

# EMPOWER



## GETTING THE BIGGEST



## OUT OF MEALTIME! FAMILY STYLE DINING

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# Early Care and Education





# Objectives

- State Empower Standard 6.
- Understand the advantages of family style dining.
- Implement a mealtime that offers learning opportunities, skill development, conversation and growing independence using family style dining.
- Be a Superhero in Action for Family Style Dining!





## Standard 6: *Family Style Meals*

- Serve Meals Family Style and do not use food as reward



Guidebook: pg 30



# Family Style Dining

- Food is placed in serving bowls on the table.
- Children are encouraged to serve themselves independently or with help from an adult.
- Child care givers sit at the table with the children.
- A pleasant mealtime environment is created.

# Who Is Responsible?

- For toddlers and up, whose job is it to...
  - Decide what will be provided? **Provider**
  - Decide when? **Provider**
  - Decide where? **Provider**
  - Decide how much? **Child**
  - Decide whether? **Child**
- For infants, whose job is it to...
  - Decide what? **Provider**
  - Decide everything else? **Child**  
(when, where, how much, whether)



# Family Style Dining: INFANTS

Family Style Dining Begins with Infants





# BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS



# BUILDING MOTOR SKILLS



# What Tools Do You Need?

- Items sized for children make it easier for them
  - Plastic wide lip bowls and platters
  - Appropriately sized measuring cups or short handled hard plastic serving spoons for serving
  - Cups
  - Small pitchers
  - Plates
  - Spoons
  - Plastic tongs
  - Cleanup supplies



# INDEPENDENCE AND SELF REGULATION



# SOCIALIZATION AND MANNERS





# COMMON CHALLENGES

- Picky eater
- Hefty eater
- Spills
- ‘Licking the serving spoon’
- Not enough food
- Serving utensils too big
- Too many kids – not enough staff to sit at each table





# Incorporating Special Needs

- Children with dietary restrictions or allergies should have a **HEALTH ACTION PLAN**.
- Children with developmental delays may need extra assistance.





# Food From Home

- What if you do not provide meals? How can you provide family style meals?
- How do you help families bring healthy food from home?



## CACFP Supports Family Style Dining

- Have all food on the table at the beginning of the meal.
- Have enough food available to meet meal pattern requirements for all children.
  - Try measuring cups to help children serve appropriate portions.
- Children must be offered all foods at the table. Remember, children choose whether and how much.
- An adult should sit with the children to facilitate and model.



# Standard 6: Family Style

**Start at  
Age 1**

- **Participate, sit and interact** with children at mealtime. Let kids learn by serving themselves and place nutritious food options within reach, utilizing child-friendly serving utensils and containers.
- Let the **children choose** what to put on their plates and let the children decide how much to eat.
- Use **encouraging** words and **avoid negative facial expressions, body language or verbal cues** in regards to the food being served.
- **Talk to the children about the food** and encourage them to discuss the food texture, taste, color, shape, size, quantity, number, temperature of food, etc.
- Ensure that **food is not used as a reward or punishment**, which may result in negative and unhealthy eating behaviors in the future.
- Healthy eating handouts (in English and Spanish) will be made available for the **families** at least once per year. (page 98-99)



**BANG!**

**Get Your Biggest Bang:  
Policies**



# Why Policy?

- Policies support and sustain the changes/standards you want in your center.
- Create consistent messaging for children, staff, and parents.
- Guides classroom decisions.
- Prevents problems and provides solutions.



# Creating a Policy

- Sample Policies
  - Guidebook: Standard Overview Tab
  - [www.theempowerpack.org](http://www.theempowerpack.org)





# Share the Policies

- All Staff
- All Families





“The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher [Empowers].”

*-William A. Ward*



# Superhero in Action

**BANG!**



# Resources

- Let's Move Child Care
  - [www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org](http://www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org)
- Nutrition Lessons/Activities
  - Healthy Habits for Life
    - [kidshealth.org/classroom/](http://kidshealth.org/classroom/)
  - Grow it! Try it! Like it!
    - USDA team nutrition website
- Family Style Videos
  - [www.theempowerpack.org](http://www.theempowerpack.org)



# Questions and Discussion

[www.theempowerpack.org](http://www.theempowerpack.org)

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