



# Your Child Care Checklist

Given just how important a role other early education and child care providers will play in your children's overall nutritional health and wellbeing, we wanted to make sure you have access to the latest child care-specific recommendations.

The following checklist of nutrition-related questions is derived from obesity-prevention (/English/health-issues/conditions/obesity/Pages/Where-We-Stand-Obesity-Prevention.aspx) strategies developed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Public Health Association, and the National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education. We suggest you keep it firmly in mind (if not in hand)—whether you're setting out to find child care for the first time or taking a closer look at your children's current environment.



- **General.** Do you have a written nutrition plan and/or menus? If so, were they developed by or with input from a qualified nutritionist or dietitian and do they meet all state requirements and US Department of Agriculture recommendations?
- **Breastfeeding.** Will you be able to help me continue to breastfeed (/english/ages-stages/baby/breastfeeding/Pages/default.aspx) my baby? Will I be able to come in and nurse? Are you comfortable with (and well trained in) feeding my baby pumped breast milk?
- **Infant Feeding.** How are babies bottle fed (/English/ages-stages/baby/feeding-nutrition/Pages/Bottle-Feeding.aspx)? Do you have policies against bottle propping? Do you have the ability to provide babies with one-on-one feeding time? What methods do you have for documenting how much and how often babies drink? Do you follow the recommendation to wait to serve solid complementary foods (/English/ages-stages/baby/feeding-nutrition/Pages/Switching-To-Solid-Foods.aspx) until the baby is about 6 months?
- **Self-feeding.** Are older infants and children adequately supervised during feeding time? Are they allowed/encouraged to practice feeding themselves using age-appropriate feeding supplies and adult assistance when needed?
- **Safety.** Are all caregivers trained in child CPR (/English/health-issues/injuries-emergencies/Pages/Responding-to-a-Choking-Emergency.aspx) and first aid (/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/First-Aid-Guide.aspx)? What sort of training do you have to respond to potential food-related emergencies such as choking and/or allergic reactions? Are children allowed to wander while snacking and/or eat in places other than sitting down at the table?
- **Allergies.** Are you able to accommodate children with allergies (/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Food-Allergies-in-Children.aspx)? What policies and procedures do you have in place to ensure that children will not inadvertently be exposed to the food(s) they're allergic to? Are there written procedures and do you/your staff have training in how to respond to an allergic reaction—including safe storage and appropriate, effective use of an epinephrine injector?
- **Drinks.** For children over a year of age, what do you routinely serve for drinks? Do you offer whole or 2% milk for children under 2 and 1% or skim for kids 2 years old and older? Is clean drinking water readily available, easily accessible to even young children, and encouraged throughout the day? Do you make a point of limiting (or not serving) juice (/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Where-We-Stand-Fruit-Juice.aspx), and—if you do serve it—is it 100% juice? Are drinks other than water limited to snack times and mealtimes, and are all drinks offered in cups as soon as children are developmentally able to drink out of a cup?
- **Staff Food.** Do you/your staff routinely eat with the children? What are your policies regarding staff bringing in and eating outside foods in front of the children?
- **Food Resistance.** What happens if a child is too hungry, tired, or fussy/upset to eat? Are they allowed to choose how much (or how little) they want to eat at any given meal or snack? Are children ever forced or bribed to try foods?

- **Nutrition Education.** What sort of opportunities do you offer children to learn about food and healthy eating (/English/news/Pages/Healthy-Children-Radio-Healthy-Eating.aspx)? Do they get to participate in age-appropriate activities such as cooking (/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/nutrition/Pages/Cooking-With-Your-Children.aspx); gardening; or reading and learning about fruits, vegetables, and other nutritious foods while in your care?
- **Physical Activity.** In addition to focusing on nutrition, do you also provide children with age-appropriate opportunities for daily physical activity (/English/ages-stages/gradeschool/fitness/Pages/Promoting-Physical-Activity-as-a-Way-of-Life.aspx)? What sort of activities do you offer? Do all children get to spend time outside daily (weather permitting) and what do they do instead if the weather doesn't cooperate?
- **Screen Time.** In recognizing that television (and other screen time (/English/family-life/Media/Pages/Where-We-Stand-TV-Viewing-Time.aspx)) can have a negative impact on healthy, active lifestyles, do you limit the amount of time that children are allowed to watch television and/or movies while in your care? What about kids under the age of 2? If/when children are permitted to watch, what is the total amount of time on any given day (and week), and what are they allowed to watch?

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**Source** Food Fights, 2nd Edition (Copyright © 2012 American Academy of Pediatrics)

The information contained on this Web site should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.