

Meals & Snacks

Promote Healthy Practices During COVID-19

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) and the [Washington State Department of Health](#) released guidance for early learning programs to limit the spread of COVID-19. Find a short summary of the guidance below. (Click the links above for the full guidance.)



Tips for serving meals and snacks

- Serve them in the program space. Prevent large group gatherings.
- Stagger mealtimes and create space between groups when serving in a large lunchroom or dining hall.
- Space children as far apart as you can at the table. Make sure tables are at least 6 feet apart.
- Consider having children take their meals outside.
- Get rid of family-style and buffet meals. The provider should handle utensils and plate the food to make sure children are not sharing food with each other.

Foster Healthy Eating, Learning and Development

- Be present when children are eating. Praise children for trying new or less-preferred foods. Maintain social distancing and model healthy eating.
- Talk with children about what they are eating. Talk about taste, smell, feel, color, shape, texture, where the food comes from or how it's grown.
- Use mealtimes to help children learn their signs of hunger and fullness. Use the terms “hungry” and “full”. Let children decide how much or how little to eat.
- Use a curriculum like [Grow It, Try It, Like It](#) or [Harvest for Healthy Kids](#) to include foods and healthy eating in lessons and activities.
- Encourage children to try new foods using these [phrases that help and hinder](#) from MyPlate.
- Serve foods that meet the [Child and Adult Care Food Program](#) meal pattern standards (this is also [WAC 110-300-0185](#)).



Visit the Links Below for More Information:



- [Nourished and Active in Early Learning](#)
- [Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards](#)



Washington State Department of
CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILIES



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