

Wellness Policy

Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition

Garces Residential Care Services (GRCS STRTP) supports the health and well-being of its youth by promoting good eating habits and physical activity. In accordance with federal law, it is the policy of GRCS STRTP to provide youth with access to healthy foods and beverages; provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity; and require that all meals served by the facility meet or exceed the federal nutritional guidelines issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. A Coordinated Wellness Committee has been formed to maintain and oversee these activities. GRCS STRTP Wellness Policy shall be made available to youth and families by means of program handbooks, parent intake packets, and the GRCS STRTP website.

I. WELLNESS COMMITTEE

The GRCS STRTP will engage administrators, department supervisors, food service professionals, health professionals, the purchasing staff, and youth in developing, implementing, monitoring and reviewing the GRCS STRTP Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition. GRCS STRTP staff shall meet annually to review nutrition and physical activity policies and to develop an action plan for the coming year as necessary. The staff shall meet as needed during the year to discuss implementation activities and address barriers and challenges.

II. NUTRITION EDUCATION

Nutrition education will be provided monthly and will include lessons from the Choose My Plate 10 Tips Nutrition Education Series provided by the USDA, along with other supportive materials. Day Reporting program participants also receive hands-on training regarding food preparation, safety, proper sanitation, menu planning, portion control, reading recipes, reading labels, plating, etc. during on-site cooking groups.

All kitchen personnel will be certified in the Servsafe program.

GOALS:

- Promote whole grains, 1%/nonfat dairy, and increase quantity and variety of fruits and vegetables.
- Make nutrition education interactive and teach youth skills to adopt healthy eating behaviors.
- Involve all staff as role models for youth. Staff members will join the youth at the table for meals and will consume the same healthy food and drink.
- Kitchen personnel will participate in a minimum of 1 in-service training per quarter.

III. NUTRITION PROMOTION

GRCS STRTP aims to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by residents. The facility will engage in nutrition promotion that:

GOALS:

- Promote fruits, vegetables, whole grain products, low-fat and fat-free dairy products, healthy food preparation methods, and health- enhancing nutrition practices.
- Emphasize caloric balance between food intake and energy expenditure (physical activity/ exercise).
- Include training for staff.

IV. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

GRCS STRTP supports the health and well-being of youth by promoting physical activity. All youth engage in scheduled recreational activities daily. In addition, GRCS STRTP youth is provided opportunities to participate in recreational activities within the community (i.e., local parks, baseball fields, swimming pool, bowling alley, trampoline park etc.).

Sufficient space is provided for the youth at GRCS STRTP to engage in various types of physical activities.

GOALS:

- Youth will be provided opportunities to develop knowledge and skills for specific physical activities. (i.e., sports)
- Youth will be educated on the short and long-term benefits of a physically active lifestyle.
- Encourage teamwork among staff to develop ways to integrate physical activity into daily routines of youth.
- Limit TV and downtime.
- GRCS prohibits the use of physical activity as punishment.

VI. MEAL CONTENT

1. Meals served through the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs will:
 - a. Be appealing and appetizing to children;
 - b. Meet, at a minimum, the nutrition requirements established by the USDA for federally funded programs;
 - c. Contain 0% trans fats;

- d. Less than 10% of total calories from saturated fats;
 - e. Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables, with a minimum of ½ cup fruit for breakfast and 1 cup both fruit and vegetable for lunch;
 - f. Include whole grains for at least half of all grains served;
 - g. Offer low-fat and non-fat milk;
 - h. Offer only 100% fruit juices.
 - i. Make potable (drinking) water readily available at all mealtimes.
2. Menus will be reviewed and approved by a licensed dietician.
 3. Special dietary needs of students will be considered when planning meals, according to the document *Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs in the School Nutrition Programs*.
 4. Menu items may be substituted as needed for the safety and security of individual residents while on suicide watch or other limited circumstances. All substitutions will be made while maintaining compliance with USDA standards.
 5. The food services department will share information about the nutritional content of meals with students, program participants, and parents/guardians. The information will be available in resident handbooks and parent intake packets.

GOALS:

- All cooked foods will be baked or steamed.
- Proper procurement procedures and preparation methods will be used to decrease excess fat, calorie and sodium levels in food.
- Introduce whole grain pastas to youth and staff.
- Provide opportunities for taste testing of new healthier foods being introduced on the menu.
- Menus will include larger variety of vegetables, particularly in the categories of beans/peas and red/orange.
- Transition in, over a two year period, healthier food and beverage choices in the vending machines that parents can purchase snacks for their child on visitation days.

VII. MEALTIME SCHEDULE AND LOCATION

1. Adequate time will be provided for youth to eat meals and snacks. Meals will be served as follows:

- Breakfast 7-9 am
- Lunch 11-1 am
- Afternoon Snack 2-3 pm
- Dinner 5-7 pm
- Evening Snack 7-8 pm

2. Meals will be served in a clean, safe and appropriate setting (i.e. dining room, living room, residential bedroom, or outside areas).

3. Appropriate supervision is provided in the dining area.

4. Meals and snacks will not be used as reward for good behavior or withheld for any reason.

5. Convenient access to hand-washing and sanitizing stations are available.

VIII. STAFF WELLNESS

GRCS STRTP supports the health and well-being of staff by promoting physical activity. Staff members are encouraged to participate in daily recreational activities with youth. Staff members are also provided one well-balanced meal, at no cost, during each shift.

GOALS:

- Increase staff involvement during youth recreational periods.
- Schedule more physical team building/stress relieving activities for staff.

IX. EVALUATION

The staff at GRCS STRTP will meet annually, at minimum, or more often as needed to evaluate the implementation and impact of the Wellness Policy on Physical Activity and Nutrition. Goal attainment will be measured, using a tool designed by the GRCS STRTP, and

goals will be revised and updated or newly created. Policy language will be assessed each year and revised as needed.

GRCS STRTP food service manager is responsible for monitoring daily implementation of the Wellness Policy within the facility. Staff reports directly to the food service manager.

GOALS:

- Meet in the third quarter of each year.
- Review menus, production records, temperature charts, special diet documentation, and substitution documentation monthly.
- Observe meal preparation and serving at a minimum of once quarterly.
- Confirm staff and residents are receiving nutrition education as prescribed.

Wellness Committee – policy updated, reviewed and approved: March 6, 2020

Executive Director: Carlos Garces Date: 3/6/2020

Food Service Manager: Deziree Davison Date: 3/6/2020

Food Service Staff: Star Smith Date: 3/6/2020

Facility Manager: Shaun Fernandez Date: 3/6/2020

Facility Manager: Ronnie Andrade Date: 3/6/2020

Addendum/ Changes to Wellness Policy

Changes to the GRCS STRTP Wellness Policy were made on March 6, 2020.

Initials: DD

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 - (2) fax: 202-690-7442; or
 - (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov
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