

Childcare**alive!**



NUTRITION & ACTIVE PLAY CURRICULUM



Childcarealive!

Shaping the First Five Nutrition and Active Play Curriculum

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This curriculum was created in partnership with:

Dakota Medical Foundation and Child Care Aware (a division of Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnership).

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The information in the ChildcareAlive! Curriculum and all supplemental materials (including website at www.childcarealive.org) was developed with the safety of young children in mind as it relates to eating, cooking activities, and physical activity. The content of this curriculum should be read in its entirety by the adult supervising the young children before enjoying the activities.

Whether leading nutrition education, cooking, or active play, caregivers must actively supervise children at all times. Be especially careful for choking hazards during cooking activities. Avoid foods that are well-known choking hazards and cut foods into pieces small enough to minimize risk. Do not use physical activity equipment that poses a risk to young children, or in a way that is not intended. Provide safe play areas so children may focus on their tasks without their surroundings becoming a risk to their safety.

While thorough consideration has been given to safety, we cannot anticipate how the information we present will be used, and therefore we disclaim liability for its improper or negligent use.

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	7
What is ChildcareAlive?	
What is the ChildcareAlive! Curriculum?	
How to Use This Curriculum	
Why Do We Need This Curriculum?	
Selected Best Practices	
Nutrition Education Overview.....	13
Teaching the Basics	
Talking about Food	
Cooking with Children	
Taste Testing in Child Care Settings	
Nutrition Activities.....	17
Active Play Overview.....	53
Active Play with a Purpose	
Fundamental Movement Skills	
Gross Motor Milestones	
Structured vs. Unstructured Active Play	
Setting up your Environment	
Active Play Lessons.....	59
Quick Active Play Ideas.....	101
Appendix.....	107



What is ChildcareAlive?

Introduction

ChildcareAlive! is a community initiative that seeks to partner with child care providers and parents in order to encourage healthy eating and active play in early care and education settings.

ChildcareAlive! began in 2009 as a result of a partnership with Child Care Aware® of North Dakota/Minnesota (formerly Child Care Resource and Referral) and Dakota Medical Foundation (DMF). Originally called GoFar Child Care, the program has been a fundamental aspect of DMF's strategy to create and support the healthiest environments in which to raise children. GoFar Child Care eventually became ChildcareAlive!, and has evolved to include numerous community partners and resources to support child care providers, educators, and parents.



2009-2012



ChildcareAlive!

2012-2013



Childcare
alive!

2013-present

In 2013, the ChildcareAlive! program administered by Child Care Aware® of Minnesota/North Dakota changed to include on-site activity demonstrations to promote nutrition and physical activity best practices. These on-site demonstrations were based on 12 nutrition and physical activity lesson plans, which are now the basis for this curriculum. Since 2013, ChildcareAlive! has impacted over 150 early care and education programs and over 3,000 children. Most of these programs reported significant benefits to their program, children, and families.

Now ChildcareAlive! has evolved again to include a curriculum, training, and an interactive website, but the mission remains the same.

ChildcareAlive! exists to positively influence eating and physical activity habits during the first five years of a child's life by partnering with child care providers and parents.

What is the ChildcareAlive! Curriculum?

Young children are active (kinesthetic) learners, using hands-on experiences to learn about their world. The activities in the ChildcareAlive! curriculum seek to capitalize on the unique learning style of young children.

You will find the following within this curriculum:

- Select best practices for nutrition, breastfeeding support, and physical activity
- Basic information for leading nutrition education and active play
- Nutrition education and physical activity lesson plans

Each lesson plan will include:

- Goal/overview for each activity
- Required and suggested materials
- Activity Plan, including suggested wording (written in italicized font)
- “Quick Tips” for leading activity
- “Did You Know?” Facts
- Ways to extend the lessons and activities
- Suggestions for engaging parents and families, including family newsletters

How to use the ChildcareAlive! Curriculum

Early care and education providers may choose to implement this curriculum in a variety of ways. The intent is for this curriculum to be a practical resource that is implemented on a regular basis, whether that is leading one activity per month, or one activity per week.

The curriculum can also be used to interact with parents and include them in these activities. Providers may choose to send the included family newsletters home with parents, invite them to participate in one of the activities, or share favorite games and recipes with them.

The ChildcareAlive! curriculum is intended for **ALL** child care providers, both those who care for children in homes and in centers. Suggestions for adjusting activities for smaller or larger groups and play spaces are included for some activities.

Website

For more information, activity videos, and a downloadable version of this curriculum, please visit www.childcarealive.org.

Why do we need the ChildcareAlive! Curriculum?

Most eating and physical activity habits are formed during the first five years of life. The people, environment, and experiences that surround children play a significant role in shaping these habits. Many children between the ages of 0-5 years spend most of their time in child care programs, making this an ideal environment to influence the formation of eating and activity habits. This curriculum is intended to be a tool for child care professionals to use as they work to shape young children's preferences for healthy foods and active play.

In addition, using this curriculum will provide opportunities to meet some standards set by regional and national organizations. For example, implementing active play strategies will help meet the expectations in the Physical and Movement Development domains from both the Early Childhood Indicators of Progress (ECIPs; Minnesota) and the North Dakota Early Learning Guidelines. Incorporating nutrition education into your curriculum also aligns with part of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Accreditation of Early Learning Program Standards. Refer to **Appendices D, E, and F (pages 112-115)** for specific ways in which the ChildcareAlive! curriculum aligns with these standards and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale (ECERS).

NAEYC Standard 2.K: Curriculum Content Area for Cognitive Development: Health and Safety

2.K.01: Children are provided varied opportunities and materials that encourage good health practices such as serving and feeding themselves, rest, good nutrition, washing fruits and vegetables before consumption, exercise, hand washing, and tooth brushing. (Opportunities for children to wash fruits and vegetables can take place during gardening, cooking or tasting projects.)

2.K.02: Children are provided varied opportunities and materials to help them learn about nutrition, including identifying sources of food and recognizing, preparing, eating, and valuing healthy foods.

For more info about NAEYC and the Early Learning Program Standards, visit
www.naeyc.org/academy/standardsandcriteria



Selected Best Practices

The following best practices represent current science, public health research, and national recommendations for children in early care and education settings. **Best practices often exceed state requirements and/or city ordinances.** These practices are intended to serve as a guide to help set goals and create policies that encourage healthy environments.

These are *selected* best practices that are the focus of the ChildcareAlive! curriculum, but do not represent *every* best practice. For more information, please visit:

Go NAP SACC: www.gonapsacc.org, **Let's Move! Child Care:** www.healthykidshealthyfuture.org, or **Caring For Our Children:** www.cfoc.nrckids.org.

Nutrition Best Practices

- Drinking water is visible and freely available indoors and outdoors.
- 100% fruit juice is limited to no more than 4-6 oz/day or less for children >1 year old.
- Sugary drinks, such as fruit drinks, sports drinks, sweet tea, and soda, are never or rarely offered.
- Children 2 years and older are served only 1% or non-fat milk (unless otherwise directed by child's health care provider).
- A fruit (not including 100% juice) and/or a vegetable (not including French fries, tater tots, or hash browns) is served at every meal and snack.
- Whole grain-rich foods are offered at least 2 times per day, including whole wheat bread, oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, or whole wheat tortillas.
- Fried/pre-fried potatoes are offered less than once per week.
- Fried/pre-fried meats are offered less than once per week.
- Planned nutrition education is incorporated in classroom routines 1 time per week or more. (Nutrition education can include circle time lessons, cooking or gardening.)
- All meals to preschoolers are served family style so that children are encouraged to serve themselves (with adult help as needed).
- A written nutrition policy is included in parent handbooks, staff manuals, or other documents, and includes a variety of nutrition best practices, including:
 - Quality of foods and beverages provided
 - Healthy mealtime environments
 - Providers/teachers encourage and model healthy eating
 - Food is not offered to calm children or to encourage appropriate behaviors
 - Planned and/or informal nutrition education is delivered to children
 - Provider/teachers regularly receive professional development on child nutrition
 - Education is provided to families on child nutrition

Pre-Fried=

Pre-Fried potatoes and meats include items that are sold frozen and then cooked in an oven or microwave. These foods include frozen French fries, tater tots, hash browns, chicken nuggets, fish sticks, corn dogs, and breaded chicken patties.

Physical Activity Best Practices

- Short supervised periods of tummy time are provided for non-crawling infants several times each day.
- Preschoolers are provided with 120 minutes or more of active play time every day, including both indoor AND outdoor play.
- Toddlers are provided with 60-90 minutes or more of active play time every day, including both indoors and outdoors.
- At least 45-60 minutes per day of adult-led physical activity is offered (examples including dancing, music and movement, and physically active games).
- Total screen time (including TV, DVD/movie viewing, computer use) is limited to no more than 30 minutes per week for preschoolers.
- A written active play policy is included in parent handbooks, staff manuals, or other documents, and includes a variety of active play best practices, including:
 - Amount of time provided each day for physical activity
 - Amount of outdoor play time provided each day
 - Limiting long periods of seated time for children
 - Shoes and clothes that allow children to play outdoors in all seasons
 - Provider/Teacher practices that encourage physical activity (participates, leads, plans into lessons or transitions, etc.)
 - Not intentionally withholding physical activity for long periods of time (more than 5 minutes) to manage challenging behaviors
 - Professional development on children's physical activity
 - Amount of planned and informal physical activity education provided
 - Amount of screen time allowed
 - Type of programming allowed during screen time use (if applicable)

Active Play Time =
Any movement of the body that increases heart rate and breathing above what it would be if a child was sitting or resting. Examples include walking, running, crawling, climbing, jumping, and dancing.





Breastfeeding Support Best Practices

Although older toddlers and preschoolers are the primary focus of this curriculum, ChildcareAlive! recognizes that supporting breastfeeding mothers is one of the best ways child care providers can promote a healthy start for children.

- Breastfeeding mothers are provided access to a room for breastfeeding or pumping, other than a bathroom, with appropriate seating and privacy.
- A written breastfeeding support policy is included in parent handbooks, staff manuals, or other documents, including:
 - Providing space for mothers to breastfeed or express breast milk
 - Providing refrigerator and/or freezer space to store expressed breast milk
 - Professional development on breastfeeding
 - Providing educational materials for families on breastfeeding
 - Breastfeeding support for employees (if applicable; includes allowing teachers/staff to breastfeed or express breast milk on their breaks.)