

Philadelphia Early Childhood Education Centers' Health and Wellness Survey

A COLLABORATION WITH THE PHILADELPHIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH'S GET HEALTHY PHILLY, HEALTH PROMOTION COUNCIL AND PUBLIC HEALTH MANAGEMENT CORPORATION

A quality early childhood education equally values healthy physical, cognitive, social and emotional development. We conducted a survey to learn more about whole child practices related to nutrition and physical activity.

SURVEY METHODS

Conducted October 2016–February 2017

Online and paper surveys to licensed childcare centers in Philadelphia serving children ages 0–5

161 responses (27% response rate)

CHARACTERISTICS OF CENTERS AS REPORTED BY SURVEY RESPONDENTS

AVERAGE CHILDREN SERVED

66

SERVING CHILDREN ≤ 2 YEARS OLD

79% 

SERVING CHILDREN 2-12 MONTHS

66%



SERVING CHILDREN 2-5 YEARS OLD

96%

OFFERING FULL-TIME SCHEDULES

93% 

PARTICIPATE IN CACFP*

47%

KEYSTONE STARS** 3 OR 4

30%

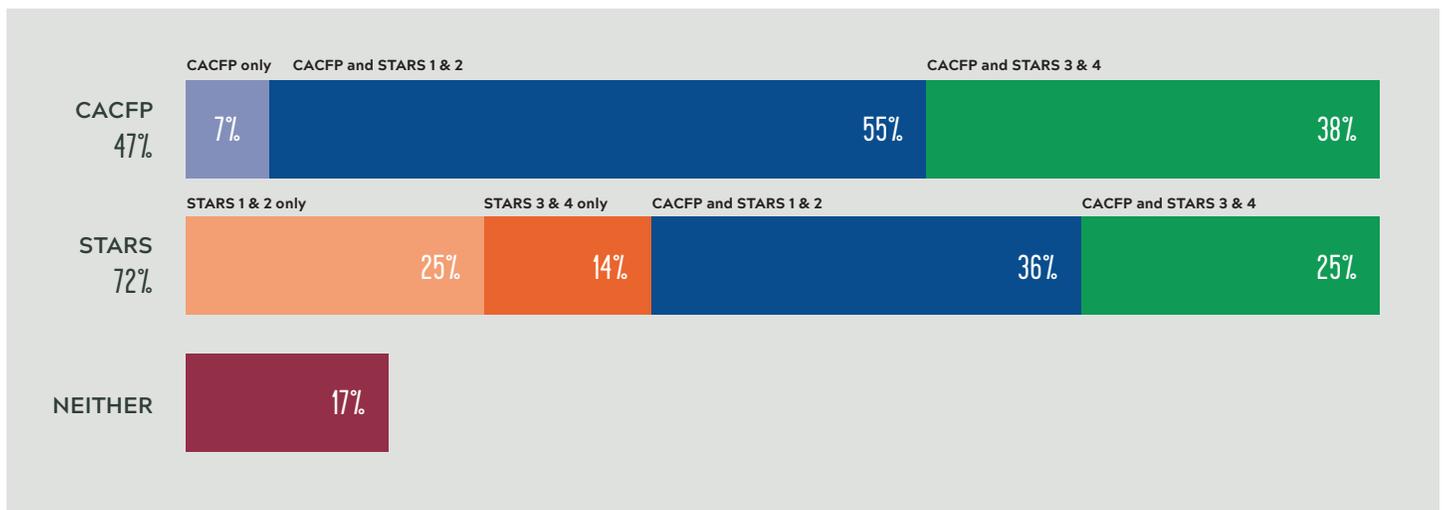
CENTERS WITH ≥ 50% OF CHILDREN RECEIVING SUBSIDIES

64% 

* CACFP = The federally-funded Child and Adult Care Food Program

** Keystone STARS = Pennsylvania's quality rating system for early learning providers. Programs earn a STAR 1 to STAR 4 rating based on a variety of quality standards.

What Quality Programs Did Centers Participate In?



		Nice Work!	Always Room for Improvement
NUTRITION			
	Served fruit once a day or more	67%	
	Served fruit fewer than 2 times per day		52%
	Served vegetables once a day or more	72%	
	Served vegetables fewer than 2 times a day		76%
	Never serve sugary drinks	84%	
	Serve sugary drinks		16%
	Never serve juice	17%	
	Serve juice daily or more		50%
	Always have water available/visible indoors and outdoors	62%	
	Drinking water is not available, only available when children ask, or is only available during water breaks		16%

For optimal nutrition and dental health, juice (including 100%) should not be served at childcare centers.

		Nice Work!	Always Room for Improvement
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY			
	Offered tummy time at least once a day	86%	
	Offered tummy time fewer than once a day		14%
	Provided toddlers at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day	76%	
	Provided toddlers 45 minutes or more of physical activity per day		46%
	Provided preschoolers at least 30 minutes of physical activity per day	94%	
	Provided preschoolers at least 45 minutes per day of physical activity		60%
	Never take away physical activity or play time to manage challenging behavior	59%	
	Sometimes or often take away physical activity or play time to manage challenging behavior		41%
	Outdoor playtime is provided at least once per day	78%	
	Outdoor playtime is provided 2 times per day or more		40%

Physical activity and screen time questions = In this survey, we collected information based around a half day at a childcare center, or 5.5 hours

Tummy time = supervised time when an infant is awake and alert, lying on her/his belly

Toddlers = ages 13-24 months, Preschoolers = ages 2-5 years

		Nice Work!	Always Room for Improvement
SCREEN TIME			
	For children 2 years of age or older, no screen time or fewer than 15 minutes per week of screen time is allowed	59%	
	For children 2 years of age or older, no screen time is allowed		35%
	For children under 2 years of age, no screen time is allowed	52%	
	For children under 2 years of age, screen time is allowed		48%
	Screen time is rarely or never used as a reward	58%	
	Screen time is used as a reward 1-5 times per week		15%

Nutrition and Physical Activity Professional Development was significantly associated with:

- More physical activity being provided to toddlers and children
- More fruit (yay!) and juice (uh-oh!) being provided to children

What do sites look like?

Have a kitchen available on site	84%
Have meals prepared on site	59%
Have space for all activities, including jumping, running, and rolling	67%
Have areas that allow play for individuals, pairs, small groups, and large groups	60%
Have full access for children with special needs	32%

Breastfeeding and Infant Feeding

Only 44% of these centers always have a quiet and comfortable space (that is not a bathroom) available for mothers to breastfeed or express breast milk.

How many centers had breastfeeding space available to mothers with:

Privacy	60%
A working electrical outlet	57%
Comfortable seating	67%
A sink with running water in the room or nearby	63%

Analysis and Recommendations

CACFP was related to higher levels of some healthy nutrition practices (fruits and vegetables being served more often). CACFP participation was also related to juice being served more often (something we'd like to see happen less).

A Keystone STARS rating of 3 & 4 was related to some healthier physical activity practices, more outdoor play time, and less screen time provided to children

Many centers are making great progress on helping children learn healthy habits for life. The survey also highlights some areas for improvement for centers.