Menu Planning

POLICY/APPROACH
SOCFC is committed to providing meals to meet the nutritional needs and feeding requirements of each child, including those with special dietary needs and children with disabilities. The nutrition program serves foods high in nutrients and low in added sugars, salt, and fat. Menus include meals which are age appropriate, consider cultural and ethnic preferences, and broaden children's food experience. Parents and appropriate community agencies are involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating the nutrition program.

Policy Council Approval 2/18/2014
Board Approval 2/20/2014

HEAD START PROGRAM PERFORMANCE STANDARDS:
1304.23(b) (1)(ii)-Age appropriate foods
1304.23(b)(1)(vi)-Foods served must be high in nutrients and low in fat, sugar, and salt
1304.23(b) (4)-Parents and appropriate community agencies must be involved
1304.23(c) (1)-A variety of foods are served

PROCEDURE:
1. Menus are planned taking into account USDA My Plate, the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and CACFP regulations.
2. Menus meet or exceed the recommended serving sizes for the USDA meal pattern. Menus are planned taking into account cultural, ethnic and religious preferences.
3. Menus are planned to include a variety of foods, shapes & sizes which broaden a child’s food experiences.
4. Each child in the center-based program receives meals and snack that provide ½ to 2/3 of the child’s daily nutritional needs.
5. All children in the morning center-based settings who have not received breakfast at the time they arrive at the Head Start program must be offered a nourishing breakfast.
6. Menus will be posted at the center in a visible location for parent availability.
7. Parents will be regularly solicited for recipes and input on menus to be used in Head Start/Early Head Start meals.
8. Food Service staff will speak with families at orientation regarding menu philosophy and volunteering in the kitchen.
Field Trips:

1. Field trips are an important part of children’s educational experiences.
2. Education staff and Food Service staff will plan appropriate field trip menus that meet CACFP guidelines.
3. All potentially hazardous foods must be maintained below 41 degrees or above 140 degrees.

Menu Suggestions:

A menu suggestion envelope will be available at all centers in an area accessible to parents (parent bulletin board, parent room, in/out area).

Parents are asked to complete the "Ideas for Meals" form. Forms are forwarded to the Food Service Department.

Menu ideas will be incorporated into the menu whenever practical and if they meet CACFP regulations.

Kids Choice:

1. Kid's Choice will reflect the Head Start/Early Head Start and USDA nutrition guidelines to ensure that children are taught healthy food habits
2. Kid's Choice menu will provide an opportunity for children to plan a meal.
3. The cook must e-mail the Food Service Manager the menu prior to service.
4. Kid's Choice must meet the meal pattern, food component, requirement for that meal and serve at least the minimum required portion sizes.
5. Kid's Choice must meet the requirements of CACFP.
6. Kid's Choice provides opportunity to include nutrition concepts, math, language and categorization of food into the curriculum.