

# Southern California Family Child Care Home Provider Survey Findings



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## Southern California Family Child Care Survey

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In 2015 CFPA received support from Kaiser Permanente Southern California to survey family child care home providers in Kern, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Bernardino and Riverside counties in regards to nutrition and current food service practices. These survey results provided a snap shot of the current state of nutrition practices in many family child care homes.

From July to September 2015, CFPA promoted the online survey through the county Resource & Referral Agencies. The survey was available in English and Spanish. The Resource & Referral Agencies sent out 4,154 surveys to providers; CFPA received 268 complete responses (16% response rate). Riverside was the only county unable to participate due to staffing and capacity issues. Respondents operate a mix of small (57%) and large (43%) licensed family child care homes.<sup>1</sup> The majority of respondents have a good deal of experience operating family child care; 69% of respondents have 7 or more years of experience.

Sixty percent of respondents participate in the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Almost 70% report that they or someone on staff attends training on nutrition (not including food safety) at least once per year and most (67%) also report providing nutrition education to children through curriculum or activities. An encouraging percentage (64%) state that their family child care home has a written policy on nutrition related to food and beverages.



Only 50% report being very familiar with the recommendations in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA), though 90% said they follow the DGA when serving meals and snacks to children. From this finding, it seems that most providers are motivated to serve healthy foods to children. However, the 40% of providers who are not participating in CACFP may lack sufficient guidance on what types of food to serve and recommended meal patterns.

Family child care providers have control over the food served in their care -- 88% report that menus are planned by the licensee themselves and 93% cook the meals in their family child care home. Procurement of foods for family child care varied with most providers shopping weekly at local wholesale stores (47%) and national retail grocery stores (41%). Seven percent rely on small grocers or convenience stores, which may limit the types of healthy foods available.

Most providers (80%) express a great deal of confidence in their ability to serve healthy meals and snacks in their respective family child care homes. Eighty-seven percent report reading nutrition labels when buying food and 76% report that they have cost-effective strategies for serving nutritious options to the children in their care.

County specific highlights can be found in subsequent pages. For more information on CFPA's early childhood nutrition work visit: [www.cfpa.net](http://www.cfpa.net)

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<sup>1</sup> A licensed Small Family Child Care Home may provide care for either (1) Four infants, or six children, no more than three of whom may be infants; or (2) Six children, or up to eight children when one child is at least six years of age and one child is attending kindergarten or elementary school and no more than two infants are in care. A licensed Large Family Child Care Home must include an assistant provider in the home and may provide care for either (1) Twelve children, no more than four of whom may be infants; or (2) Up to fourteen children when one child is at least six years of age and one child is attending kindergarten or elementary school, and no more than three infants are in care.

# Southern California Family Child Care Survey: All Counties

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## Family Child Care Home Characteristics

- 57% of providers surveyed were small licensed Family Child Care Homes (FCCH's).
- 69% of providers surveyed had been providing child care for more than 7 years.
- 70% of providers said they participate in the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

## Family Child Care Home Nutrition Environments

- 67% of providers reported that they and/or their staff attend nutrition trainings at least one time per year.
- 23% of providers reported that nutrition education was not provided to parents with children in care; 66% stated that nutrition education was provided at least one time per year
- 80% of providers who completed the survey reported nutrition education was provided to children through curriculum or other planned activities.
- 64% of FCCH's surveyed reported they have some form of written nutrition policy related to food and beverages.
- Half of FCCH's surveyed stated they were very familiar with the recommendations in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. However, 90% stated they follow the DGA when serving meals and snacks to children in care.



## Meal Pattern and Nutrition Practices

- When asked if there are any other meal patterns that FCCH's used to guide the types of meals and snacks served to children, CACFP came in first with (53%), followed by MyPlate (32%), and caring for our Children (10%). Other meal patterns used included Nemours (4%) and Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) Best Practices (2%)
- 74% of providers do not charge for meals served to children in care.
- Nearly half of all providers reported they do their food shopping at whole sale stores (47%) or national retail grocery stores (41%)
- Nearly 70% of providers said they spend over \$250 dollars on average a month to prepare meals for the children in their care.

## Meals Served to Children in Care

- 50% of all those surveyed said they provided the following meals to children in care: breakfast (97%); morning snacks (88%); lunch (98%); afternoon snack (98%); dinner supper (76%); and breast milk or formula (82%)
- 90% of FCCH's surveyed provide Fresh or Frozen Fruits to children 2 or more times per day; 72% provide fresh or frozen vegetables 2 or more times per day.
- 27% of FCCH's reported that fried foods are served to children in care at least 1 time per week.
- 30% of FCCH's reported they do not serve any type of 100% juice to children in their care; 94% of them reported that they provide water two or more times per day to children in care.

## Family Child Care Home Nutrition Capacity

- 80% of FCCH's reported they strongly agree that they are able to serve healthy meals and snacks to children in their care.
- 84% of FCCH's reported they read nutrition labels when buying food to serve to the children in their care.
- 91% of FCCH's surveyed reported that it is not difficult for them to prepare meals that meet nutrition guidelines (67% strongly agree; 24% agree)

# Southern California Family Child Care Survey: Kern County

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## Family Child Care Home Characteristics

- 51% of providers surveyed were small licensed Family Child Care Homes (FCCH's).
- 64% of providers surveyed had been providing child care for more than 7 years.
- 71% of providers said they participate in the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

## Family Child Care Home Nutrition Environments

- 69% of providers reported that they and/or their staff attend nutrition trainings at least one time per year.
- 31% of providers reported that nutrition education was not provided to parents with children in care; 57% stated that nutrition education was provided at least one time per year
- 85% of providers who completed the survey reported nutrition education was provided to children through curriculum or other planned activities.
- 64% of FCCH's surveyed reported they have some form of written nutrition policy related to food and beverages.
- 51% of FCCH's surveyed stated they were very familiar with the recommendations in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. However, 87% stated they follow the DGA when serving meals and snacks to children in care.



## Meal Pattern and Nutrition Practices

- When asked if there are any other meal patterns that FCCH's used to guide the types of meals and snacks served to children, CACFP came in first with (53%), followed by MyPlate (24%) and Caring for Our Children (8%). Other meal patterns used included Nemours (7%)
- 80% of providers do not charge for meals served to children in care.
- Nearly half of all providers reported they do their food shopping at whole sale stores (53%) or national retail grocery stores (38%)
- 78% of providers said they spend over \$250 dollars on average a month to prepare meals for the children in their care.

## Meals Served to Children in Care

- Providers surveyed said they provided the following meals to children in care: breakfast (100%); morning snacks (93%); lunch (100%); afternoon snack (97%); dinner supper (84%); and breast milk or formula (63%)
- 84% of FCCH's surveyed provide Fresh or Frozen Fruits to children 2 or more times per day; 76% provide fresh or frozen vegetables 2 or more times per day.
- 35% of FCCH's reported that fried foods are served to children in care at least 1 time per week.
- 16% of FCCH's reported they do not serve any type of 100% juice to children in their care; 93% of them reported that they provide water two or more times per day to children in care.

## Family Child Care Home Nutrition Capacity

- 67% of FCCH's reported they strongly agree that they are able to serve healthy meals and snacks to children in their care.
- 78% of FCCH's reported they read nutrition labels when buying food to serve to the children in their care.
- 86% of FCCH's surveyed reported that it is not difficult for them to prepare meals that meet nutrition guidelines (53% strongly agree; 33% agree)

# Southern California Family Child Care Survey: Los Angeles County

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## Family Child Care Home Characteristics

- 30% of providers surveyed were small licensed Family Child Care Homes (FCCH's).
- 82% of providers surveyed had been providing child care for more than 7 years.
- 67% of providers said they participate in the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

## Family Child Care Home Nutrition Environments

- 84% of providers reported that they and/or their staff attend nutrition trainings at least one time per year.
- 11% of providers reported that nutrition education was not provided to parents with children in care; 66% stated that nutrition education was provided at least one time per year
- 84% of providers who completed the survey reported nutrition education was provided to children through curriculum or other planned activities.
- 60% of FCCH's surveyed reported they have some form of written nutrition policy related to food and beverages.
- 48% of FCCH's surveyed stated they were very familiar with the recommendations in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. However, 91% stated they follow the DGA when serving meals and snacks to children in care.



## Meal Pattern and Nutrition Practices

- When asked if there are any other meal patterns that FCCH's used to guide the types of meals and snacks served to children, CACFP came in first with (50%), followed by MyPlate (24%), and Caring for Our Children (18%). Other meal patterns used included Nemours (2%) and Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) Best Practices (3%)
- 70% of providers do not charge for meals served to children in care.
- Nearly half of all providers reported they do their food shopping at whole sale stores (46%) or national retail grocery stores (46%)
- 80% of providers said they spend over \$250 dollars on average a month to prepare meals for the children in their care.

## Meals Served to Children in Care

- Providers surveyed said they provided the following meals to children in care: breakfast (95%); morning snacks (88%); lunch (95%); afternoon snack (100%); dinner supper (77%); and breast milk or formula (63%)
- 85% of FCCH's surveyed provide Fresh or Frozen Fruits to children 2 or more times per day; 65% provide fresh or frozen vegetables 2 or more times per day.
- 15% of FCCH's reported that fried foods are served to children in care at least 1 time per week.
- 18% of FCCH's reported they do not serve any type of 100% juice to children in their care; 95% of them reported that they provide water two or more times per day to children in care.

## Family Child Care Home Nutrition Capacity

- 76% of FCCH's reported they strongly agree that they are able to serve healthy meals and snacks to children in their care.
- 87% of FCCH's reported they read nutrition labels when buying food to serve to the children in their care.
- 94% of FCCH's surveyed reported that it is not difficult for them to prepare meals that meet nutrition guidelines (67% strongly agree; 27% agree)

# Southern California Family Child Care Survey: San Bernardino County

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## Family Child Care Home Characteristics

- 71% of providers surveyed were small licensed Family Child Care Homes (FCCH's).
- 63% of providers surveyed had been providing child care for more than 7 years.
- 76% of providers said they participate in the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

## Family Child Care Home Nutrition Environments

- 62% of providers reported that they and/or their staff attend nutrition trainings at least one time per year.
- 24% of providers reported that nutrition education was not provided to parents with children in care; 62% stated that nutrition education was provided at least one time per year
- 83% of providers who completed the survey reported nutrition education was provided to children through curriculum or other planned activities.
- 57% of FCCH's surveyed reported they have some form of written nutrition policy related to food and beverages.
- 43% of FCCH's surveyed stated they were very familiar with the recommendations in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. However, 88% stated they follow the DGA when serving meals and snacks to children in care.



## Meal Pattern and Nutrition Practices

- When asked if there are any other meal patterns that FCCH's used to guide the types of meals and snacks served to children, CACFP came in first with (55%), followed by MyPlate (31%), and Caring for Our Children (7%). Other meal patterns used included Nemours (2%) and Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) Best Practices (4%)
- 76% of providers do not charge for meals served to children in care.
- Nearly half of all providers reported they do their food shopping at whole sale stores (43%) or national retail grocery stores (48%)
- 71% of providers said they spend over \$250 dollars on average a month to prepare meals for the children in their care.

## Meals Served to Children in Care

- Providers surveyed said they provided the following meals to children in care: breakfast (95%); morning snacks (78%); lunch (100%); afternoon snack (98%); dinner supper (74%); and breast milk or formula (87%)
- 98% of FCCH's surveyed provide Fresh or Frozen Fruits to children 2 or more times per day; 74% provide fresh or frozen vegetables 2 or more times per day.
- 52% of FCCH's reported that fried foods are served to children in care at least 1 time per week.
- 10% of FCCH's reported they do not serve any type of 100% juice to children in their care; 95% of them reported that they provide water two or more times per day to children in care.

## Family Child Care Home Nutrition Capacity

- 81% of FCCH's reported they strongly agree that they are able to serve healthy meals and snacks to children in their care.
- 86% of FCCH's reported they read nutrition labels when buying food to serve to the children in their care.
- 88% of FCCH's surveyed reported that it is not difficult for them to prepare meals that meet nutrition guidelines (67% strongly agree; 21% agree)

# Southern California Family Child Care Survey: San Diego County

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## Family Child Care Home Characteristics

- 64% of providers surveyed were small licensed Family Child Care Homes (FCCH's).
- 68% of providers surveyed had been providing child care for more than 7 years.
- 69% of providers said they participate in the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

## Family Child Care Home Nutrition Environments

- 65% of providers reported that they and/or their staff attend nutrition trainings at least one time per year.
- 29% of providers reported that nutrition education was not provided to parents with children in care; 59% stated that nutrition education was provided at least one time per year
- 81% of providers who completed the survey reported nutrition education was provided to children through curriculum or other planned activities.
- 65% of FCCH's surveyed reported they have some form of written nutrition policy related to food and beverages.
- 55% of FCCH's surveyed stated they were very familiar with the recommendations in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. However, 91% stated they follow the DGA when serving meals and snacks to children in care.



## Meal Pattern and Nutrition Practices

- When asked if there are any other meal patterns that FCCH's used to guide the types of meals and snacks served to children, CACFP came in first with (55%), followed by Caring for Our Children (31%) and MyPlate (24%). Other meal patterns used included Nemours (7%) and Nutrition and Physical Activity Self-Assessment for Child Care (NAP SACC) Best Practices (1%)
- 72% of providers do not charge for meals served to children in care.
- Nearly half of all providers reported they do their food shopping at whole sale stores (48%) or national retail grocery stores (37%)
- 77% of providers said they spend over \$250 dollars on average a month to prepare meals for the children in their care.

## Meals Served to Children in Care

- Providers surveyed said they provided the following meals to children in care: breakfast (97%); morning snacks (90%); lunch (97%); afternoon snack (99%); dinner supper (70%); and breast milk or formula (86%)
- 91% of FCCH's surveyed provide Fresh or Frozen Fruits to children 2 or more times per day; 73% provide fresh or frozen vegetables 2 or more times per day.
- 52% of FCCH's reported that fried foods are served to children in care at least 1 time per week.
- 30% of FCCH's reported they do not serve any type of 100% juice to children in their care; 95% of them reported that they provide water two or more times per day to children in care.

## Family Child Care Home Nutrition Capacity

- 86% of FCCH's reported they strongly agree that they are able to serve healthy meals and snacks to children in their care.
- 88% of FCCH's reported they read nutrition labels when buying food to serve to the children in their care.
- 94% of FCCH's surveyed reported that it is not difficult for them to prepare meals that meet nutrition guidelines (73% strongly agree; 21% agree).