

Using Cycle Menus to Control Food Costs

Recordkeeping Training

To receive 2 hours credit for this training please do the following:

1. Read through the "Mealtime Memo for Child Care" entitled "Using Cycle Menus to Control Food Costs".
2. Do the following activity with the children:
 - A. Gather the children around your activity table.
 - B. On lined notebook paper, create the following Categories List

Protein (Meat/ Meat Alternate)	Vegetable	Fruit	Grains (Bread/ Bread product)	Dairy (Milk)

C. Talk to the children about the food that you prepare and serve them each day for their meals and snacks. Explain that you need their help to create some menus of their favorite foods. As you look at each different category, ask the children to name some of their favorite foods. You can write them down under the correct category. Keep getting foods from them until you have several different foods in each category. ALTERNATIVE: Have the children cut out pictures of their favorite healthy foods from recent grocery store flyers. Use these pictures to create a poster board list of foods to choose from that looks like the above.

D. Using the favorite food list, explain to the children that you need their help to create the menu. For each meal, talk about which food is required and enlist their help in choosing from the list which food to fill in on the cycle menu in each component.

3. After completing the activity, answer all the Review questions (either on-line or by hand to mail in).

Enjoy using this training!

Training Review for:

USING CYCLE MENUS TO CONTROL FOOD COSTS

Please return this Review to receive credit for this training.

1. Cycle Menus save time because the provider does not need to serve a variety of foods. T F
2. A "Cycle Menu" is a series of menus that are repeated, usually over 4 weeks. T F
3. Cycle Menus can help prevent: (select all that apply)
 - A. Extra trips to the store
 - B. Wasting time
 - C. Good nutrition
 - D. Wasting gas
4. Cycle menus can make it easier to buy items in bulk. T F
5. How can you take advantage of seasonal foods when using Cycle Menus?

6. To promote variety, Cycle Menus should cover at least how many weeks? _____
7. When planning your Cycle Menus, which part of the meal should be scheduled first?
 - A. Vegetables
 - B. Drink
 - C. Main Dish
8. To be sure that all requirements have been met after completing your Cycle Menus, refer to:
 - A. The Internet
 - B. The CACFP Meal Pattern
 - C. Other Providers
9. Basic meal planning guidelines include: (select all that apply)
 - A. A variety of foods.
 - B. Familiar foods as well as new foods for the child.
 - C. Foods that all look the same.
 - D. Foods that are easy to cook.
 - E. Foods that are of different temperatures.
10. What are your observations about the activity done with the children?

Using Cycle Menus to Control Food Costs

Using cycle menus in child care has many advantages. Cycle menus save time and allow menu planners to offer a variety of menu selections. Cycle menus can control food costs in a number of ways.

A cycle menu is a series of menus that is repeated over a specific period of time, such as 4 weeks. The menu is different each day during the cycle. At the end of the cycle, the menu is repeated.

Cycle menus save time and labor costs.

- Cycle menus save time in gathering information, planning menus, developing specifications, and costing.
- Purchasing procedures are standardized and take less time.
- A standard grocery list for a cycle menu helps prevent extra trips to the store, saving you time and gas.
- As menu items are repeated, staff members become more familiar with the recipes and more efficient in producing them.
- The time you save by using cycle menus can be used for nutrition education and training.

Cycle menus can help control food costs.

- It is easier to project the right amount of product to purchase when you have previous production records for menus.
- Cycle menus make it easier to buy regularly used items in bulk.
- Cycle menus can take advantage of seasonal foods.



Cycle menus reduce storage costs.

- Since cycle menus help project the right amount of product to purchase, they help keep stock at appropriate levels.

Cycle menus reduce food waste.

- As menus are prepared repeatedly, it is easier to project how much of each menu item you will need to make.

Mealtime Memo FOR CHILD CARE

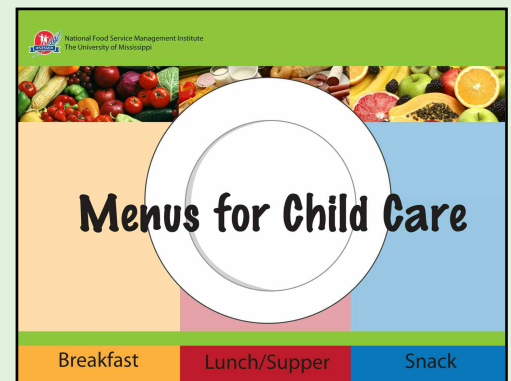
Steps to Planning Cycle Menus

1. Gather menu planning resources, such as recipes and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) Meal Pattern requirements.
2. Decide on the length of the cycle. The cycle menu should be at least 3 weeks to promote variety.
3. Plan the main dishes first.
 - Try to include a different main dish for each day of the cycle.
 - Vary the meat/meat alternate from day to day. For example, serve Vegetable Beef Soup on Monday, Fish Nuggets on Tuesday, and Chicken and Rice on Wednesday.
4. Add foods to go with the main dish. Check the CACFP Meal Pattern requirements to be sure all requirements have been met.
5. Plan breakfast and snack menus.
6. Remember basic meal planning guidelines.
 - Include a variety of foods.
 - Include familiar foods as well as foods that may be new to children.
 - Include different shapes, colors, textures, and temperatures of food.
 - Balance higher-cost and lower-cost foods throughout the week.
 - Use familiar recipes and try some new recipes.
7. Remember that cycle menus can be flexible to allow variations for holidays, seasonal fruits and vegetables, special items, and the use of unexpected leftovers.

***Menus for Child Care* is a new resource available at www.nfsmi.org that provides four sets of four-week cycle menus for child care. These menus can be adapted to meet the needs of your child care.**

When using *Menus for Child Care*, consider the following tips:

1. Identify recipes you have tried in the past. *USDA Recipes for Child Care* are featured on the menus.
2. Choose one of the cycle menus to try first.
3. Consider any changes that may be needed to meet the needs of your child care. For example, think about which fresh fruits and vegetables you may purchase in a given season and make substitutions.
4. As you try the first four-week cycle menu, note any changes that you would make next time you prepare each meal.



Recipe to try

Try this delicious recipe for Corn Chowder.

Corn Chowder

Fresh onions, chopped	⅓ cup
OR	OR
Dehydrated onions	3 Tbsp
Fresh celery, ¼" chopped	½ cup
Margarine or butter	¼ cup 2 Tbsp
Enriched all-purpose flour	¾ cup
Lowfat 1% milk, hot	1 qt 1 cup
Chicken stock, non-MSG	1 qt 1 cup
Fresh potatoes, peeled, ¼" cubes	3 ¼ cup
Canned yellow corn, cream-style	2 ⅔ cups
Salt	2 tsp
Ground black or white pepper	¼ cup



In a heavy pot, sauté onions and celery in margarine or butter until tender, about 5 minutes. Add flour and cook for 1 minute stirring continuously. Slowly add hot milk and chicken stock to flour mixture. Whisk until smooth and thickened. Add potatoes and simmer for 10 minutes. Stir in corn, salt, and pepper. Heat to 165 °F or higher for at least 15 seconds. Hold for hot service at 140 °F or higher. Portion with 4 oz ladle (½ cup).

Number of servings: 25

Serving size: ½ cup (4 oz ladle) provides ¼ cup of vegetable.

¹Based on *USDA Recipes for Child Care*.

Mealtime Memo FOR CHILD CARE

Sources

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