

Report to the Legislative Oversight Committee on Health & Human Services

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Child Care & NC Pre-K Nutrition Standards

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Who sets the nutrition standards?

Child Care Commission

- 17 members that meet quarterly
- Appointed by the Governor, Speaker of the House & President Pro Tempore of the Senate
- Membership categories include:
 - For-profit & non-profit child care providers
 - Family Child Care Home provider
 - Parents
 - Private citizens
 - Pediatrician
 - Early Childhood Specialists



Current Nutrition Standards

- Expectations align with the USDA Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)
- Over 5,000 child care programs currently participate in the CACFP program
- Children must be provided meals that include each of the components specified in the USDA requirements:
 - 1 serving of milk
 - 2 servings of fruit/vegetable
 - 1 serving of grains/bread
 - 1 serving of meat/meat alternative



Current Nutrition Standards

- The Child Care Commission adopted the rule over twenty years ago
- Ensures that all children in regulated programs have access to meals that contain all food components
- Meals brought from home that do not include all food components are supplemented by the early education provider
- The early education program locally determines whether or not parents will be assessed a fee for the supplemented items



Advantages of the Child Care Setting for Promoting Healthy Practices

- Meals/snacks typically provided
- Teacher as role model
- Learning environment to practice healthy habits
- Potential to introduce healthy nutrition concepts into the curriculum





Why are nutrition standards important for child care and Pre-K?



- Research has shown that children who are not provided with nutritional meals are not able to learn and progress in school
- Healthy food and children's health is a critical component of serving the needs of the whole child
 - Good nutrition promotes optimal growth & development for young children



West Hoke Elementary

- November, 2011 NC Rated License Assessment Project conducted an assessment on the program
 - very high overall score was obtained
 - low score on the nutrition related item
- January 26, 2012 DCDEE licensing consultant made a visit to the program to review the assessment results with principal and teacher and provide technical assistance



West Hoke Elementary

- Licensing consultant visits are observational in nature and do not involve any sort of "inspection" of child lunches brought from home
- The incident in Hoke County did not result in a violation of any type to the Pre-K program
- The nutrition standards are consistent with standards that have been in place in the More at Four program since its inception
- DCDEE encourages Pre-K providers to share nutrition principles with teachers and parents of young children



Questions?

