

### **Always offer a variety of foods**

- Be sure you don't serve the same food in two different ways at a meal. For example, apples and apple juice are both apples. Serve and enter another creditable fruit/veggie item.
- At snacks, always serve foods from two of the four groups.
- Never serve only 100% juice and milk at a snack; both are fluids and are not a creditable snack.

### **Document both holiday and school-age care**

When you care for school-age children on a food program holiday, remember to document both school-age care and holiday care.

CACFP.Net claimers, document online at [wisconsinearlychildhood.org](http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org), Food Program, [Online Forms](#). Paper claimers, note the information on the Child Information Form (CIF) you send in.

### **Do we have your current email address?**

We send your direct deposit date and other important information via email.

To update your email quickly and easily, go to [wisconsinearlychildhood.org](http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org), Food Program, Online Forms. Complete and submit the [Email Address Change form](#). Or note the correction on your CIF.

### **Do you care for infants?**

You are required to offer, at no cost to parents, an approved iron-fortified infant formula to every infant. Enter the name of the formula on the Parent/Provider Formula Agreement that you submit for that infant.

You must offer formula even if:

- The infant now gets breast milk.
- The parent now supplies formula.

If you and a parent change your agreement later, submit a new formula agreement to the WECA office, and mark it "revised."

You are also required to inform WECA when a parent brings solid food for an infant meal or snack.

- Do you claim online with CACFP.Net? Complete and submit the "Infant Food Provided by Parent" online form on the WECA website at [wisconsinearlychildhood.org](http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org).
- On paper menu forms, highlight in yellow all solid foods supplied by the parent.

Remember, you cannot be paid for an infant meal/snack unless you supply at least one required infant menu item.

### **Will you be away? Inform your area coordinator**

If you will be out with the day care children at a normal meal or snack time, notify your area coordinator by 7 am. that day. Call 800-783-9322, and leave her a voice mail message.

If your area coordinator comes for a home visit while you're out, and you don't arrive within a half-hour of your normal serving time, you'll lose payment for that meal or snack.

Whenever you change your meal or snack times, inform your area coordinator so she can visit at the correct times.

### **Creditable cheeses**

**The following are the ONLY items labeled "cheese" that are creditable on the food program:**

☺ **Cheese food. The package must be labeled "spread" or "natural."**

☺ **Pasteurized process cheese.**

If you use a jarred or canned cheese sauce, keep the Child Nutrition (CN) label on file. If there isn't one, contact the manufacturer for their product analysis sheet, and keep that.

The following products are NOT creditable:

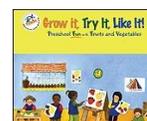
- ☹ Velveeta [[cookbookcode03](#)].
- ☹ Imitation cheese.
- ☹ Cheese product.

### **Cereals for kids one year and up**

A cereal is creditable for children over one year if any ONE of the following statements is true:

1. It's labeled whole grain.
2. It's labeled enriched.
3. It's labeled fortified.
4. The first grain listed in the ingredients is whole grain, or enriched flour, or meal, bran, or germ.
5. Manufacturer documentation provides the gram amount of creditable grains per serving.

It is recommended that iron-fortified cereals with less than 6 grams of sugar per ounce be served.



### **Order your free gardening kit!**

Go to <http://tn.ntis.gov/> to order *Grow It, Try It, Like It*, containing books, a CD, a DVD, and projects for gardening with kids. Quantities are limited.

## Milk Substitute Policy

A child who is one year or older and unable to drink regular milk for a dietary reason (NOT a disability), may be served an approved non-dairy beverage at parent request. (Example: A parent may request soy milk instead of cow's milk for a child who is a vegan.)

1. The provider and parent must complete the Non-Dairy Substitute Request form to identify the dietary need of the child.
2. An approved copy of the form must be on file in the WECA office, and the provider must keep a copy.
3. Substitutions are at the option and expense of the provider.

The substitute must be nutritionally equivalent to milk and meet United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) nutritional standards. Currently, only four substitutes are USDA-approved. Contact your area coordinator for more information.

Requirements for a child with a medical disability have not changed. An approved Special Diet Statement signed by a recognized medical authority must be on file at the WECA office. The provider must keep a copy.



## Is it time for some spring cleaning?

Spring is a good time to clean up your child list and drop children who have left your care. Remember to wait two months after the child's last day in care.

- Drop children online at [wisconsinearlychildhood.org](http://wisconsinearlychildhood.org), Food Program, Online Forms, [Updates to Child Information](#).
- Or write the information on the CIF that you send with your paper claim.

## Our most recent cookbook winner

The winner of the second cookbook drawing is Kathryn Shisler, Monroe County. Kathryn has been with WECA since February 1990. Congratulations to you, Kathryn!

Find the cookbook code in the online issue, click on the link, complete the form, and send.

## What's in this issue's online *Provider Connection*?

- WECA providers [celebrating anniversaries](#).
- Recipe for [low-sodium Chex cereal mix](#).
- [Homemade baked corndog recipe](#) shared by provider Nicole Leiterman.

## Water availability – clarification from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI)

USDA Guidance Memo CACFP 20-2011, which requires that water be available upon request to children at all times, does not apply to children under 12 months of age.

## Cut back on sodium

Kids develop a taste preference for salty foods early, if fed those foods regularly. You can help them learn to enjoy the natural flavor of foods without added salt or other ingredients that contain sodium.

About 75% of the salt Americans eat is added by manufacturers during food processing. And we eat more processed and prepared foods each year.

Read Nutrition Facts labels on processed foods to find the sodium content; then choose lower sodium options. Or prepare foods at home to control the sodium content. Here are some tips:

### Meat and Poultry

- Avoid cured meats, like ham, or processed meats like chicken nuggets, bologna, hot dogs, lunch meats.
- Prepare meat without added salt; use herbs and spices instead. Try growing your own herbs. Visit [garden.org](http://garden.org) for information.

### Meat alternates – dried beans and peas

- Drain and rinse canned beans to remove extra sodium.
- Soak and then cook dried beans/peas when possible. Dried legumes are low in sodium.

### Meat alternates – Cheese

- Remember that salt is part of the cheese making process. Natural cheese has less sodium than processed cheese, so read and compare labels.

### Grains and breads

- Prepare oatmeal and other cooked cereals without added salt.
- Serve whole-grain pastas seasoned with herbs and spices, rather than salty seasonings.
- Prepare pancakes, muffins, and other bread items with the least amount of salt required.

### Vegetables

- Check nutrition labels. Many frozen vegetables are processed with little added salt; canned veggies are higher in salt.
- Steam fresh vegetables or microwave them without added salt.

### Cooking with herbs and spices

- Go to [homecooking.about.com](http://homecooking.about.com), type in “Herbs and Spices Chart,” and click on Search for information and recipes.
- Visit [lowsodiumcooking.com](http://lowsodiumcooking.com) for recipes and a free newsletter.

Credit: National Food Service Management Institute, [nfsmi.org](http://nfsmi.org), Care Connection, *Reduce the Salt in Child Care Menus*.