



COLLEGE *of*
CHARLESTON

**N. E. Miles Early Childhood Development Center
Food Safety and Nutrition Plan**

Introduction

At N.E. Miles ECDC, we aim to provide and model high quality nutrition and healthy living habits for young children and their families. Our program uses the *National Health and Safety Performance Standards* (3rd Edition) published by the [National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education](#) to guide our policies and practices. While ECDC does not participate in or receive federal food subsidies, we also adhere to the standards set for the [Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) (CACFP)

Goals

- For children at ECDC to be healthy, safe, and on a path to lifelong good nutritional habits.
- Work with our parents and families to encourage healthy eating habits.
- Use meal and snack times as opportunities for development of fine motor skills, language, and social skills
- Accommodate children with special health care and nutritional needs.

Food Services Provided

ECDC staff serve snack twice daily, and three times for children who attend the program longer than 8 hours per day. We prepare, serve, and store foods according to [U.S. Department of Agriculture](#) guidelines.

Children bring their own lunches from home and we require parents/guardians to use appropriate packaging for keeping food hot or cold. We encourage families to send healthy foods that comply with [current recommendations](#) for [portion sizes and balanced nutrition](#). We also share resources that provide families with good information about healthy eating and food preparation tips, such as the [Food](#) newsletter.

Occasional special treats (for birthdays, holidays, etc.) are permitted and parents are encouraged to provide healthy treats, or if “sugary,” very small portions.

Snack Foods

The five-week ECDC master snack menu provides a monthly rotation of foods that comply with recommended nutritional density and variety and serving quantities. USDA recommends that each snack contain items from 2 of the four food groups, which are currently designated as:

FV	Fruits & Vegetables	Fresh, dried, or canned fruits and vegetables
BG	Breads & Grains	Whole grain products & derivatives such as flour, meal, cereals
D	Dairy	Milk (1%) or milk products such as yogurt, cheeses
MA	Meat Alternate	Protein-dense foods such as seeds, seed butters, beans or other legumes

Young children’s eating habits and appetites are notoriously mercurial, as sometimes a child may want to eat the same food every day or become picky, refusing familiar or new foods and dawdling over meals. We work with families and children through these experiences, promoting not only good eating habits, but daily rigorous outside activity and exercise, rest periods, and plenty of water and fluids. These practices limit the child’s risk of childhood obesity, and contribute to their overall health and well-being.

Baking activities are an important part of the curriculum at ECDC and are built into the snack menu weekly. Children look forward to baking and participate in preparations, which also give teachers the opportunity to teach safe and appropriate food handling and safety practices. We focus on gluten-free recipes that incorporate ingredients from multiple food groups. Baked snack items include for example, banana bread, pumpkin muffins, granola/fruit preserve bars and oatmeal/raisin cookies.

Food Sensitivities & Preferences

Children with allergies to foods or environmental substances notify ECDC of those conditions and depending on severity, may provide the program with a written plan for meeting their needs. We may ask parents to provide special foods if they are not those that would be easy to procure or typically part of our food inventories (such as soy milk in lieu of 1% cow’s milk). Information about children with food sensitivities or allergies is provided to all staff and posted in food preparation areas. We take care when shopping for foods to note ingredients on packages that might be unsuitable for children with special dietary needs. In addition, our population is culturally diverse with many different kinds of food traditions. Some of our families favor a vegan or vegetarian lifestyle. Our menu is planned to respect those needs; it is peanut and tree-nut free, and limited in gluten, processed foods, sugars, and fats. It also includes some items that reflect our Low Country and regional food traditions.

Liquids

We encourage children to drink water all day. Each child is required to have his/her own water bottle. We do not typically use fruit juice for snack, as we prefer children to eat whole fruits with water. We provide 1% hormone-free milk from a local dairy source that is delivered weekly and stored in a temperature-controlled milk cooler. We understand the importance of hydration and teachers monitor children outside carefully, making sure they use their water bottles or the drinking fountain regularly. Our staff are all trained in Pediatric First Aid and CPR and know the signs of dehydration and the various heat-related conditions that can affect children who don’t drink enough water.

Resources

The College of Charleston Aramark Service has a registered dietician/nutritionist on staff that provides us with advice and guidance as needed or requested. This nutrition plan and menu is reviewed annually.

Meal & Snack-time Classroom Routines

We provide glasses, stainless eating utensils, and paper napkins for snacks and lunchtime. Teachers use gloves if needed to prepare or distribute food, but children are encouraged to use tongs, spoons, and

other utensils to serve themselves. At lunchtime, teachers help children who need assistance with opening their lunchboxes and food storage containers.

Children in the Seashell and Sunflower classes (2-3 year olds) are seated at child-sized round tables and they all eat snack and lunch together, family style. In the Butterfly class (4K/5K), we encourage independence and socialization by setting up snack at one table and children choose when they will have snack with friends, during morning center time and after rest time in the PM. The teachers write instructions in rebus format on a whiteboard placed in the snack area so that children know what the serving size is, and provide appropriate serving dishes and utensils. Butterfly lunch seating is “restaurant” style, with children seated at the many small tables around the room that accommodate from 2-6 children. In all classrooms, teachers sit with the children and model conversation, good manners, and safe/proper eating habits.

Children participate in set-up and clean-up routines and the College provides a custodial staff member to help during the lunch period.

Nutritional Learning for Children and Families

Acquiring and practicing good health habits and knowledge about foods and nutrition are part of daily life at ECDC. Some of the things we do to promote learning include:

- Involving children and families in baking and cooking activities
- Discussing, collecting, and creating recipes and cookbooks
- Inviting families to share cultural and food traditions from home as part of the curriculum
- Maintaining an edible & sensory garden with herbs, vegetables and fruits.
- Teaching sustainable practices such as recycling, composting, and rain-water harvesting
- Incorporating experiences with foods that provide children opportunities to explore their taste, smell, textures, shapes, colors, and sizes.
- Providing families with resources about nutrition, foods, and activities they can do with their children
- Sharing healthy recipes children enjoy at school with families

References

Farm to School

Initiative http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/f2s/FactSheet_Farm_to_Preschool.pdf;

National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education <http://cfoc.nrckids.org/>;

U.S. Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service Child Nutrition Programs <http://www.fns.usda.gov/school-meals/child-nutrition-programs>;

WK1		MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY
AM	BG D	Cinnamon applesauce & granola	BG MA	Steamed rice & field peas or red beans	FV D	Cucumber & carrot slices w/ranch dressing made with yogurt made with plain yogurt)	FV BG	GF Pumpkin muffins (A) GF Oatmeal Cookies w/cherries (B)	MA FV	Sunflower seeds, craisins
PM	FV MA	Banana & sunbutter	D FV	String cheese & orange slices	BG FV	Rice crackers & fruit spread (berry)	BG D	quesadilla (multi-grain tortilla & cheese)	D BG	Yogurt w/multi-grain Cheerios OR SS
WK2		MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY
AM	FV MA	Raw carrots, cucumbers & Hummus	D FV	Yogurt & peaches	BG D	Mini rice cakes & melted cheese	BG FV	GF Blueberry muffins (A) GF Fruit Bars (B)	BG MA D	GF Oatmeal & milk w/pepitas or sunflower seeds
PM	BG D	Whole grain crackers & cheese cubes	BG FV	White or Blue Corn Tortilla chips & salsa	BG FV	Chow mein noodles & apples	FV BG MA D	English Muffin pizzas with sauce & mozzarella & turkey pepperoni	BG FV	Oyster crackers & oranges OR SS
WK3		MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY
AM	FV MA	Pears & sunflower seeds	BG FV	French toast sticks or mini-pancakes & syrup or fruit spread	FV	Roasted sweet potatoes with butter & cinnamon	BG FV	GF Apple/carrot muffin (A) GF Rice Chex treats with raisins (B)	FV BG	Pineapple tidbits & rice crisps
PM	FV BG D	Raisin bread & cream cheese (mixed w/ricotta cheese)	D FV	Salad & ranch dressing (made with plain yogurt)	BG D	Pretzels & cheese sticks	FV D	Vanilla yogurt & oranges	BG D	Graham crackers & milk OR SS
WK4		MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY
AM	FV D	Cheese cubes & apples	FV D	Pineapples & Vanilla yogurt	BG FV	Multi-grain Waffles with applesauce	FV BG	GF Banana muffin (A) Corn Bread & honeybutter (B)	BG D	GF pasta, marinara sauce and/or Parmesan cheese
PM	BG MA	Carrot sticks & cucumber, Pita chips & hummus	BG MA	Oat Bran bread & sunbutter	BG FV D	Rice crackers & grape/cheese cube kebabs or seasonal fruit	D FV	Veggie chips & ranch dressing (made with plain yogurt)	FV BG D	Celery sticks, ricotta/cream cheese & raisins OR SS
WK5		MONDAY		TUESDAY		WEDNESDAY		THURSDAY		FRIDAY
AM	MA D	Hardboiled egg slices (or scrambled eggs) & cheese	BG FV	Blue or white corn Tortilla chips & salsa	FV BG	Sliced peaches & GF granola	BG D FV	Biscuit & pimiento cheese (A) Cheese Grits (B)	FV MA D	Salad & ranch dressing (made with plain yogurt)
PM	FV BG	Whole grain or pretzel Goldfish crackers & apple slices	BG D	Mini-bagel & cream cheese (mixed with ricotta cheese)	BG FV D	Fig bars & milk	MA FV	Oranges & pepitas	BG FV	Vanilla yogurt & graham crackers OR SS
	D=	Dairy	FV=	Fruit /Veg	BG=	Bread/Grain	MA=	Meat Alternate-Protein	GF=	Gluten Free
	A Months	September		November		January		March		May
	B Months	October		December		February		April		June
	Blue	May contain gluten	Green	Pitted fruit	Yellow	Contains eggs				

