

“ Research proves that good nutrition in young children not only contributes to their physical growth, but to their intellectual and emotional development as well. Children who participate in the CACFP have the opportunity to develop positive eating habits that will lead to a lifetime of good eating habits and good health. ”

## NARRATIVE HISTORY OF THE CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

The Children's Aid Society of New York provided this country's first school food service program in 1853. By 1900, other cities were making significant efforts to initiate some type of school food service program. By 1913 there were 30 cities with school food service programs, most of them operated by private charities. During the Depression years of the 1930's, the federal government began to provide financial aid to assist with school food service programs.

In 1946, the 79th Congress passed the National School Lunch Act and established the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). The Act assisted states in providing an adequate supply of food and assisted other facilities in establishing, maintaining, operating and expanding non-profit school lunch programs. The government also established several policies regarding implementation of the NSLP:

- Free or reduced-price lunches would be served to children unable to pay full price.
- All meals for all students would be subsidized.
- The program would be non-profit.
- Lunches must meet nutritional requirements.
- The program should use donated foods as much as possible.

In 1962, the 89th Congress passed the Child Nutrition Act.

The history of government support for child care feeding programs began in 1965 as part of a three-year pilot program known as "Special Food Service Program of Children." That was the forerunner of the Child & Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). The pilot program provided assistance to non-residential child care centers serving children from low-income areas or from areas with significant numbers of working mothers. In 1968, Congress instituted the Child Care Food Program (CCFP) as part of the Child Nutrition Program. This was to improve nutritional status and prevent disease in children attending day care centers, recreational centers and settlement homes in low-income areas of the U.S., where large numbers of working mothers lived. Meals were required to meet minimum nutrition standards, and were to be served at no cost or reduced cost to children unable to pay full price.

In October of 1975, new child nutrition legislation, Public Law 94-105, expanded the program to include family day care homes and all private or public non-profit day care facilities. The law extended eligibility to all non-profit day care centers (those serving non-needy as well as needy areas). It also opened participation to family and

group day care homes, allowing them to join under the sponsorship of a qualifying "institution" or organization.

In November of 1978, the CCFP became permanent. Public Law 94-627 modified the program in these major areas:

- Permanent authorization was given to the program.
- Cash reimbursement changed from an income to a reimbursement.
- Categorized rate for day care homes to a flat rate or reimbursement for each child in family day care homes.
- Reimbursement for all meals served in the homes would be at one rate, regardless of the family income of the participants.
- USDA would pay sponsoring agency administrative expenses.
- Sponsoring agency monitoring and supervisory assistance was expanded.

The Rules and Regulations implementing this law went into effect May 1, 1980. To carry out the CCFP, agreements were made between state agencies and the USDA Food and Nutrition Service for reimbursement to qualified contractors of child care facilities, outside-school-hours centers and family day care homes, for nutritious meals and supplements to children.

In 1989, the Program expanded to allow adults in adult day care centers to participate. The name changed to the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) to reflect the change.

In 1996, a welfare reform legislation was enacted that created significant changes to the CACFP. Resulting in a two tier system that went into effect in 1997.

The CACFP has grown throughout the years. Nationwide approximately 3.2 million children are served each working day in family day care homes and thousands more participate in child care centers and Head Start Programs.

The goals of the Child and Adult Care Food Program are to ensure that well-balanced, nutritious meals are served to children and to help children learn to eat a wide variety of foods as part of a balanced diet.

### **The Program Serves**

- Children under the age of 13.
- Migrant workers' children, age 15 and under.
- Physically or mentally disabled persons receiving care in a family day care home or child care center where most participants are 18 years old or younger.
- Adults who are functionally impaired or over the age of 60, and unable to care for themselves.

### **Day Care Home Participation**

- Family day care homes must follow the state licensing requirements.
- Family day care homes must participate through a sponsoring organization.

### **Sponsoring Organizations**

Sponsors must be either private or public non-profit agencies or state and local government, and have the staff and expertise necessary to provide nutrition and services to the family day care home community.

The goals of the Child and Adult Care Food Program are to ensure that well-balanced, nutritious meals are served to children and to help children learn to eat a wide variety of foods as part of a balanced diet.

