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INSTRUCTOR'S GUIDE

# Nutrition and Physical Activity



First Edition, 2006



California Childcare Health Program  
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This *Instructor's Guide* is a supplement for trainers of the California Training Institute's curriculum for Child Care Health Advocates.

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# INTRODUCTION TO THE NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY MODULE

This *Instructor's Guide* provides trainers with an outline for the teaching of the *Nutrition and Physical Activity* module. Participants will learn the importance of developing healthy habits in young children, the components of healthy nutrition and feeding practices in the early care and education (ECE) setting, ways to improve nutrition and food safety, the importance of physical activity for young children and ways to promote physical activity. Child Care Health Advocates (CCHAs) play a critical role in promoting the health of young children and developing habits that have significant long-term health consequences.

## Learning Objectives:

1. To describe the major nutrition issues affecting children and providers in ECE programs.
2. To describe the health benefits of physical activity for children in ECE programs.
3. To identify safe practices in food handling, cooking and storage to prevent foodborne illnesses.
4. To describe three ways a CCHA can assist ECE programs meet the nutrition and physical activity needs of children.
5. To identify the primary nutrition and physical activity resources available to assist and support ECE providers and families.

## Primary Messages:

1. Nutrition and physical activity are important factors in children's health and happiness.
2. ECE providers who establish good nutrition and physical activity habits can have a positive impact throughout children's lives.
3. Children who do not get enough nutrients, such as those who overeat unhealthy foods, may become obese and have serious health problems as teenagers and adults.
4. ECE staff can affect their community's health status by supporting the efforts of mothers who continue to breastfeed after returning to work or school.
5. Children with special needs such as food allergies or diabetes present challenges to a successful nutrition program in ECE programs. A Child Care Health Consultant (CCHC) can provide critical education and support to the ECE staff when consulting on such cases.
6. Developing a nutrition plan is key to meeting children's nutritional needs in ECE programs.
7. For good health, children need a variety of safe and nutritious foods, along with daily physical activity.
8. Balanced nutrition and physical activity improve not only physical health, but also children's growth, mood, quality and quantity of sleep, and ability to learn.
9. ECE programs should select indoor and outdoor play equipment that is developmentally appropriate for safety.
10. CCHAs play an important role in the promotion of physical activity for young children.

## Materials and Equipment Needed:

1. Copy of module: *Nutrition and Physical Activity*
2. Copy of *Instructor's Guide: Nutrition and Physical Activity*
3. Copies of *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guidelines for Out-of-Home Child Care Programs, Second Edition* (CFOC)
4. Flip chart/whiteboard and markers, or chalkboard and chalk
5. Masking tape for posting flip chart paper
6. LCD projector or overhead projector
7. Computer for PowerPoint slides
8. CDs of slides or transparencies
9. Handouts
  - a. Handouts in the *Nutrition and Physical Activity* module
    - i. Handouts from California Childcare Health Program (CCHP), Oakland, CA

Handout Title	Page Number in Module
<i>Fact Sheets for Families: Food Allergies</i>	23
<i>Fact Sheets for Families: Food-Borne Illness</i>	24
<i>Fact Sheets for Families: Overweight and Obesity</i>	25
<i>Forms: Nutrition and Feeding Care Plan</i>	27
<i>Health and Safety Notes: Active Outdoor Play</i>	29
<i>Health and Safety Notes: Diabetes in the Child Care Setting</i>	31
<i>Health and Safety Notes: Healthy Snacks for Toddlers and Preschoolers</i>	33
<i>Health and Safety Notes: Is It Safe to Play Outdoors in Winter?</i>	35
<i>Health and Safety Notes: Supporting Breastfeeding Families</i>	37
<i>Health and Safety Notes: Types of Vegetarian Diets</i>	39
<i>Possible Choking and Suffocation Hazards</i>	41

- ii. Handouts from other sources

Handout Title	Page Number in Module
<i>Child Care Center Self-Assessment Guide: Safe Food Handling and Preparation</i>	43
<i>Family Child Care Homes Self-Assessment Guide: Safe Food Handling and Preparation</i>	51
<i>Food Allergy Action Plan</i>	59
<i>How to Help Your Child Have Healthy Weight</i>	61

- b. Handouts in the *Instructor's Guide*

Appendix Title	Appendix Number
<i>Using the Nutrition and Physical Activity Module</i>	13A

## SUGGESTED TRAINING OUTLINE

Outline	Method	Time (Minutes)
I. Introduction to the Nutrition and Physical Activity Module	—	15
A. Assessment of Group Knowledge	Questioning	2
B. Introduction/Rationale to Nutrition and Physical Activity	Lecture	3
C. The Role of the CCHA in Promoting Nutrition and Physical Activity	Lecture and Discussion	10
II. Nutrition and Feeding in ECE Programs	—	30–60
A. Nutritional Guidelines	Lecture and Discussion	5
B. <i>Optional: Communicating with Parents</i>	<i>Large Group Discussion</i>	<i>10</i>
C. <i>Optional: Nutrition Plans</i>	<i>Small Group Activity</i>	<i>10</i>
D. Building Healthy Eating Habits	Small Group Activity	15
E. Safe and Healthy Practices	Large Group Discussion	10
F. <i>Optional: Special Health Conditions That Require Nutritional Planning</i>	<i>Handout Review</i>	<i>10</i>
III. Physical Activity in ECE Programs	—	15
A. Recommendations for Physical Activity in ECE Programs	Lecture and Discussion	5
B. Promoting Physical Activity for Young Children	Large Group Discussion	10
IV. Summary and Closure	—	10–20
A. <i>Optional: Using the Nutrition and Physical Activity Module</i>	<i>Small Group Activity</i>	<i>10</i>
B. Next Steps for the CCHA	Large Group Discussion	5
C. Summary and Closure	Brief Closing Activity	5

Total time: 70–110 minutes

# OUTLINE AND INSTRUCTIONS

## Nutrition and Physical Activity

### I. Introduction to the Nutrition and Physical Activity Module

#### A. **Topic:** Assessment of Group Knowledge

**Method:** Questioning

**Instructions:**

1. Ask participants several of the following questions, choosing questions most appropriate for your participants. Ask them to raise their hand if they:
  - Know the nutritional standards for young children.
  - Evaluate snacks and food for their nutritive content.
  - Provide information to parents about nutrition.
  - Are familiar with the recommendations for physical activity for young children.
  - Are familiar with community resources that support healthy nutrition and physical activity.
2. Ask participants how information about their nutrition and feeding policies is communicated to parents. Ask them what the conflicts are with parents over the feeding of children in their program.

#### B. **Topic:** Introduction/Rationale to Nutrition and Physical Activity

**Method:** Lecture

**Instructions:**

1. Give participants the following information:
  - a. Nutrition and physical activity are an important part of a healthy childhood. For good health, children need a variety of safe and nutritious foods, along with daily physical activity. Balanced nutrition and physical activity improve not only physical health, but also children's growth, mood, quality and quantity of sleep, and ability to learn.
  - b. At home and in ECE programs, young children develop preferences and habits for foods and activities (Birch, 1998). These early habits are likely to continue for the rest of their lives.
  - c. Attitudes and beliefs related to nutrition and feeding practices are often strongly felt by parents and ECE professionals and can become a source of parent-provider misunderstanding. Staff training, clear policies based on nutritional guidelines and clear communication of these policies to parents helps to reduce misunderstanding.
    - i. Ask participants to think for a moment about why young children are at risk for unhealthy nutrition and poor physical health. Then state:
      - a) They depend on adults to teach them about healthy eating, to provide them with good food choices and to provide them with safe physical activities.
      - b) Children eat small portions of food, so it is hard to get enough nutrients. Therefore, they must eat food that is rich in calcium, iron and other nutrients.
      - c) Parents may prepare foods based on convenience.
      - d) Children are targets of marketing strategies.

- ii. Ask participants to think for a moment about issues related to the ECE setting that pose particular challenges to healthy nutrition and physical activity. Then state:
  - a) The amount of nutrients that children receive each day when they eat both at home and at the ECE setting may not be balanced or different enough if parents and ECE staff do not talk about the food eaten.
  - b) Staff turnover interferes with staff training about the importance of nutrition and physical activity.
  - c) Food served must be free of bacteria, must be clean and wholesome, and must be unlikely to cause choking. Even a small amount of carelessly stored or prepared food can make a young child very ill.
- iii. Summarize by stating that ECE programs have unique challenges for meeting the goals of safe and healthy nutrition and regular physical activity. For example:
  - a) Parents may not be aware of the components of a nutritious diet and may give their children foods that have poor nutrition.
  - b) Breastfeeding mothers may find it difficult to continue exclusive breastfeeding after going back to work or school. ECE programs can help support breastfeeding.
  - c) Parents and ECE providers may have different beliefs and attitudes about food.

**C. Topic:** The Role of the CCHA in Promoting Nutrition and Physical Activity

**Method:** Lecture and Discussion

**Instructions:**

1. Open the discussion by stating that ECE providers are really on the frontline of promoting healthy nutrition and physical activity. They work with providers, parents and children—which gives them the opportunity to influence the ECE setting and the homes children return to at the end of the day. The CCHA looks for and creates opportunities to improve nutrition and physical activity.
2. Ask participants how they promote healthy nutrition and physical activity.
3. Briefly state that it is the role of the CCHA to:
  - a. Promote healthy nutrition practices.
  - b. Monitor and teach safe food handling practices (including hand washing by staff and children).
  - c. Monitor practices for feeding children with special needs.
  - d. Review policies and procedures.
  - e. Train and provide culturally sensitive resources and educational materials for ECE providers, families and children.
  - f. Routinely update resources and information.

**II. Nutrition and Feeding in ECE Programs**

**A. Topic:** Nutritional Guidelines

**Method:** Lecture and Discussion

**Instructions:**

1. Ask participants if they know the nutritional guidelines for young children. If so, have them begin listing them. Then introduce the nutritional guidelines, Dietary Guidelines for

Americans (2005), which is based on a 2000 calorie per day intake (see page 4 of the module):

- a. 2 cups per day of fruits.
  - b. 2.5 cups per day of vegetables (including vegetables from all 5 vegetable subgroups).
  - c. 2 cups per day of fat-free or low-fat milk (and calcium-fortified milk substitute).
  - d. For children between 2 and 3 years old, 30% to 35% of their calories should come from fat. For children between 4 and 18 years old, 25% to 35% of calories should come from fat.
  - e. Whole grains everyday for sufficient dietary fiber.
  - f. Lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs and nuts.
  - g. Minimal saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt and added sugars.
2. Ask participants how many of their programs have systems for:
- a. Monitoring the daily food intake of the children in their care.
  - b. Communicating the daily food intake to the parents/guardians of the children in their care.

**B. *Optional Topic: Communicating with Parents***

**Method:** Large Group Discussion

**Instructions:**

1. *Ask participants to describe the conflicts that arise between ECE providers and parents about food. For example: a parent complains that her child is hungry at the end of the day and has a “meltdown”; a parent complains that there are never snacks her child likes; or the teachers are upset that the parents do not understand the challenges in providing snacks for children that are easy, safe, healthy and affordable for the ECE setting.*
2. *Emphasize that food and nutrition are emotionally charged issues for parents and providers, and the role of the CCHA is to prevent these conflicts from developing and to help resolve them smoothly when they do. State that being clear on the responsibilities of the ECE provider is helpful in preventing these kinds of conflicts. Go over the responsibilities of the ECE provider listed on page 2 of the module. You may go around the room and have each participant read each responsibility aloud. Ask participants whether these responsibilities are communicated to parents. If so, how? If not, encourage them to do so.*

**C. *Optional Topic: Nutrition Plans***

**Method:** Small Group Activity

**Instructions:**

1. *State that developing a nutrition plan is key to meeting children’s nutritional needs in ECE programs. The plan should include the following: healthful food choices, food preparation and food storage safety, kitchen cleanliness and sanitation, correct infant feeding practices, and healthy menu planning.*
2. *Divide participants into groups and ask them to create a nutrition plan for one day in their program. Participants should be given leeway to create a nutrition plan appropriate for their settings.*



**D. Topic:** Building Healthy Eating Habits

**Method:** Small Group Activity

**Instructions:**

1. State that participants will have an opportunity to practice determining how to improve nutrition and physical activity in an ECE setting by working on case scenarios.
2. Divide participants into groups so that each group may work on one scenario. (For large groups, you may have 8 groups, with 2 groups for each scenario.) Ask participants to turn to page 12 of the module.
3. Give instructions to participants:
  - a. Identify the problems in the following four scenarios.
  - b. In small groups, talk about suggestions for improvements.
  - c. Note educational and any other supportive steps you might take in these situations.
  - d. What CFOC standards are relevant?
4. Have groups report back. Ask the large group for additional information on each scenario, adding any missing information.
5. Have participants return to their seats.

**E. Topic:** Safe and Healthy Practices

**Method:** Large Group Discussion

**Instructions:**

1. Ask participants to call out choking hazards and what they do to avoid them. Chart on paper and add any missing information. (Note to trainer: Refer to page 5 and *Handout: Possible Choking and Suffocation Hazards* on page 41 of the module).
2. Ask participants to call out the healthy snacks they serve. Chart on paper and add any missing information. (Note to trainer: Refer to *Handout: Health and Safety Notes: Healthy Snacks for Toddlers and Preschoolers* on page 33 of the module).
3. Ask participants how they support breastfeeding. Chart on paper and add any missing information. (Note to trainer: Refer to *Health and Safety Notes: Supporting Breastfeeding Families* on page 37 of the module).
4. Review *Handout: Child Care Center Self-Assessment Guide: Safe Food Handling and Preparation* (page 43 in module) or *Handout: Family Child Care Homes Self-Assessment Guide: Safe Food Handling and Preparation* (page 51 in module).
5. *Optional: Review handouts listed above.*

**F. Optional Topic:** Special Health Conditions That Require Nutritional Planning

**Method:** Handout Review

**Instructions:**

1. *Ask participants to describe what practices they engage in and what policies they have in place regarding food allergies. Review Handout: Food Allergy Action Plan on page 59 of the module.*
2. *Ask participants to describe what practices they engage in and what policies they have in place regarding diabetic children. Review Handout: Health and Safety Notes: Diabetes in the Child Care Setting on page 31 of the module.*
3. *Ask participants how they currently are managing the nutrition for children with special dietary needs. Review Handout: Forms: Nutrition and Feeding Care Plan on page 27 of the module.*

### III. Physical Activity in ECE Programs

#### A. **Topic:** Recommendations for Physical Activity in ECE Programs

**Method:** Lecture and Discussion

**Instructions:**

1. Give participants information about recommendations for physical activity (refer to page 6 of the module).
2. State that the Dietary Guidelines for Americans (2005) and the American Heart Association (2005) recommend that children and teenagers do at least 60 minutes of physical activity on most, preferably all, days of the week.
3. **Health Benefits:** State that increased physical activity has been linked to an increased lifespan and decreased risk of heart disease (American Heart Association, 2005). Many children are at risk for health problems because of inactive lifestyles (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 1996).
4. **Weather and Outdoor Play:** State that despite the myth that being in cold weather increases the risk of the common cold or makes it worse, children and adults benefit from outdoor activity in all but the most extreme conditions. There is no evidence that playing in brisk weather causes children to catch colds. See *Handout: Health and Safety Notes: Is It Safe to Play Outdoors in Winter?* (page 35 in module) and *Handout: Health and Safety Notes: Active Outdoor Play* (page 29 in module). Weather that poses a significant health risk includes wind chill at or below 15 degrees F and heat index at or above 90 degrees F. Ask participants which of them work at ECE programs with policies in place related to outdoor play. What information can they give to parents who do not want their child to play outdoors because the child is not feeling well?
5. **Play Equipment and Space:** State that ECE programs should select indoor and outdoor equipment that is developmentally appropriate for safety; the equipment should also provide developmentally appropriate gross and fine motor experiences (AAP et al., 2002, Standard 2.016). Children should always be supervised while playing on playground equipment (AAP et al., 2002, Standard 5.085). There should be enough space in the outside play area so that children can move freely without running into one another—if an outside play area is not accessible or available, an indoor play area that is similar in size to the standard outside play area will work well (AAP et al., 2002, Standards 5.162, 5.163).
6. *Optional: Refer to physical activity guidelines from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (page 10 in module) for infants, toddlers and preschoolers.*

#### B. **Topic:** Promoting Physical Activity for Young Children

**Method:** Large Group Discussion

**Instructions:**

1. Ask participants to list physical activities for children in three age groups and chart their answers on paper:
  - Under 2 years old
  - 2 to 3 years old
  - 3 to 5 years old
2. Ask which of these have been most popular and successful. Make sure both outdoor and indoor activities are listed.

**If you have experienced CCHAs in the room, do one or more of the following:**

1. Group them in separate groups and ask them to share with each other their successes and challenges.
2. Ask them to discuss their favorite ways of teaching about nutrition.
3. Ask them to discuss their favorite ways to promote physical activity in rainy weather (inside and outside).
4. Pair them up with nonexperienced participants and instruct the nonexperienced to ask questions of the experienced CCHAs.

IV. Summary and Closure

*A. **Optional Topic:** Using the Nutrition and Physical Activity Module*

***Method:** Small Group Activity*

***Instructions:***

1. *Explain to the participants that the curriculum is a rich resource for them and encourage them to become familiar with it. Towards this end, spend a few minutes looking through it together. Explain that participants will work in pairs to go through the module to find the answers to these questions.*
2. *Hand out Appendix 13A. Tell the participants they have 5 to 10 minutes to locate the answers.*
3. *Note to Trainer: Participants may feel that this is “busy work.” Let them know that our goal is to use our time today to give them new tools and resources, and the curriculum is one such resource. Explain that becoming familiar with the curriculum is one way to help them determine how they will improve quality in their setting.*

**B. Topic:** Next Steps for the CCHA

**Method:** Large Group Discussion

**Instructions:**

1. Ask participants what messages they would like to give to parents about nutrition and physical activity. Ask them what information they would want to bring back to other teachers.
2. Refer to the list of the CCHA's role at the beginning of this training session and state that participants have learned about many aspects of the CCHA's role and about how to promote nutrition and physical activity. As the group has discussed, it is the role of the CCHA to promote healthy nutrition practices, monitor and teach safe food handling practices (including hand washing by staff and children), monitor practices for feeding children with special needs, review policies and procedures, and train and provide culturally sensitive resources and educational materials for ECE providers, families and children.

**C. Topic:** Summary and Closure

**Method:** Brief Closing Activity

**Instructions:**

1. Summarize the key points shared by participants. Ask participants to list some of the ways that they can improve nutrition and physical activity in their settings. They may list these by themselves or call out their ideas to the larger group.
2. Next Steps: Direct participants to write down what their next steps for improving nutrition and physical activity in their settings will be. Ask participants to share these with the group.

# APPENDIX 13A

## Using the Nutrition and Physical Activity Module

**Topic:** Using the Nutrition and Physical Activity Module

**Method:** Small Group Activity

**Instructions:** Review the module and find the answers to the following questions.

According to the module:

1. What are some organizations and resources for improving nutrition and physical activity in the ECE setting?
2. How long can you safely store an opened package of lunch meats?
3. What are five guidelines to follow to assure safe food handling?
4. Who is responsible for what and how much children eat?