

Growing up healthily in a child care centre

Find out more about how your child's nutritional needs
will be met at the child care centre



Going to child care is a new and often a scary experience for children. Before your child starts attending a child care programme, spend a few weeks talking to him about the experience.

- Tell him about how exciting it will be, how he will learn many new skills, and make many new friends.
- Reassure him that there will be teachers to look after and take care of him, and that there will be lots of new toys to play with.
- Visit the centre with your child and familiarise him with the place, so that he will not be frightened on his first day.



• If he needs you to, accompany him for the first few days. You can leave once he settles in and starts to take an interest in the surroundings and the people around him. Do not hang around too much, as this will make it harder for him to let go.

- Your child may cry. This is normal. Reassure him that you will be back in the evening to bring him home. Once he is familiar with the routine and knows that you will be there after school each day, he will gradually adjust to attend lessons at the child care centre.

Healthy eating at the child care centre

Research has shown that when it comes to food, children develop their preferences for food and tastes mostly before and during their preschool years, and that these eating habits and preferences tend to stay with them as they grow up. The preschool phase is the best time to help your child inculcate good eating habits that can benefit him for life.



If your child attends a child care programme, he probably takes at least two out of three meals a day there. This is why the child care centre also plays an important role in educating your child about nutrition, and shaping his eating habits.

To incorporate the culture of healthy eating in child care centres, the Health Promotion Board introduced the “Healthy Eating in Child Care Centres Programme” (HECCP) in 2005, in collaboration with the Ministry of Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS).

There are four parts to this programme:

1. Food Service

The participating child care centres serve healthy and nutritious meals to the children, based on the following guidelines:

- **Milk:** At least one glass (250ml) of milk/ 30g of milk powder for each child per day.
- **Fruit:** ½-1 serving of fruit for each child per day.

- **Vegetable:** ½-1 serving of vegetable for each child per day.
- **Reduced sugar intake:** Sweetened dishes/desserts contain no more than 8g of sugar per 100ml.
- **Reduced fat intake:** Lean cuts of meat and poultry are served with the skin removed.
- **Reduced consumption of processed food:** Processed meats are served no more than once a week.
- **Reduced consumption of deep-fried food:** Deep-fried food is served no more than once a week.

2. Nutrition Education

The participating child care centres conduct nutrition education for the children. The education is done through lesson plans, exhibits at the centres, activities for parents as well as field excursions for the children.

Choose a HECCP-certified child care centre for your child.





3. Training

The child care centre supervisors and cooks attend culinary training on healthier methods of preparing meals that incorporate milk, fruits and vegetables in the children's diet.

4. Certification

The child care centres are evaluated annually. Child care centres which meet the guidelines will be certified and listed on the Health Promotion Board's website.



CHERISH Junior

A CHERISH Junior School provides a health-promoting environment for your growing child.

The CHERISH (Championing Efforts Resulting in Improved School Health) Junior Award recognises child care centres, kindergartens and schools that have done well to promote and improve the physical, social, mental and emotional well-being of all students, staff and the school community.