CACFP Awareness

# child and Adult care food program

**Why visit local, state, federal representatives about CACFP?**

* To educate them on the programs value
* To protect the program
* To enhance the program
* Bring awareness

**Site Visit tools**

How Do I Organize a Visit?

* Find an Ideal Site
* Prepare for the Visit
* Craft Your Message
* Work With the Media
* Create An Ideal Photo Op
* Organize a Stakeholder Meeting
* Follow Up
* For more details consult the FRAC Child Nutrition [Site Visit Guide](http://frac.org/action/advocacy-toolkit)

**Write a Letter**

Educate your representatives about the value and benefits of the CACFP.

Promote yourselves as a contact. Make your representatives aware of the provider, parent and sponsor constituency.

Encourage them to keep you informed of issues relating to the CACFP.

CACFP brings to the table a plethora of benefits

**Children Benefit**

The Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) offers lifetime benefits. Children in child care with providers who participate in the CACFP are given nutrition education by providers who understand their role in shaping healthy attitudes toward the acceptance of nutritious foods. Providers create an atmosphere that instills a positive, curious attitude about food from the earliest years.

***“CACFP a quality indicator in ChildCare”***

Some benefits:

* proper nutrition ensures appropriate development and
* reduces physical and educational problems later in life
* determines the quality of one's diet throughout life.

**Parents Benefit**

* assured that their children will be served high quality meals,
* children are less likely to experience fatigue and illness, and less time a parent must be absent from work,
* their child is more likely to be healthy, happy and develop at a normal physical, emotional and intellectual pace because of nutritional value received,
* less burden to bring nutritional food,
* save money,
* happy healthy child = happy healthy parent

**Community Benefit**

* federal tax monies are returned to the provider's state and invested in the health of the community's children,
* added revenue is a means of helping to keep child care costs down for employees working in the community,
* since only regulated providers are eligible to participate in the program, it provides an incentive for unlicensed providers to comply with the communities local child care ordinances.

**Economic Value**

* CACFP helps keep families working;
* CACFP funding supports the local economy, by purchasing required healthy foods at grocery stores and farmers’ markets. CACFP funding is a significant resource for supporting child care providers, afterschool programs, homeless shelters and adult care centers.
* ****CACFP supports jobs in child care; the small and large child care business owner’s success in CACFP and child care contributes to all levels of the economic impact of the local and national community.

# applaud yourself and Cacfp

What You Can Do to Create CACFP Awareness

**Sponsors**

Create awareness during national CACFP events with staff, community and child care providers on and off your program. There are many ways to achieve this, applaud yourselves and the participants at the same time.

Take these events as an opportunity to brag about your program and its accomplishments but most important, educate everyone on the benefits of the Child and Adult Care Food Program.

While we create awareness throughout the year, these national events are an opportunity for all of CACFP to be doing it together.

Go to the many state and national organizations that have come up with many ideas for your agency to use.

A Few Quick Things to Create Awareness

* Put an announcement on your website
* Place an announcement in your organizations e-letter and social media page
* Take the CACFP Pledge to tell at least one person about CACFP
* Have your clients take the same Pledge
* Handout Try Day Stickers or even pdfs and make [Friday CACFP TryDay](https://www.fns.usda.gov/make-today-try-day-stickers)
* Post on your social media sites about CACFP

**Providers**

The purpose of a CACFP event such as CACFP birthday celebration and CACFP Week is for the nation’s sponsors and participants to educate parents and community about how the CACFP helps child care providers serve well balanced, nutritious meals. To create awareness about the important contributions CACFP makes in building a healthy culture.

Be open to ideas to create CACFP awareness and applaud your participation in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; Lovingly referred to by many as the Food Program and CACFP.

Look at these events as an opportunity to educate your clients, children and the community in child nutrition, CACFP and your child care.

A Few Quick Things to Create Awareness

* Take the CACFP Pledge to tell at least one person about CACFP
* Have your clients take the same Pledge
* Handout Try Day Stickers or even pdfs and make [Friday CACFP Week TryDay](https://www.fns.usda.gov/make-today-try-day-stickers) and get parents involved
* Post on your social media sites about CACFP
* Handout to the parents about CACFP and/or child nutrition tips. [Example](https://choosemyplate-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/tentips/DGTipsheet11KidFriendlyVeggiesAndFruits.pdf)
* Create a meal based on MyPlate and share

Sponsors

For more ideas, refer to the next page or online tools at all three contributor website or Facebook site.

### National CACFP Event Ideas to Celebrate and Create Awareness

CACFP Sponsors Applaud and Celebrate Ideas

* **All:** Create a CACFP Event [Cookbook](https://whatscooking.fns.usda.gov/cookbook) for Providers/Parents using USDA Mixing Bowl or some of your favorites
* Sponsor Staff: Create a "nutrition question of the day" contest sent by email or posted on a display. Draw the name of a daily prize winner from those who provided the correct answer. Suggested prizes: pens, pencils, magnets, buttons or cooking items. Award a grand prize at the end of the month drawn from all correct submissions.
* Sponsor Staff: Vote for your favorite fruits and vegetables: Offer a selection of fruits and vegetables cut into bite-size pieces. Ask participants to vote for their favorite vegetable and fruit. Post a tally board to record votes.
* All: Try some handouts for providers, parents and staff "[**20 Ways to Enjoy More Fruits and Vegetables**](http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/resources/national-nutrition-month/~/~/media/dc1c25ae795e4f0ab4fcd1887c3abeeb.ashx)." [Nutrition Education Cards](https://www.ecoliteracy.org/sites/default/files/uploads/CEL_nutrition_education_cards_eng.pdf); [Fruit and Vegetable Fact Sheets](http://lancaster.unl.edu/nep/fruitveggie.shtml) [Screen Time Games for Children](http://www.foodchamps.org/), [Eat More Fruits and Vegetables](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/wp-content/uploads/UserFiles/File/pdf/resources/cdc/ChooseSmart_Womens_Brochure%281%29.pdf)
* **All:** Start a CACFP Vegetable garden by planting seeds indoors or in the ground. [Start Here](http://www.farmtoschool.org/our-work/early-care-and-education)
* All: Organize and sponsor a **"Healthy CACFP Snack Challenge"** for providers, afterschool programs, parents. Get everyone to send or bring in pictures and vote.
* All: Host a [**"MyPlate Champion"**](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/kids-become-myplate-champion) event in your child care, in your office.
* All: Develop a project that involves kids drawing and creating a meal based on MyPlate, using the [**Choose MyPlate Coloring Page.**](http://www.eatright.org/~/media/eatright%20files/nationalnutritionmonth/handoutsandtipsheets/activityhandouts/choosemyplatecoloringpage.ashx)
* All: Contest to highlight ethnic and cultural food traditions. Offer a special CACFP Creditable menu items from international cuisines (Asian, Mediterranean, Mexican, etc.) or regional foods of the United States. Take a picture and post it and have a pot luck.
* Sponsors: Organize a "healthy recipe" contest among the organization. Have the judges be Child Care Providers or Parents. Then have a pot luck lunch/dinner/snack.
* All: Conduct a formal taste testing of new healthier versions of recipes that are creditable.
* All: Organize a CACFP Child Care Fair for a training that promotes healthy eating resources and physical activity.
* All: Take the CACFP Pledge to tell at least one person about CACFP
* All:Take a picture holding up a #CACFP50Birthday #CACFPWeek #CACFPWorks or picture and post it or send it to someone to post.
* All: Organize a Run/Walk with staff and family “CACFP Run/Walk” providers can do the same. With a healthy snack at the end!
* Sponsor: Give Providers handouts for the parents about CACFP and/or child nutrition tips. [Example](https://choosemyplate-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/tentips/DGTipsheet11KidFriendlyVeggiesAndFruits.pdf)
* All: Handout Try Day Stickers or even pdfs and make  [CACFP FridayTryDay](https://www.fns.usda.gov/make-today-try-day-stickers)

(Date)

**SAMPLE Press Release**

TO: Local Newspaper

FROM: Your Sponsorship Name Address

FOR: IMMEDIATE RELEASE SUBJECT: Name of the EVENT (DATE)

NAME OF THE EVENT SHINES SPOTLIGHT ON EFFORTS TO IMPROVE HEALTH AND WELL BEING OF THE NATIONS CHILDREN

California –The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is a federally funded United States Department of Agriculture program. CACFP enables child and adult care programs to provide nutritious meals and snacks and these meals contribute to the wellness, healthy growth, and development of infants and young children and the health and wellness of older adults and chronically impaired disabled persons.

Such efforts will be recognized as part of Name of the EVENT, DATE, a national education and information campaign designed to raise awareness of how the USDA’s Child and Adult Care Food Program works to combat hunger and bring healthy foods to the table for adults in day care and children in child care homes, centers, and in afterschool and summer feeding programs across the country.

The CACFP provides approximately 2.2 billion meals and snacks to over 4 million children daily in child care centers, family care homes, and after-school programs; over 115,000 elderly persons in adult day care; and over 64,000 child care centers. In addition, 113,000 family child care providers working with around 800 sponsors use CACFP to provide children with high-quality nutrition and learning experiences.

Children that are cared for by providers participating in the CACFP benefit by being fed nutritious USDA regulated meals that ensure their proper development. These children gain from early nutrition education that helps them establish positive eating habits that will enrich the quality of their diet throughout their life. Parents of children in child care are assured that their child(ren) receives high-quality meals. With proper nutrition, the child is less likely to experience illness and fatigue and will develop at a normal physical and intellectual pace.

An excerpt from the Food Research and Action Center Blog tells us that “Millions of children across the country live in households that struggle with food insecurity. CACFP plays an important role in ensuring children receive the nutrition they need for a healthy start in life**.**

Childhood overweight and obesity, an issue that disproportionately affects low-income children, continues to be one of the nation’s most pressing public health problems.

Nationwide, preschoolers are consuming diets too high in calories, saturated fat, and sweets, and too low in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy.

Intervening in early childhood and providing high quality child care programming is critically important as lifelong health behaviors are developed during childhood.” [FRAC Chat](http://frac.org/blog/frac-celebrates-cacfp-week)

Good nutrition is the recipe for building a healthy culture now and for the next generations to come.

**Write, Call or Visit Your Legislator**

* Inform and educate your representatives about the value and benefits of the CACFP. Promote your sponsorship as a contact.
* Make your representatives aware of the provider, parent and sponsor constituency. Encourage them to keep you informed of issues relating to the CACFP, so you can keep your providers informed too.
* Invite a legislator to your agency office and/or set up a time when they can visit a provider's home, preferably at a meal or snack time. Make a snack from the flyer with your provider and the day care children.
* Take a picture, tell a story. Do your homework, maybe the legislator or staff has children in child care. Take a picture with the children and representative.
* Write a letter to your legislative representatives will serve to raise awareness and get personal about the CACFP. And then send it to the local news people and social media.

**Sample note from CACFP Child Care Providers to Parents**

Child care centers, home based, afterschool and summer programs participating in CACFP provide meals to 4 million children and 125,000 elderly or disabled adults each day for a total of 2.2 billion total meals and snacks. One of those children is your child.

Did you know your child is learning lifelong habits in a childcare that recognizes the importance of participating in the Child and Adult Care Food Program as a way to help children grow and develop to their fullest potential? Your child is learning how their body develops from the healthy choices that you, your child and provider are learning to make. Receiving these nutritious meals early in life, as well as being physically active will help your child develop positive lifelong habits.

Aren’t you proud to know that we participate in the USDA CACFP Program which means healthier foods and habits for your children with no added cost!

Date

**SAMPLE Letter to Congress**

Dear Congress person:

The National Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) celebrates National CACFP Week the third week of March every year. Because this program is so important to the constituents in your state, I want to obtain your support during NAME OF THE EVENT AND DATE

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) plays a vital role in improving the quality of child care and making it more affordable for many low income families. CACFP is key to good nutrition and quality, affordable child care, which allows children to develop fully and maintain a healthy weight, prepares children to enter school ready to learn, and helps working families work.

In Fiscal Year 2016, CACFP provided meals to more than 4 million children and 130,000 elderly or disabled adults each day. • CACFP provided OVER 2.2 billion total meals and snacks during Fiscal Year 2016.

• CACFP provides nutritious meals and snacks to children and adults receiving child care at family child care homes, child care centers, Head Start programs, afterschool programs, Homeless shelters and adult care centers.

• CACFP ensures that young children in child care receive a nutritious diet and learn good eating habits through nutrition education.

• CACFP has also been shown to improve the quality of care. The CACFP has been cited both in academic studies and in government reports for the contributions it makes to the well being of children being cared for in our child care system.

As you can see by the facts presented, The CACFP benefits our state when children, parents and community benefit in so many different ways.

**Children Benefit;** proper nutrition ensures appropriate development; reduces physical and educational problems later in life, determines quality of one's diet throughout life.

**Parents Benefit;** Their children are less likely to experience fatigue and illness, and less time a parent must be absent from work; more likely to be healthy, happy and develop at a normal physical, emotional and intellectual pace because of nutritional value received, less burden to bring nutritional food, save money, happy healthy child = happy healthy parent.

**Community Benefit;** Federal tax monies are returned to the provider's state and invested in the health of the community's children; added revenue is a means of helping to keep child care costs down for employees working in the community, since only regulated providers are eligible to participate in the program, it provides an incentive for unlicensed providers to comply with the communities local child care ordinances.

Working together will continue in building a healthy culture now and for the next generations.

Sincerely,

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The CACFP Facts FRAC; <http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/cacfp-fact-sheet.pdf>

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| **[Proclamation 2017]** |
| [ Here are the most common steps to request a proclamation from the governor or mayor; however, some states and cities may vary regarding proclamation procedures.   1. Begin the process as soon as possible but don’t let dates stop you, as the wheels of government turn slowly, and start by locating the appropriate state or city government website. 2. You may find a tab called "Mayor's Page" or "Governor's Page." Also look for "Ceremonial" or "Forms" on the navigation. 3. If you do not see any of these, try using the site's Search feature with the word "proclamation." 4. Another option is the "Contact Us" link. This area allows you to write a brief message such as: 5. How do I ask the governor to issue a proclamation declaring (date) National CACFP Birthday Celebration?    * A staff person will probably reply and email a form to complete. Email the form back for an official signature.    * If no form is available, use the proclamation provided on the next page Place the proclamation on your official affiliate letterhead. Mail or email to the mayor's or governor's office along with a formal request from your state or district association.    * Follow up with a phone call just to be sure your request arrived. 6. When you have confirmation that the proclamation has been signed, contact local media to suggest a news item, interview or photo with the mayor or governor and affiliate representatives. |

**SAMPLE Proclamation Form**

(State or City) OF

EXECUTIVE OFFICE

##### **PROCLAMATION**

WHEREAS: One of the basic rights of children, as set forth in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by Eleanor Roosevelt in 1948, is their right to basic nutrition. Caring for the children must be our nation’s first priority; and

WHEREAS: Since the inception of the Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) in 1968, it has granted our children the best possible foundation in life and benefited many adults, which is vital to our state’s long term health; and

WHEREAS: The two fundamental goals of the CACFP are that children serviced by this program will be well nourished during their crucial years, while concurrently learning healthy eating behaviors that will last their lifetime; and

WHEREAS: We acknowledge the child and adult care providers, nutrition educators, program specialists and staff, state and federal professionals and parents who contribute to the success of this outstanding program, The Child & Adult Care Food Program; and

WHEREAS: The CACFP will continue its commitment to the benefits of nutritious eating for children and adults. Together, as Americans, we can make a difference in the lives of our children.

NOW, THEREFORE I, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Name), \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_(Title)

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, (City/State)

DO HEREBY PROCLAIM the do hereby proclaim this week of (Date) to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ CHILD & ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM Name of the EVENT (City, County, State Name) and I encourage all citizens to join the campaign and become concerned about child nutrition in the hope of building a healthy culture for today and the next generation.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

to be affixed.

Done at the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_on this the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_day of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

Two thousand and seventeen.

By:

Title:

Attest:

Title:

[](http://www.cacfpforum.com/resources.html)Sources:

National CACFP Week is the time to put your hands together and applaud the work that is being done in child nutrition programs the child care profession throughout the United States.

[USDA FNS CACFP](https://www.fns.usda.gov/cacfp/child-and-adult-care-food-program)

[FRAC](http://frac.org/programs/child-adult-care-food-program)

Reviewed January 1, 2018