

# Nutrition

In the U. S., the number of children who are obese has doubled in recent years. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), children who are obese can experience decreased health, lower self-esteem, fewer friends, and depression. All of these can lead to children's poor academic performance. The AAP recommends that child care programs create policies and practices that help children maintain a healthy weight.

Your child care center is partnering with ABC Grow Healthy to promote your child's health and well-being through healthy nutrition. ABC Child Care, South Carolina's Quality Improvement System at SCDSS Child Care Services, has new Grow Healthy standards for all child care programs participating in the ABC system.

Following are practices that you will see in your child's program:

- For children 2 years and older, only skim or 1% milk will be served
- No sugar sweetened beverages will be served
- Juice is allowed only once per day
- Fruit will be offered at least twice per day

You will also notice:

- More vegetables offered (other than white potatoes)
- Fewer fried or pre-fried vegetables offered (including potatoes)
- Fewer high-fat meats served
- More whole grains offered
- Limited sweets offered weekly

*Please note: These guidelines apply only to the food served by the child care program. Families are not required to follow these guidelines if they send breakfast, lunch or snacks for their child from home, but we hope you will help us limit sweet and high fat foods.*

In addition to the nutrition guidelines described above, your child's program will also adopt other practices designed to promote your child's health.

- Food will not be used as a reward or punishment
- Your child care program will develop a written nutrition policy that will be available to all families.
- The teachers and staff at your child care center will attend training on nutrition.
- Your child will have at least one opportunity per week to learn about nutrition.



While in child care, your child has important opportunities to practice skills that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Together we can implement practices that will help your child maintain a healthy weight and develop healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime!