



Incorporating Nutrition into Policies

Sample Assignment

Objective

Policies on nutrition impact young children's health and eating habits in early childhood settings. This hands-on assignment will allow you to observe, analyze, and implement nutrition-related policies by engaging with real-world settings, preparing a healthy meal/snack demonstration, and creating a visual nutrition policy guide for families and educators.

CCCS ECE 2051 Course Competencies

1. Identify the functions of various regulatory agencies at the local, state, and national levels concerning health, safety, and nutrition of young children.
2. Identify purposes of childcare licensing-mandated health, safety, and nutritional trainings designated for Early Childhood (EC) professionals.
3. Identify regulations and effective practices that promote the physical and mental health, safety, and nutrition of young children from birth through age 12.
7. Design and promote developmentally appropriate curriculum-based activities for use in early childhood classrooms emphasizing basics of health, nutrition, and safety practices with young children.
10. Explore and share credible resources with colleagues and families on topics related to child wellness, health, safety, and nutrition.

Instructions

Part 1: Observation and Analysis of Nutrition Policies

Submission Format: 1-2 page written summary or presentation (5-7 slides)

1. Observe child care center, school or after-school program (in-person or virtually) to analyze how nutrition policies are implemented.
 2. Identify and describe at least three nutrition policies being followed (e.g. CACFP meal guidelines, allergy-free practices, meal/snack schedules, portion sizes, sugar intake regulations).
 3. Reflect on your observations:
 - a. How are these policies beneficial for children's health?
 - b. Are there any gaps or areas for improvement?
- If an observation is not possible, interview a child care provider or research your state's childcare nutrition policies and compare them to best practices.

Part 2: Hands-on Meal/Snack Demonstration

Submission Format: video demonstration (2-5 minutes) or step-by-step poster or presentation (5-7 slides) with photos and explanations



1. Design and prepare a healthy meal or snack that aligns with early childhood nutrition policies and developmental needs.
2. Ensure the meal/snack meets state and federal nutrition guidelines (e.g. CACFP meal components).
3. Document the process by taking photos or videos of:
 - a. Ingredients and preparation steps
 - b. Final plated meal/snack
 - c. A child-friendly way to serve or present the meal/snack
4. Explain the nutrition benefits of your meal/snack, including how it meets dietary guidelines and supports child growth and development.
5. If possible, service it to children, friends, or family members to gather feedback.

Part 3: Create a Visual Nutrition Policy Guide

Submission Format: one-page flyer, infographic, or poster or presentation (5-7 slides) with visuals

1. Design a visually appealing guide for families or childcare educators on best practices for implementing nutrition policies.
2. The guide should include:
 - a. Three to five key nutrition policies (e.g. meal planning, food safety, allergy management, water intake, family-style dining)
 - b. Simple tips for caregivers and educators to implement these policies
 - c. Engaging visuals (charts, images, or infographics)
3. Consider the audience: will your guide be for parents, teachers, or childcare staff? Adjust the language and content accordingly.

Part 4: Reflection and Peer Discussion

Submission Format: 1-2 paragraph reflection (written or video) or discussion board post or in-class presentation

1. Write a short reflection (1-2 paragraphs) on what you learned through this hands-on assignment.
 - a. What surprised you about nutrition policies in practice?
 - b. What challenges did you encounter?
 - c. How can nutrition policies be better communicated to families and staff?
2. Share your experience with classmates through a brief discussion post or presentation.
3. Provide feedback on at least one classmate's work, offering constructive insights or suggestions.

Submission Requirements

- Choose a presentation format that best suits your strengths (written, visual, or video)
- Cite sources in APA format where applicable.
- Submit via [insert submission platform]



Evaluation Criteria

Each component will be evaluated based on clarity, depth, creativity, and application of knowledge.

1. Observation and Analysis of Nutrition Policies (25 points)

- Clearly describes at least three nutrition policies in a childcare setting.
- Explains how these policies benefit children's health and development.
- Identifies areas for improvement and provides thoughtful insights.
- Demonstrates a strong understanding of nutrition policy implementation.

Excellent (25 pts) - Creative, well-documented, fully meets guidelines, clear explanation.

Proficient (20 pts) - Good meal choice, meets most guidelines, documentation is clear.

Developing (15 pts) - Meets some guidelines but lacks strong documentation or explanation.

Needs Improvement (10 pts or below) - Does not meet guidelines, lacks documentation or explanation.

2. Hands-on Meal/Snack Demonstration (25 points)

- Designs and prepares a nutritious, age-appropriate meal or snack.
- Ensures it meets state/federal nutrition guidelines (e.g., CACFP standards).
- Provides photos/videos documenting preparation and final product.
- Explains the health benefits and how it supports child development.

Excellent (25 pts) - Creative, well-documented, fully meets guidelines, clear explanation.

Proficient (20 pts) - Good meal choice, meets most guidelines, documentation is clear.

Developing (15 pts) - Meets some guidelines but lacks strong documentation or explanation.

Needs Improvement (10 pts or below) - Does not meet guidelines, lacks documentation or explanation.

3. Visual Nutrition Policy Guide (25 points)

- Creates a visually appealing, easy-to-understand guide for families or educators.
- Includes at least three to five key nutrition policies with clear explanations.
- Uses engaging visuals (infographics, charts, images) for clarity.
- Information is accurate, relevant, and accessible for the audience.

Excellent (25 pts) - Well-organized, creative visuals, clear and useful content.

Proficient (20 pts) - Organized and informative but lacks strong visual appeal.

Developing (15 pts) - Basic layout, missing visuals or clear structure.

Needs Improvement (10 pts or below) - Disorganized, lacks key information, or difficult to read.

4. Reflection and Peer Discussion (25 points)

- Thoughtfully reflects on personal learning experiences and project challenges.
- Provides specific insights on nutrition policy effectiveness.
- Actively engages in peer discussion, providing meaningful feedback.
- Demonstrates a clear connection between policies and real-world application.



Excellent (25 pts) - Deep reflection, strong engagement in discussion, insightful responses.
Proficient (20 pts) - Good reflection with some depth, engages in discussion.
Developing (15 pts) - Minimal reflection, limited peer engagement.
Needs Improvement (10 pts or below) - Superficial reflection, does not engage in discussion.

Additional Resources

To support your hands-on assignment on implementing nutrition policies in early childhood settings, here are several credible resources:

1. Nutrition Standards and Guidelines
 - a. Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Nutrition Standards: Provides detailed information on meal patterns and nutritional requirements for children in care settings.
www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/nutrition-standards
 - b. USDA Food and Nutrition Service - Child Day Care Centers: Offers guidance on providing nutritious meals and snacks as part of daily childcare routines.
www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-day-care-centers
2. Policy Development Resources
 - a. The Early Childhood Program Wellness Policy Workbook: A comprehensive guide to help early childhood education providers develop and implement effective wellness policies, including nutrition and physical activity components.
<https://snaped.fns.usda.gov/library/intervention/the-early-childhood-program-wellness-policy-workbook>
 - b. Model Policies for Creating a Healthy Nutrition and Physical Activity Environment in Child Care Settings: Offers sample policies and best practices to promote healthy eating and active living in childcare environments.
https://health.mo.gov/living/dnhs_pdfs/ChildCareModelPolicies.pdf
3. Best Practice and Implementation Tools
 - a. Advancing Early Child Nutrition in Early Care and Education (ECE) - CDC: Provides strategies and standards to enhance nutrition practices in ECE programs, aiming to prevent childhood obesity.
www.cdc.gov/early-care-education/php/early-child-nutrition/index.html
 - b. Healthy Child Care Settings - The Nutrition Source: Features programs and resources designed to improve nutrition and physical activity practices in childcare settings.
<https://nutritionsource.hsph.harvard.edu/healthy-child-care>
4. Meal Planning and Snack Ideas
 - a. Child Care Nutrition Standards: What You Need to Know: Outlines meal and snack requirements, offering practical tips for planning nutritious offerings in childcare centers. www.fns.usda.gov/tn/standardized-recipes-cacfp
 - b. Recipes for Healthy Kids: Cookbook for Child Care Centers:
<https://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/recipes-healthy-kids-cookbook-child-care-centers>
 - c. Recipes for Healthy Kids: Cookbook for Homes
www.fns.usda.gov/tn/recipes-healthy-kids-cookbook-homes
5. Educational Materials for Families and Educators
 - a. Early Child Nutrition Resources - CDC: A collection of toolkits and materials to support nutrition education and policy implementation in early care settings.
<https://www.cdc.gov/early-care-education/php/early-child-nutrition/resources.html>



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- b. Early Childhood Nutrition - UNICEF: Offers insights into the importance of early childhood nutrition and practical advice for caregivers and educators.
www.unicef.org/nutrition/early-childhood-nutrition