**Section 408.80 Nutrition and Meals**

a) Food requirements for children between birth and the age of eating table food shall be geared to the individual needs of the child and determined by consultation with the parents. The facility shall provide one-third to two-thirds of the daily nutritional requirements, depending on the length and time of day of the child's stay. The main meal shall be nutritionally balanced conforming to age appropriate portions and variety as reflected in the Meal Pattern Charts, Appendices A and B.

b) Children one year of age and older in attendance for more than 2 but less than 5 hours shall be served a mid-session snack consisting of one-half cup of pure fruit juice or full-strength canned or frozen fruit juice that contains at least 30 milligrams of Vitamin C per serving, or one to one-half cup of pasteurized milk, or one serving of citrus fruit.

c) Children one year of age and older in attendance 5 to 10 hours shall be served at least one-third of their daily food requirements, which shall include a well-balanced, nutritive meal. Occasional picnic-type meals may be substituted for a main meal. Midmorning and midafternoon snacks consisting of fruit, fruit juice, or pasteurized milk (as prescribed under subsection (c)) shall be included. Children in attendance for over 10 hours shall be served food to provide at least two-thirds of their daily food requirements. Two meals and the supplemental snacks will meet this requirement. One of the meals may be breakfast or supper, depending on the time the child arrives or departs.

d) Children under one year of age who are no longer drinking formula or breast milk shall be served whole milk unless low-fat milk is requested by the child's physician.

e) Children shall be served small servings of bite-size pieces.

f) All meals shall be suitable for children and prepared by methods designed to conserve nutritive value, flavor, and appearance.

g) Children under 2 years of age shall not be fed whole berries, hard candies, raisins, corn kernels, raw carrots, whole grapes, hot dogs, nuts, seeds, popcorn, or raw peas, as these foods may cause choking.

h) Cooked carrots, corn, peas and bananas may be served to infants only if mashed, grated or pureed.

i) Hot dogs and raw carrots may be served to children between 2 and 3 years of age only if cut into short, thin strips. Up to 3 tbsp. of peanut butter may be served to children ages 3 through 5 if thinly spread on bread, crackers or other foods or if mixed with other foods.

j) Drinking water shall be readily available to the children at all times.

k) Mealtimes shall be pleasurable experiences for the child.

1) There shall be enough time allowed for meals so the children can eat in an unhurried atmosphere.

2) Children shall be encouraged but not forced to try new foods.

3) Information provided by parents concerning the child's eating habits, food preferences, or special needs should be considered in planning menus.

4) Food preferences and eating habits shall not be permitted to become a source of friction at mealtimes.

5) Mealtimes should occur in a social atmosphere and afford children the close presence of an attentive adult.

l) Meals shall not be brought from home as a substitute for a meal provided by the facility except as provided in subsection (m).

m) Provisions of this Section notwithstanding, a child requiring a special diet due to medical reasons, allergic reactions, or religious beliefs shall be provided meals and snacks in accordance with the child's needs and the written instructions of the child's parent, guardian, or a licensed physician. Such instructions shall list any dietary restrictions/requirements and shall be signed and dated by the child's parent, guardian or physician requesting the special diet. The group day care home may request the parent or guardian to supplement food served by the facility. When food is supplied by the parent or guardian, the facility shall be responsible for assuring that it is properly stored and served to the specific child in accordance with the diet instructions on file at the facility. Records of food intake shall be maintained when indicated by the child's physician.

(Source: Amended at 32 Ill. Reg. 9164, effective June 20, 2008)