

First Years in the First State:

Improving Nutrition & Physical Activity Quality in Delaware Child Care



MENU PLANNING GUIDE



Introduction

This toolkit is intended to serve as a practical, how-to guide to following DE CACFP/*Delacare* nutrition rules in your child care home or center. Materials include:

- A summary of the Delaware CACFP/*Delacare* Rules on nutrition
- Information on choking hazards and allergies
- 16 weeks of Delaware CACFP/*Delacare*-approved menus
- 120 CACFP-reimbursable recipes with nutritional information
- 8 shopping lists of items needed for every two-week menu cycle

While we have made a great effort to include suggestions and ideas that are possible for all homes and centers, we understand that budgets and other resources can differ greatly. If you come across a recipe that calls for an ingredient you are not able to get, please feel free to substitute as you see fit. However, be sure to substitute recipe ingredients with an item that is similar and fits into the same food group/category. We encourage you to use the toolkit as a flexible guide. You should adapt it to best fit your child care home or center.

This toolkit is the result of extensive research, collaboration and feedback from many individuals. It is a “living document.” It will continue to be edited, updated and improved over time. We welcome your comments, questions and suggestions. It is YOU that this toolkit is intended to serve! If you have feedback, please contact:

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Community Nutrition Programs**

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Table of Contents

Recipe Index	2	Spring Menu Cycles & Recipes	55
Delaware CACFP/Delacare Rules for Nutrition	4	Menu Cycle: Spring – Week 1	55
Choking Hazards & Allergy Warning	5	Menu Cycle: Spring – Week 2	56
Menus & Recipes — Info You Need to Know	6	Shopping Lists: Spring Weeks 1 & 2	57
Measuring & Serving	8	Recipes: Spring Weeks 1 & 2	58
Fall Menu Cycles & Recipes	9	Menu Cycle: Spring – Week 3	64
Menu Cycle: Fall – Week 1	9	Menu Cycle: Spring – Week 4	65
Menu Cycle: Fall – Week 2	10	Shopping Lists: Spring Weeks 3 & 4	66
Shopping Lists: Fall Weeks 1 & 2	11	Recipes: Spring Weeks 3 & 4	67
Recipes: Fall Weeks 1 & 2	12	Summer Menu Cycles & Recipes	75
Menu Cycle: Fall – Week 3	20	Menu Cycle: Summer – Week 1	75
Menu Cycle: Fall – Week 4	21	Menu Cycle: Summer – Week 2	76
Shopping Lists: Fall Weeks 3 & 4	22	Shopping Lists: Summer Weeks 1 & 2	77
Recipes: Fall Weeks 3 & 4	23	Recipes: Summer Weeks 1 & 2	78
Winter Menu Cycles & Recipes	31	Menu Cycle: Summer – Week 3	84
Menu Cycle: Winter – Week 1	31	Menu Cycle: Summer – Week 4	85
Menu Cycle: Winter – Week 2	32	Shopping Lists: Summer Weeks 3 & 4	86
Shopping Lists: Winter Weeks 1 & 2	33	Recipes: Summer Weeks 3 & 4	87
Recipes: Winter Weeks 1 & 2	34		
Menu Cycle: Winter – Week 3	44		
Menu Cycle: Winter – Week 4	45		
Shopping Lists: Winter Weeks 3 & 4	46		
Recipes: Winter Weeks 3 & 4	47		

Recipe Index

Breakfast*

Banana-Rama Breakfast	87
Basketball Biscuits	23
Fruity Toast	14
Go Bananas! Bread	70
Golden Porridge	35
Johnny Applesauce Pancakes	15
Mega Muffins	82
Pumpkin Patch Pancakes	25
Spiced Pancakes	37
Strawberry Jumpin' French Toast	47
Superstar Breakfast	41
Very Merry Berries	39

Salad

Bowties*	47
Colorful Crispy Salad*	38
Going Green*	12
Green Giant Salad*	17
Green Monster Salad	62
Island Fun Pasta Salad*	61
Jolly Green Giant Salad*	91
Karate Chopped Salad*	74
Lucky Leprechaun Greens*	53
Orangutan Salad*	81
Prince and Princess Salad*	40
Speckled Salad*	51
Spunky Spud Salad	35
Sweet Summer Salad*	88
Way Cool Pasta Salad*	73

Soup/Stew

Big Bad Wolf Soup*	37
Farmer's Harvest Chili*	25
Homemade Chicken Soup	50
Jack O' Lantern Soup*	30
Monster Mash Soup*	95
Red Monster Soup*	50
Sunshine Soup*	53
Swamp Soup*	78
Under the Sea Chowder	28
Veggin' Out Stew*	90
Wizard's Stew*	62

Pasta

Cheesy Spaghetti Bake	17
Luigi's Lasagna*	79
Macaroni Mess	14
Mario's Meal	60
Party Pasta*	67
Polka Dot Pasta*	43
Poppin' Pasta	51
Rainbow Bake*	49
"Use Your Noodle" Bake*	89
Veggie Sketti*	72

Beans*

Cowboy Quinoa	26
Pete's Pizza	82
Wild Cowboy Stew	42

Fish

Boat Burgers	15
Catch of the Day	87
Chuck's Cheesy Tilapia	58
Fancy Fish	68
Fishin' Poles	40
Gone Fishin'	81
Sailboats	79
Sammy Salmon	52
Super Salmon	16
Swimmy Salmon Steaks	94

Chicken

Chix Mix	13
Finger Food	29
Finger Lickin' Chicken	39
Jammin' Jambalaya	24
Kickin' Chicken	27
Limeade Chicken	88
Old McDonald Chicken	71
Spotlight Chicken	71
Summer Sizzler	78
Tasty Tenders	36
Zesty Nuggets	59

Recipe Index (cont'd.)

Turkey

“Gobble Up” Burgers	60
Magic Meat	18
Shipwreck Pie	73

Sandwiches/Wraps

Beautiful Butterflies	41
Cheesy Chicken Quesadilla	38
Dragon Treats	69
Eggs in a Nest*	52
Fish in Blankets	27
Hip-Hop Pita Pocket*	90
Pita Pockets*	96
Pizza Party Pita*	42
Rainbow Wrap*	93
Rock-n-Roll-Ups	59
Roly Poly Roll-Up	29
Sloppy Sammies	80
Snowy Day Sandwiches	36
Squirrel Snacks	63
Submarine Sandwich	48
Sunshine Roll-Ups	83
Tasty Taquitos	18
Tuna Sammies	74
Twisted Tuna	49
Underwater Wheels*	69
Veggie Tuna Melts	34

Snacks*

All-Star Snack	30
Autumn Orchard Snacks	28
Berry Banana Split	19
Friends Trail Mix	63
Fruit Towers	72
Fruit-astic Salsa	89
Melon Chiller	68
Molten Lava	83
Monkey Snacks	48
Muscle Mix	13
Sandbox Surprise	26
Sandy Snack	80
Smoothilicious	91
Sunny Salsa	61
Sunshine Smoothie	95
Super Drink	58
Toasty Treats	70
Tootie Fruity Chip Dip	24
Wintery Mix	34

Sides*

Bunny Sticks	16
From the Garden Rice	67
Jimmy Crack Cornbread	92
Pop's Potatoes	23
Stuffed Spud	12

* Vegetarian Dishes (includes all Breakfast, Beans, Snacks and Sides)

Delaware CACFP/Delacare Rules for Nutrition

The following nutrition rules are REQUIRED for *all* licensed child care centers and homes in Delaware.

INFANTS	
JUICE	Infants under 12 months of age may not be served juice.
MEATS & MEAT ALTERNATES	Cheese products and cheese foods are not allowed. Only real cheese may be served. Processed meats are not allowed. Fried or pre-fried and then baked meats are not allowed.
FRUITS & VEGETABLES	Fried or pre-fried and then baked fruits and vegetables are not allowed.
GRAINS & BREADS	Cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per serving. For infants 8 through 11 months, a whole grain product must be served at least one time each day. [†] Sweet grains (e.g., cookies, cakes, donuts, danishes, etc.) are not allowed.
COMBINATION FOODS	Combination foods (a mixture of 2 or more different meal components) are not allowed. Combinations of fruits and/or vegetables may be served. Desserts, cobblers, puddings and jarred cereals with fruit are not allowed.
CHILDREN	
JUICE	No more than one serving per day of 100% juice may be served to children 1 - 18 years of age. All juice must be 100% fruit or vegetable juice. Non-100% juice (e.g., juice drink or cocktail) is not allowed.
MILK	Children 12 through 23 months of age must be served whole milk. Children 2 years of age or older must be served fat-free or 1% (low-fat) milk.
MEATS & MEAT ALTERNATES	Processed meats (e.g., hot dogs, sausage, bologna, etc.) may be served only one time every two weeks.* No fried or pre-fried and then baked food items are allowed (e.g., chicken nuggets, fish sticks) unless no more than 35% of their total calories are from fat.* Cheese products and cheese foods are not allowed. Only real cheese may be served.
FRUITS & VEGETABLES	No fried or pre-fried and then baked fruits or vegetables (e.g., French fries, tater tots) are allowed unless no more than 35% of their total calories are from fat.*
GRAINS & BREADS	A whole grain product must be served at least one time each day. [†] Cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of sugar per serving. Sweet grains/baked goods (e.g., cookies, cakes, donuts, danishes, etc.) may be served one time every two weeks for snack only (not for breakfast, lunch or supper).*

*It is highly recommended that these foods are not served at all. † It is highly recommended that whole grains are served whenever possible.

Choking Hazards & Allergy Warning

Choking Hazards

The following foods, if served whole or in chunks, are considered choking hazards for children under four years of age. Use these simple changes to make them safe options. Some foods cannot be safely altered, so it's recommended they not be served at all.

Choking Hazard	Make It Safe By...
Nuts and seeds	Chopping finely
Hot dogs†	Cutting in quarters lengthwise, then cutting into smaller pieces
Whole grapes	Cutting in half lengthwise, then cutting into smaller pieces
Raisins	Cooking in food
Chunks of meat or cheese	Chopping finely
Hard fruit chunks (like apples)	Chopping finely, cutting into thin strips, steaming, mashing or pureeing
Raw vegetables	Chopping finely, cutting into thin strips, steaming, mashing or pureeing
Peanut butter	Spreading thinly on crackers or mixing with applesauce and cinnamon and spreading thinly on bread (use only creamy (not chunky) version)
Choking Hazard	DO NOT SERVE
Dried fruits or vegetables	Do not serve
Popcorn*	Do not serve

*Foods that are not reimbursable. †Foods that may only be served once every two weeks.

ACTION STEP: Be sure all foods are cut into bite-size pieces, steamed or mashed. Encourage children to chew completely before swallowing to ensure safety.

Food Allergies

Because food allergies are common in children, it is important to be aware of the ingredients in all foods before serving.

The eight most common allergens are:

- Milk
- Eggs
- Peanuts*
- Tree nuts*
- Fish
- Shellfish
- Soy
- Wheat

***Note:** Tree nuts, peanuts and nut butters are excellent sources of protein for growing children, are reimbursable meat alternate options and are strongly encouraged if feasible for your center. Because many centers in Delaware are nut-free, any nuts listed in the following recipes are optional.

ACTION STEP: If a child has a food allergy, a doctor's note must be kept on file stating the allergy and any appropriate substitutions. Be sure to speak with all parents/guardians about children's food allergies. If allergies are severe, ask for a list of foods the child is permitted to eat.

Menus & Recipes—Info You Need to Know

The Menu Cycles and Recipes in this toolkit were created with the following considerations:

- **Variety:** Some recipes may be children’s favorites, while others may cause more push-back, which is okay. You may need to adjust the recipes according to taste preferences and food availability. In order to meet the guidelines, choose fruits, vegetables, spices and lean meats/meat alternates to add to or replace other ingredients.
- **Nutritional value:** Recipes were created in alignment with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010. They do not exceed 35% of calories from fat or 7% of calories from saturated fat per serving. Grain products have no more than 25% of calories from sugar.
- **Combination foods:** Most recipes are combination foods, meaning they satisfy two or three meal component requirements. When it is noted that a food satisfies a fruit/vegetable component for a meal, each serving contains approximately 1/4 cup.

Before viewing the Menu Cycles and Recipes, here are some tips to help you better understand the contents of this section.

Menu Cycles

- **Processed meats and sweet grains/breads:** These products may be served once in a two-week cycle. However, because of high fat, sodium and sugar content, it is highly recommended they are not served at all. For this reason, they are not included in the Menu Cycles in this toolkit.
- **Whole grains:** A whole grain product must be served at least once per day. Following recommendations by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans to make half of grain servings whole, most grain/bread products in the Menu Cycles are listed as whole grains. Other grain products may be substituted as long as one whole grain is served each day.
- **Water:** Water should be available at all times throughout the day. Encourage children to drink water during play, at snacks and as a second beverage option after serving milk at meals.
Note: Water cannot be substituted for milk at meals. Water is not a creditable food item.

***NOTE:** If you participate in CACFP, it is important to be as clear as possible when filling out menu cycles for reimbursement. State the brand of the product or be specific when describing it. This will ensure you receive credit for meeting the guidelines. Examples of how to fill in grain/bread are shown throughout the menu cycles. Other examples include: “cheddar cheese” and “baked turkey breast.” Be specific. Be sure to state if a product is homemade on the menu (e.g., “homemade meat sauce,” “homemade chicken soup”). If serving commercially prepared combination foods for meat/meat alternate components, please serve a second source of meat/meat alternate to be sure there is enough to meet the guidelines (e.g., serve commercially-prepared meat sauce with beans).

Menus & Recipes—Info You Need to Know (cont'd.)

Recipes

- **Servings:** The number of servings provided by each recipe is based on the DE CACFP/*Delacare* meal pattern requirements for children 3–5 years of age. You are encouraged to prepare at least 10-20% more servings than needed to ensure there is enough food for children who will eat extra as well as for the staff at your center or home.
- **Nutrition labels:** The nutrition labels are based on one 3–5 year old serving that satisfies the DE CACFP/*Delacare* meal requirements for each meal/snack.
- **CACFP reimbursable meal components:** The shaded boxes at the bottom of each recipe show which meal components are fulfilled with one serving. The empty boxes show which meal components must still be served to complete meal pattern requirements and receive reimbursement (if applicable).

Shopping Lists

- **Lists:** The shopping lists cover the ingredients needed for each two-week Menu Cycle.
- **Amount:** The amounts needed for each ingredient will vary depending on the number of children served. Check the Recipes and Menu Cycles prior to shopping to determine how many times items are used.

Measuring & Serving

Recipe Abbreviations	
approx.	= approximate
tsp or t	= teaspoon
Tbsp or T	= tablespoon
c	= cup
pt	= pint
qt	= quart
gal	= gallon
wt	= weight
oz	= ounce
lb or #	= pound
g	= gram
kg	= kilogram
vol	= volume
mL	= milliliter
L	= liter
fl oz	= fluid ounce
°F	= degree Fahrenheit
°C	= degree Celsius or centigrade

Measure Equivalents	
1 Tbsp	= 3 tsp
1/16 cup	= 1 Tbsp
1/8 cup	= 2 Tbsp
1/6 cup	= 2 Tbsp + 2 tsp
1/4 cup	= 4 Tbsp
1/3 cup	= 5 Tbsp + 1 tsp
3/8 cup	= 6 Tbsp
1/2 cup	= 8 Tbsp
2/3 cup	= 10 Tbsp + 2 tsp
3/4 cup	= 12 Tbsp
1 cup	= 48 tsp
1 cup	= 16 Tbsp
8 fl oz	= 1 cup
1 pint	= 2 cups
1 quart	= 2 pt
4 cups	= 1 qt
1 gallon	= 4 qt
16 oz	= 1 lb

Ladles & Portion Servers		
Ladle (fl oz)	Approx. Measure	Portion Server (fl oz)
1 oz	1/8 cup	1 oz
2 oz	1/4 cup	2 oz
3 oz	3/8 cup	3 oz
4 oz	1/2 cup	4 oz
6 oz	3/4 cup	6 oz
8 oz	1 cup	8 oz
12 oz	1-1/2 cups	—

Scoops	
Scoop No.	Level Measure
6	2/3 cup
8	1/2 cup
10	3/8 cup
12	1/3 cup
16	1/4 cup
20	3-1/3 Tbsp
24	2-2/3 Tbsp
30	2 Tbsp
40	1-2/3 Tbsp
50	3-3/4 tsp
60	3-1/4 tsp
70	2-3/4 tsp
100	2 tsp

Volume Equivalents for Liquids					
Pan Size	Approx. Capacity	Serving Size	Ladle (fl oz)	Scoop #	Approx. # Servings
12" x 20" x 2-1/2"	2 gal	1/2 cup	4 oz	8	64
		3/8 cup	3 oz	10	80
		1/3 cup	2.65 oz	12	90
		1/4 cup	2 oz	16	128
12" x 20" x 4"	3-1/2 gal	1/2 cup	4 oz	8	112
		3/8 cup	3 oz	10	135
		1/3 cup	2.65 oz	12	168
		1/4 cup	2 oz	16	224
12" x 20" x 6"	6 gal	1/2 cup	4 oz	8	160
		3/8 cup	3 oz	10	200
		1/3 cup	2.65 oz	12	240
		1/4 cup	2 oz	16	320