



CACFP Child Meal Patterns

| | Child Meal Pattern | | |
|--|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|
| | 1-2 year olds | 3-5 year olds | 6-12 year olds |
| Breakfast | | | |
| Milk —must be fluid milk (Fat-free or 1% for children ages 2 and over) | 1/2 cup | 3/4 cup | 1 cup |
| Vegetable or fruit or 100% fruit juice | 1/4 cup | 1/2 cup | 1/2 cup |
| Grains/Breads —must be enriched or whole grain | | | |
| Bread | 1/2 slice | 1/2 slice | 1 slice |
| OR, Cornbread or biscuit or roll or muffin | 1/2 serving | 1/2 serving | 1 serving |
| OR, Cold dry cereal | 1/4 cup | 1/3 cup | 3/4 cup |
| OR, Hot cooked cereal | 1/4 cup | 1/4 cup | 1/2 cup |
| OR, Cooked pasta or noodles or grains | 1/4 cup | 1/4 cup | 1/2 cup |
| Lunch or Supper | | | |
| Milk —must be fluid milk (Fat-free or 1% for children ages 2 and over) | 1/2 cup | 3/4 cup | 1 cup |
| Meat/Meat alternate | | | |
| Lean meat, poultry, or fish without bone | 1 oz | 1 1/2 oz | 2 oz |
| OR, Cheese | 1 oz | 1 1/2 oz | 2 oz |
| OR, cottage cheese | 2 oz (1/4 cup) | 3 oz (3/8 cup) | 4 ounces (1/2 cup) |
| OR, Egg (large) | 1/2 egg | 1 egg | 1 egg |
| OR, Cooked dry beans or peas | 1/4 cup | 3/8 cup | 1/2 cup |
| OR, Peanut butter or other nut or seed butters | 2 tbsp | 3 tbsp | 4 tbsp |
| OR, Nuts and/or seeds | 1/2 oz = 50% | 3/4 oz = 50% | 1 oz = 50% |
| OR, Yogurt, plain or sweetened | 4 oz (1/2 cup) | 6 oz (3/4 cup) | 8 oz (1 cup) |
| Vegetable or fruit or 100% fruit juice —serve two different vegetables and/or fruits to equal | 1/4 cup | 1/2 cup | 3/4 cup |
| Grains/Breads —must be enriched or whole grain | | | |
| Bread | 1/2 slice | 1/2 slice | 1 slice |
| OR, Cornbread or biscuit or roll or muffin | 1/2 serving | 1/2 serving | 1 serving |
| OR, Cold dry cereal | 1/4 cup | 1/3 cup | 3/4 cup |
| OR, Hot cooked cereal | 1/4 cup | 1/4 cup | 1/2 cup |
| OR, Cooked pasta or noodles or grains | 1/4 cup | 1/4 cup | 1/2 cup |
| Snack —select 2 of the 4 components | | | |
| Milk —must be fluid milk (Fat-free or 1% for children ages 2 and over) | 1/2 cup | 1/2 cup | 1 cup |
| Vegetable or fruit or 100% fruit juice | 1/2 cup | 1/2 cup | 3/4 cup |
| Grains/Breads —must be enriched or whole grain | | | |
| Bread | 1/2 slice | 1/2 slice | 1 slice |
| OR, Cornbread or biscuit or roll or muffin | 1/2 serving | 1/2 serving | 1 serving |
| OR, Cold dry cereal | 1/4 cup | 1/3 cup | 3/4 cup |
| OR, Hot cooked cereal | 1/4 cup | 1/4 cup | 1/2 cup |
| OR, Pasta or noodles or grains | 1/4 cup | 1/4 cup | 1/2 cup |
| Meat/Meat alternate | | | |
| Lean meat, poultry, or fish | 1/2 oz | 1/2 oz | 1 oz |
| OR, Alternate protein product | 1/2 oz | 1/2 oz | 1 oz |
| OR, Cheese | 1/2 oz | 1/2 oz | 1 oz |
| OR, Egg | 1/2 egg | 1/2 egg | 1/2 egg |
| OR, Cooked dry beans or peas | 1/8 cup | 1/8 cup | 1/4 cup |
| OR, Peanut or other nut or seed butters | 1 tbsp | 1 tbsp | 2 tbsp |
| OR, Nuts and/or seeds | 1/2 oz | 1/2 oz | 1 oz |
| OR, Yogurt, plain or sweetened | 2 oz (1/4 cup) | 2 oz (1/4 cup) | 4 oz (1/2 cup) |
| See notes and reminders on back | | | |

Child Meal Pattern Important Reminders

- **Milk** served to children two years of age (24 months) and over must be fat-free (skim) or lowfat (1%). It is recommended, but not required that children 12 through 23 months of age be served whole milk. Milk substitutes (such as soy milk) must be *nutritionally equivalent to cow's milk* to be reimbursable.
Go to <http://www.nutritionnc.com/snp/resource.htm> and click on “Non-dairy tool” to see if the non-dairy milk is nutritionally equivalent to cow’s milk..

- **Cereal:** If you are serving cold dry cereal for breakfast OR snack:

- For ages 1 and 2 years, serve: 1/4 cup (volume) or 1/3 oz (weight), whichever is less
- For ages 3 through 5 years, serve: 1/3 cup (volume) or 1/2 oz (weight), whichever is less
- For ages 6 through 12 years, serve: 3/4 cup (volume) or 1 oz (weight), whichever is less

- **Grains:** Serving sizes of grains and breads for different age groups can be found in the Healthy Menus Planning Toolkit: <http://www.nutritionnc.com/snp/pdf/kidsesmm/HealthyMenusToolkitFinal.pdf>, page 87

- **Nuts and Seeds:**

If you are serving nuts and seeds for **lunch or supper**: nuts and seeds may fill up to 1/2 of the meat and meat alternate requirement for lunch or supper. In order to fulfill the lunch or supper requirement, nuts and seeds must be combined with another meat or meat alternate.

If you are serving nuts and seeds for a **snack**: Nuts and seeds may fulfill all of the meat and meat alternate requirement for a snack. Tree nuts such as almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts, macadamia nuts, pine nuts, pistachios, walnuts, and pecans can be used as meat alternates. Seeds such a sunflower, sesame, squash, and pumpkin can be used as meat alternates.

- For determining combinations of nuts or seeds for meat alternate: 1 oz nuts or seeds = 1 oz cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish.

Caution: Children under 4 years of age are at the highest risk of choking. For this age group, the USDA recommends that nuts and/or seeds be ground or finely chopped and served to children in prepared foods.