

## Creating Healthy Eating Environments to Raise Healthy Children

### Thank you for your feedback!

Nutrition Services, Alberta Health Services, would like to thank the child care sector for giving public health dietitians the opportunity to gather information about ways we can work together to create healthy eating environments in child cares.

Since 2010, over 185 child care stakeholders have participated in meetings, conversation cafés, interviews and surveys. Participants included; early learning and care program directors, early childhood educators and cooks, and other child care sector stakeholders such as government, post-secondary training programs, researchers, and child care organizations.



Thank you for sharing your expertise as we work together to help create environments that provide and promote healthy food choices and healthy attitudes about food.

### Sharing your ideas...

Child care professionals work together with families to raise healthy children. Many of you shared what you are already doing to support children as they learn to eat well. You also shared several ideas about how we can continue to work together to help children develop healthy eating behaviours and positive attitudes about food. These ideas are presented below:

#### Promote healthy eating

- ❖ Use Canada's Food Guide and Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth to build nutritious menus.
- ❖ Create a positive environment, including role modelling.
- ❖ Try new recipes and make recipes healthier.
- ❖ Manage food restrictions and allergies.
- ❖ Learn about cultural, religious, and vegetarian food practices.

#### Support nutrition education

- ❖ Learn about healthy eating and nutrition resources.
- ❖ Share ideas and resources with colleagues.
- ❖ Support educators to:
  - Promote children's learning and exploration around food and eating.
  - Engage families to promote eating well.

### Healthy eating environments

#### Enhance collaboration and partnerships

- ❖ Develop online nutrition tools and resources.
- ❖ Work together to support consistent healthy eating practices.

#### Strengthen healthy eating policy

- ❖ Use Alberta Child Care Act and Regulations, Accreditation Standards and Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth to support a healthy eating environment.
- ❖ Promote positive healthy eating attitudes and behaviours through child care policy.

## Recommended resources and tools

As a result of these consultations, the following resources and tools have been developed to support child care programs in promoting healthy food and eating environments:

### [Healthy Eating Starts Here – Child Care](#)

Website supporting healthy food environments in child care programs. Resources and tools include:

#### [CHEERS for Child Care](#)

Website promoting healthy eating and active environments through a self-administered survey, personalized program report, and resources.

#### [Child Care Recipes](#)

Recipes scaled to 50 servings to meet the needs of child cares.

#### [Child Care Resource List](#)

Resources about nutrition and physical activity for use in policy development, menu and program planning and encouraging healthy eating and physical activity at home at child care.

#### [Feeding Tiny Tummies - A Guide for Childcare Providers](#)

Information on menu planning, food safety, and the feeding relationship to assist child cares in following the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children and Youth.

#### [Feeding Toddlers and Young Children](#)

Handout to explain a positive feeding relationship and tips to address common feeding behaviours.

#### [Nutrition Tip Sheets](#)

Information on a variety of topics for educators and families.

#### [Raising Our Healthy Kids](#)

Short videos (60-90 seconds) on preschool nutrition for child care professionals and families.

#### [Snacks for Children](#)

Handout with photos about choosing snacks for children.



### [Healthy Eating Environments in Child Care Advisory Committee](#)

Provincial committee promoting collaboration among members, including government, training programs, research and child care organizations.

## Next steps

In consultation with the child care sector, the following opportunities have been identified:

- Professional development, supported in a variety of ways.
- Menu planning resources, based on Canada's Food Guide and the Alberta Nutrition Guidelines for Children & Youth.
- Resources to promote pleasant meal time experiences and positive conversations with children.
- Nutrition education ideas for children at meal times and throughout the day.
- Resources and tools for educators to support families in eating well.
- Policy tools to strengthen healthy eating environments.

We look forward to continued partnership and collaboration towards creating healthy eating environments to raise healthy children.

## For more information

**Websites** [Healthy Eating Starts Here](#)  
[CHEERS for Child Care](#)

**Email** [PublicHealthNutrition@ahs.ca](mailto:PublicHealthNutrition@ahs.ca)

**Thank you for your time, interest and collaboration!**