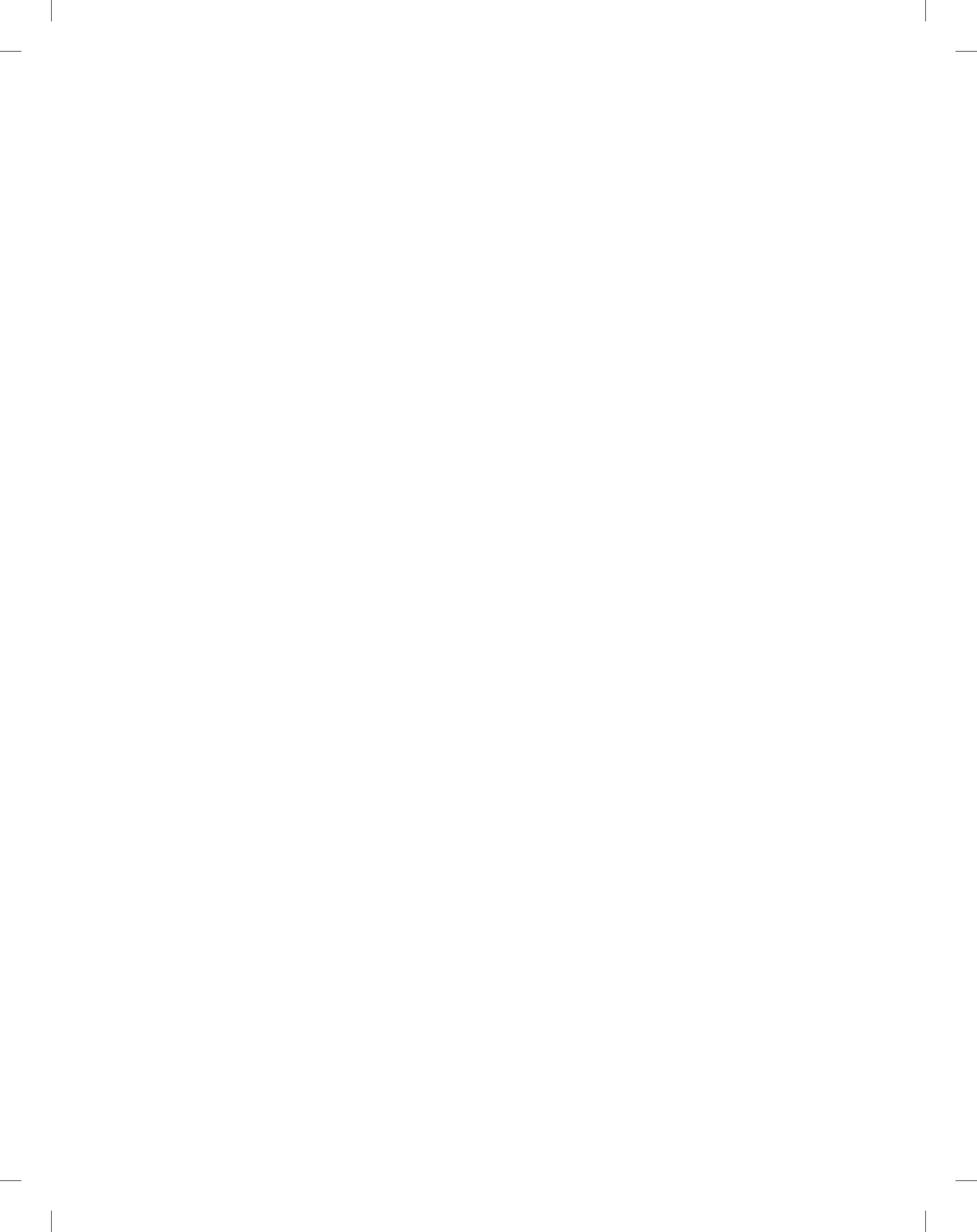




Missouri  
**Eat Smart**

Child Care Guidelines: A How-To Workbook



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# Introduction

## What are the Missouri Eat Smart Guidelines for Child Care?

The *Eat Smart Guidelines* are a set of nutrition related recommendations for child care facilities. They are written to help child care providers create a food and nutrition environment that will ultimately improve the health of Missouri's children.

### Facts about our children

- ✦ In 1997, 14.4% of Missouri's 2 to 5 year old children were overweight. By 2006, that number rose to 16.6%
- ✦ In 1997, 9.4% of Missouri's 2 to 5 year olds were obese. By 2006, that number rose to 13.6% (2006 PEDNSS data)
- ✦ More children are cared for outside the home
- ✦ 74% of American pre-school aged children are in some form of non-parental care
- ✦ 56% of American pre-school aged children are in center-based care (2001 National Household Education Survey)
- ✦ 64.5% of Missouri children under age 6 need child care because both parents work (2007 US census data)

Children are spending more time in child care and eat more meals at child care than at home. The food and the environment in which children eat their meals have a big impact on future nutrition habits and weight status.

Children who are provided healthy foods during early childhood are more likely to continue healthy eating habits as they get older. Child care providers play an important role in developing these habits.

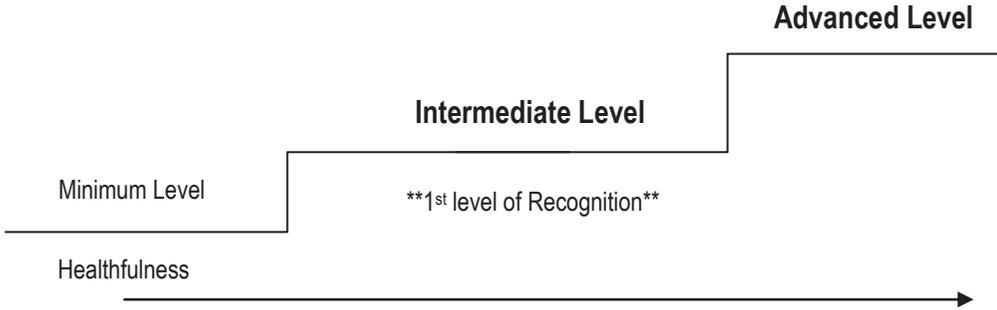
### Facts about the Eat Smart Guidelines

The *Guidelines* challenge child care facilities to gradually work toward improving their meal service by following a set of nutrition recommendations. All licensed facilities and those who participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) must at least meet the minimum level. The levels are:

- ✦ Minimum—meets current U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) meal pattern requirements for the CACFP and Missouri State Licensing requirements
- ✦ Intermediate—more healthful than the Minimum level
- ✦ Advanced—more healthful than the Intermediate level

The Intermediate and Advanced level guidelines are not required by federal regulation, but recommendations have been made to revise the current USDA child care meal pattern to better reflect the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Recommended guidelines are given for breakfast; lunch and supper; snack; overall meal pattern; and environmental factors that relate to nutrition habits and meal service.

When a facility meets all the recommendations for either the Intermediate or Advanced level, it can apply to become recognized as an "Eat Smart Child Care." The *Guidelines* are for any facility responsible for the care of children, regardless of enrollment size and setting (in-home or center-based).



## Why should your child care adopt the Eat Smart Guidelines?

- ✦ To help prevent childhood obesity
- ✦ To show you care about the children's health
- ✦ To prepare you for future changes in federal rules
- ✦ To be recognized for your dedication to providing children with improved nutrition.

When recognized as an Eat Smart Child Care, you will receive:

- A certificate and promotional items announcing your achievement as an Eat Smart Child Care
- Menu template that includes the Eat Smart logo
- A sample press release for the local paper announcing your achievement
- A parent letter to let parents know what you are doing for their child's health
- The right to use the Eat Smart logo on your website and publications

This recognition could be used in marketing your facility to potential families looking for care. Parents deciding on the best care environment for their child may be very interested to learn that your facility has specific policies and practices supporting good nutrition. With the rapidly rising rates of childhood obesity in Missouri, more and more parents have taken interest in positive nutrition and physical activity habits.

Achieving either level of the *Guidelines* would assist child care facilities in making improvements in their nutrition programs to better the health of the children they serve.

*Children learn their food habits early and child care providers can make a difference!*

## How were the Eat Smart Guidelines created?

A group of professionals who work with young children and child care providers created the *Guidelines*. They called upon their years of experience as well as resources highlighting best practices for supporting development of healthy nutrition habits.



Workgroup members represented:

- ✦ Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services - Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP); Section for Child Care Regulation; and Center for Local Public Health Services
- ✦ University of Missouri Extension Service
- ✦ Head Start State Collaboration Office
- ✦ Lincoln University Child Development Department
- ✦ Missouri Council for Activity and Nutrition (MOCAN)
- ✦ A Missouri child care center

The Eat Smart How-To Workbook is divided into the following sections:

Section	Content
<b>The Basics</b>	Information to help you understand the <i>Guidelines</i> and take steps toward applying for recognition
<b>The Details</b>	"Why" and "How To" information for each Guideline
<b>Appendix</b>	Eat Smart Guidelines — Children Aged 2 through 12 Years

