

# Benefits of the Child and Adult Care Food Program

**The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) can help your afterschool centers and the families you serve.**

Afterschool care centers provide a much needed service to their communities. They give children a safe place to go after school and nutritious food that gives them the energy they need to concentrate on homework and join their friends in physical, educational, and social activities. The Food and Nutrition Services (FNS) acknowledges the dedication and commitment of sponsors and centers ensuring that the meals claimed for reimbursement meet the CACFP requirements, and that meal time is pleasant, nutritious, and a sociable experience for the children in their care. At-Risk Afterschool Care Centers and Outside School Hours Care Centers serve an important role in helping children develop good eating and physical activity habits.

The CACFP plays a vital role in improving the quality of organized afterschool programs, making it more affordable for the organization. Benefits include:

- Centers may be approved to claim up to one meal and one snack per participant in attendance each day.
- Training and technical assistance is available on nutrition, foodservice operations, program management, nutrition education, and recordkeeping.
- Improved health and well-being of children through age 18 by providing nutritious, well-balanced meals.
- Development of good eating habits in children that will last through their lifetime.

## **Key points to remember about the CACFP:**

- The primary goal is to provide nutritious meals and snacks.
- The CACFP is a supplementary program.
- The CACFP is a federally funded program through the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), and is administered by the Department of Health and Senior Services-Community Food and Nutrition Assistance (DHSS-CFNA).
- The CACFP is regulated by Congress and the USDA.
- The DHSS-CFNA will conduct CACFP monitoring reviews at all participating independent centers and sponsoring organizations pursuant to 7 CFR 226.

