

LEAP OF TASTE

WV CHILD CARE NUTRITION STANDARDS



Good nutrition is a vital component of children's growth, development and learning, and that's why the West Virginia Department of Education's Office of Child Nutrition (OCN) is leading the way in the fight against childhood obesity and poor eating habits.

Create A Healthy Eating Environment

As we turned the page on a new decade, our efforts have focused on implementing one of the most progressive child care nutrition standards in the nation. Leap of Taste - WV Child Care Nutrition Standards ensures that child care centers comply with nutritious food guidelines for beverages, milk, fruits & vegetables, meats and meat alternatives, and grains and breads.

Empowering Child Care Providers

The Leap of Taste campaign, launched in the summer of 2010, was designed to bring nutrition standards to life by empowering child care providers to play an important part in introducing children to healthy food. By providing nutritious food and teaching children how to make healthy food choices, the nutrition standards are helping child care centers lay a healthy foundation for our children's future success.

The Parents' Role

Research shows that parents are often their children's most important role model. Children who see parents enjoying healthy foods and being physically active are more likely to do the same. Parents can really help give their children good eating habits by eating together with their children, serving healthy food they like combined with a few new foods now and then, and letting the child decide how much to eat will help them develop healthy, nutritious eating habits that last a lifetime.

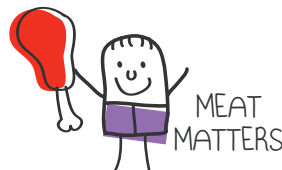
About the Nutrition Standards

The standards are divided into four key components:



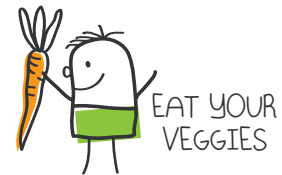
Beverage Guidelines

These guidelines set portion sizes on the appropriate beverage choices by age group while advocating milk consumption (which provides calcium, protein, and Vitamin D for bone growth and development), limiting fruit juices (which can lead to obesity and tooth decay), and avoiding sugary beverages which provide no nutritional value.



Meat & Meat Alternates

Meat and meat alternates, such as beans and eggs, offer protein and other nutrients like zinc, iron and B vitamins. Protein supplies amino acids that build, repair and maintain body tissues. These guidelines were meant to provide examples of age-appropriate protein sources for each stage of development.



Fruit & Vegetable Guidelines

Fruits and vegetables provide essential vitamins and minerals, fiber which helps children feel fuller longer, and other substances that may protect against many chronic diseases. These guidelines help parents and caregivers make the appropriate fruit and vegetable choices by age group, as well as set correct portion limits.



Grain & Bread Guidelines

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend making half our grains whole grains and that all age levels consume 14 grams of fiber per 1,000 calories. For children aged 12 to 36 months, the recommended level of intake is 19 grams of fiber per day. These guidelines help parents and caregivers choose the best options for reaching these daily intake levels.

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West Virginia Department of Education

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