

## Menu Planning Checklist

Please use the following checklist to review your menus before you submit them. This will help speed the approval process. Menu reviews may require four (4) to six (6) weeks. Please send in your menus before the rest of your renewal packet to allow sufficient time for possible corrections and a follow-up review. For further information, refer to Appendix "C" in the *Regulations Governing Licensure of Child Care Facilities* for the Minimum Standards for Nutritional Care in Child Care Facilities. You may also contact your Mississippi State Department of Health District Nutritionist.

- Use Menu Planning Worksheets (Form # 290).
- Submit two (2) cycles (weeks).
- Complete facility name, county, mailing address, telephone number, hours of operation and the date the menus are submitted, at the top of the menu Planning Worksheet. Also, please include a contact person we may call in case of questions.
- List serving times. (A minimum of 2 ½ hours is required between a snack and a meal. The maximum time between these should not exceed 4 hours. Example, if morning snack is served at 9:00 a.m., then lunch should not be served earlier than 11:30 or later than 1:00.)
- Serving sizes do not have to be included any longer on the menu planning worksheet.
- Include all required components in meals and snacks. (Ham or eggs served at breakfast do **not** take the place of the required cereal or bread, juice or fruit, and milk.)
- Fat free (skim) milk is recommended for all children over the age of two. Fluid milk is required at every meal – breakfast, lunch and supper. (Milk is an option for snacks but is not required.)
- Always list the type of juice served. If juice is used as one of the two components for snacks, it must be 100% juice, not a fruit punch or juice punch. Fresh fruit or canned fruit is preferred over juice, especially for breakfast.
- Make sure two different food groups are represented in the snack. Apple juice and carrot sticks are not acceptable as a snack combination since both foods come from the fruit and vegetable group.
- A vitamin C food is required daily. If juices are used to meet this requirement, they must be from a food naturally rich in this vitamin such as orange juice. (Refer to page 13 of Appendix C)
- A vitamin A food is required every other day (at least three days in one week). (Refer to page 14 of Appendix C).
- Serve water with snacks and meals. (This is in addition to the required milk served at meals)
- Avoid "junk" food. The use of foods high in fat and salt, such as chips, pastries and cookies should be limited to special occasions such as brown bags days, which are allowed once a month. If cookies are sometimes used for snacks, they should be low fat types of peanut butter or oatmeal. Vanilla wafers, animal crackers and graham crackers are also acceptable types to be used only occasionally.
- Avoid foods high in fat, salt and sugar. Processed foods (hot dogs, bologna, etc.) are not recommended. Avoid fried foods.
- Limit foods which can cause choking/asphyxiation and serve only to older children under close supervision. (Refer to page 5 of Appendix C. Raw vegetables shall not be served to children under the age of two (2) years.)
- Do not substitute Jell-O for a serving of fruit.

**The current menu should be posted on the parents' bulletin board and in the kitchen. Indicate any substitutions on the menu and keep the dated menus on file for a minimum of one year. A file of recipes used shall be kept in the facility.**