



Policy Name:	Wellness Policy	BAP
Domain:	Congregate Care	
Scope:	Milieu-Based Programs and Residential Schools participating in the USDA Food Programs (SEC, The Home at Walpole – Riccio/Adams, Hailer and Merrill and Clifford Academy, HH, WH, CCSC and TASP)	
Policy Location:	HomeBase	
Effective Year:	2010	
Years Reviewed	2019, 2024	
References:	DESE National School Lunch Program requirements	
Purpose: In compliance with the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004, the Healthy Hunger-Free Act of 2010 (HHFKA), the USDA National School Lunch, Breakfast and After School Snack programs (NSLP, NSBP, ASSP) operated by the MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the DPH standards for School Wellness Advisory Committees. The Home for Little Wanderers ("The Home") established this local wellness policy that promotes the nutritional health and physical activity and wellbeing of youth and children we serve.		
Definitions: <u>Accommodations</u> This is the term used when the food items in the meal are changed to meet the special needs of some youth. <u>Point of Service</u>- This is a term used to indicate where meals must be observed to determine if they are "reimbursable" and able to be claimed. Meals must be observed at the point a youth receives the meal. <u>Accuclaim</u> – The process where meal counting and claiming is reviewed to ensure compliance. This is an annual DESE requirement.		
Policy Statement: The Home is committed to providing environments that promote and protect children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. It is The Home's policy that the environment of each of The Home's Programs promote healthy eating and wellness behaviors. The Home will have written practice guidelines that support this policy ie: Food Safety, Meals Services, Menu Planning, Dietary Reminders and Meal Accommodations. Such guidelines will be reviewed regularly to ensure compliance with best practice guidelines established by applicable federal and state guidelines. In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.		



Nutrition:

All meals served to clients shall meet the nutrition requirements as set forth by the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans as well as the USDA National School Lunch, Breakfast and After School Snack Programs. These standards include:

- Healthy foods including fruits, vegetables, whole grains and low-fat dairy and lower sodium products will be offered.
- Water will be readily available throughout the day and offered at all meals
- All events where food is being served to clients and families/caretakers shall be supportive of healthy eating by offering water and healthy food options.
- Special attention is given to youth with food allergies and special dietary needs to minimize exposure and ensure alternative food options.
- Lists of youth with allergies will be posted in the kitchen and houses in a way that is respectful of confidentiality.
- The use of food as an incentive or reward is discouraged.

Efforts should be made to lower carbohydrates to help decrease this risk diabetes type 2 and obesity.

Clients/youths shall not be denied food as a form of punishment. For example:

- A client cannot be denied dinner because they refused to clean their room.
- A client cannot be denied lunch because they threw their breakfast at the wall earlier that day.

Physical Activity:

Physical activity opportunities are required, provided, and must meet a minimum of 60 minutes per day for children and adolescents in the school setting. Youths will have opportunities to be physically active before, during and after school as well as having physical activity breaks in class. Youth in group homes should have a minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity per day on weekends and school vacations

Clients/youths shall not be denied participation in physical activities as a form of punishment. For example:

- A staff member cannot forbid a client from attending gym class if they did not first attend science class.
- A client cannot be prohibited from participating in a basketball game after school if they swore at staff earlier that morning.

Staff Qualifications and Professional Development:

All Kitchen Managers and Cooks will meet or exceed hiring and annual continuing education/training requirements outlined in the USDA professional standards for child nutrition professionals.

Food Service Staff will be offered training opportunities through webinars, in-person workshops, and group classes. Some available resources include DESE Making it Count and the John Stalker Institute.

<http://makingitcount.info/> and Nuts & Bolts of School Nutrition OnDemand John C. Stalker Institute



All staff are encouraged and supported to model healthy eating and physical activity for clients.

Opportunities for wellness education through events or workshops for youth and families is encouraged.

Any staff person involved with food preparation, serving or counting meals will receive training appropriate to their role.

Physical Health Education:

Students will be provided physical education, using an age-appropriate, sequential physical education curriculum consistent with national and state standards for physical education.

The physical education curriculum will promote the benefits of a physically active lifestyle and will help youths develop skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits.

Curriculum will satisfy the required number of hours/week of physical education.

Clear guidelines will be set for youth exemptions.

Nutritional Health Education:

Schools shall develop and implement curriculum in accordance with the MA Frameworks and Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requirements that connects and demonstrates the interrelationship between physical activity, good nutrition, and health.

Curriculum teaches skills that are behavior focused, interactive and develops skills to engage in lifelong healthy habits and disease prevention.

Nutrition education is linked with the school food program. (e.g. taste testing opportunities).

Wellness Committees:

A wellness committee is charged with making recommendations concerning school health/wellness policies, programs and practice guidelines.

- The wellness committee shall meet at least 4x/year;
- Members are Wellness Champions for their program and represent the voices of staff members who are responsible for food services, physical education and activity, health services, and to the extent possible involvement from clients, families, and community agencies;
- The Wellness Committee shall keep minutes of all committee meetings.

Implementation and Monitoring

Each Program Director and/or their designee shall establish clear written goals annually for wellness initiatives for their program. Goals should be based on a needs assessment specific to the program and results from the previous year's goals. Involvement from clients, families, community, and staff should be elicited when developing goals for wellness initiatives.

- Goals should be specific to nutrition, physical activity, and wellness promotion activities as well as related issues that affect client health (ie: tobacco use, stress reduction, good hygiene).



- General public health data should be considered when establishing goals (e.g. youth health needs assessments, data indicating the effect of health status on academic performance).
- Program specific data should be reviewed (e.g. time and quality of physical activity opportunities, status of health education program, BMI screening data).

Status of the Wellness Initiatives shall be documented by the program and submitted quarterly to the Wellness Committee. A year-end report will be generated based on outcomes of set goals and objectives.

An assessment of implementation of the wellness policy will be conducted every three years.

The policy, recent assessment, and year-end report will be posted on the HFLW website to invite, inform and update the public/parents and youths.

Wellness Promotion:

Posters and handouts encouraging physical activity, healthy food and beverage choices are visible and /or distributed to clients, staff, and parent/caregivers.

General: All policies receive this section:

The Home for Little Wanderers is an equal opportunity provider.

The Home will investigate all credible allegations of non-compliance with this policy.

Employees' compliance with this Policy is a term and condition of employment.

The Home reserves the right to amend or terminate this Policy as The Home deems necessary or warranted.

This Policy replaces and supersedes any and all previous policies relating to the subject matter of this Policy.

Authorizing Signatures:

Chairman, Board of Directors

Date 4/1/2024

President & CEO

Date 3/26/2024

VP of HR and Compliance

Date 3/26/2024

Attachments:

Wellness Policy Implementation Assessment Tool