

NeighborImpact Head Start & Early Head Start Policy & Procedure	
Section: Subpart C-Education and Child Development Program Services	PC Approval Date: 11/21/05, 1/18/18
Title: Family Style Meal Service	Updated: 11/3/17
Policy #: HS-43	NI Board Approval: 9/12/19
Forms Required: Attendance Form	
Performance Standards: 1302.31 , 1302.44, CCD 141-300-0270, CFOB: 4.5.0.10	Page 1 of 3

Policy: It is the policy of NeighborImpact Head Start & Early Head Start that mealtimes contribute to children’s development and socialization, broaden food experiences and help them develop positive attitudes toward healthy foods. Staff and classroom volunteers sit with children, eat the same foods and serve as role models for healthy eating and socialization. Conversation is encouraged as a means of stimulating language development.

Purpose: Family Style Meal Service is a type of meal service where groups of six-ten children and one or more adults sit and eat together, sharing the same food. Children serve themselves and adults serve as role models, setting a personal example of eating and social skills. The atmosphere created is one of pleasant conversation and socially enjoyable food sharing.

Definitions:

Family Style Meal Service – A type of meal service where when possible the maximum number of care givers to children will be 1:7 and not exceeding 1:10 per table. Staff will eat with children at tables, modeling and monitoring appropriate mealtime table behaviors. Staff set a personal example of eating and social skills, and encourage table discussions about color, texture, cultural aspects, and other qualities about food. Adults serve as key role models, by serving the correct child size portion for themselves, and then allowing children to do the same. Children are encouraged but not forced to try all foods. FSMS (Family Style Meal Service) will entail a relaxed, social, and educational experience.

It is the expectation that menus are read to classroom prior to meal service. Possibly on the bus to school, or part of the daily calendar/carpet time with children,

Procedures:

1. Staff creates a pleasant, clean and bright area for meal service that minimizes distractions.
2. Staff set up designated and posted hand washing facilities and supervises hand washing prior to table setting and meal service, and after meal service or tooth brushing for children, staff and volunteers.
3. Staff ensures that tables are properly cleaned and sanitized prior to each meal service. Spray tables with soap and water mixture, wipe with paper towels. Spray with Saniquat solution, let air dry.
4. Children are provided with child-sized chairs and tables with enough space for each child to sit comfortably. Staff seat children so that children’s feet reach the floor and the table is below chest height.
5. Staff provides children with opportunities to set tables with supervision and support and foster self-sufficiency. Encouraging but not requiring children to aid in distribution of utensils, napkins, plates, and cups, to tables. Letting children assume responsibility for setting up and cleaning up there eating area.
6. Paper products will only be used on occasion with prior approval from the Site Lead.
7. Staff makes sure that all required portions of food and milk for the meal are on the table at the beginning of the meal.
8. When possible Staff and other adults sit immediately with children and minimize adult trips away from the table.
9. Staff will minimize transition and before activates in lieu of starting to eat. (e.g., one song, counting, and then eat)

10. Beginning of the meal, Staff Model taking a child size portion of every component with positive comments about food, appropriate table manners and no negative comment or body language about food.
 11. Staff teaches children how to serve themselves including the appropriate way to handle and pass serving bowls.
 12. All foods and milk are passed around at least two times in order to encourage all children to take the full portion size. Children can choose to take or decline food as it is passed around.
- Children are encouraged, but not forced or bribed, to eat or taste food and food is never used as a reward or withheld as punishment.**
13. A designated staff member circles the meal offered to the child at the time of meal service, “point of service” on the Child Plus Attendance Form within 15 of the meal service. The staff member who completes the documentation on the attendance form is accepting responsibility that all meal components and required amounts were served. Adults and other adults who are participating in the family style meal service modeling and eating with the children, are also documented on the attendance form.
 14. Staff is responsible for supervising and managing children’s behavior and encouraging safety rules and sanitation.
 15. Staff is responsible for teaching children how to handle foods in a sanitary way by using serving utensils, only touching the food you plan to eat, shielding sneezes and coughs, hand washing, and not serving contaminated food.
 16. Staff talks with children about a variety of age appropriate topics and encourage positive conversation and use of language.
 17. Children control which of the foods offered they eat, the amount of food that they eat and even if they eat. If no food is eaten but offered it is a reimbursable meal.
 18. Staff encourage and support children with cleaning up their own spills in a positive manner. Cloth towels are used for spills.
 19. Sufficient time will be provided for each child to enjoy a relaxing meal. One half hour is allowed for meals but may be adjusted if necessary. The staff will set a leisurely pace, so slow eaters will be allowed sufficient time to finish or fast eaters will have an activity planned if they are finished before others, and wish to leave the table.
 20. Staff follow procedures that help children learn to clean up their places and scrap dirty dishes. Classrooms can choose to use washing tubs or not, depending on space, and classroom dynamics.
 21. After all foods have been served; leftovers are to be disposed of on site. No USDA/CACFP provided foods are to leave the centers/sites at any time, unless for field trips.
 22. Staff will coordinate family and volunteer involvement with nutrition related classroom food activates within the Head Start & Early Head Start guidelines and policy and procedures of food safety and sanitation.
 23. The Food Services Coordinator, and the Nutrition Consultant (Registered Dietician) work together to plan appealing and safe menus that provide a variety of flavor, taste, texture and color and provide diverse cultural and ethnic foods that validate children’s home cultures. A registered Dietitian will be consulted regarding any medical based diet, food allergy, food intolerance or special diet request. Such requests will be reviewed and accommodated on individual basis with documentation from the health care provider.
 24. Foods that are considered a choking hazard will not be served. Foods associated with young children’s choking incidents include (round, hard, small, thick and sticky, smooth, compressible or dense, or slippery):

- Hot dogs and other meat sticks (whole or sliced into rounds)
- Raw carrot rounds
- Whole grapes
- Hard candy
- Nuts
- Seeds
- Raw peas
- Hard pretzels
- Chips
- Peanuts
- Popcorn
- Rice cakes
- Marshmallows
- Spoonful's of peanut butter
- Chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole

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25. No peanuts or peanut products will be served or allowed at sites due to the potential of severe allergic reactions.
26. Foods that have potential to cause severe allergic reactions (seafood, etc.) will be assessed individually per site. The Health Services Manager in conjunction with the Food Services Coordinator and Registered Dietician will make the determination if a site is to avoid a specific food.
27. In rare cases, exceptions to no peanuts/peanut products and/or foods that are choking hazards may be approved only with the approval of the Registered Dietician, Health Services Manager and Food Services Coordinator.
28. Clean, sanitary drinking water will be available to children throughout the day, both indoors and outside.

Staff Training

1. All staff receive annual training on Family Style Meal Service Policy and Procedures. New employees receive training within 30 days of hire.
2. The Health Services Manager or Food Services Coordinator arranges additional training with the Registered Dietician Consultant as needed.