

WATERMELON and WIGGLES



Dakota County Public Health Department • 651-554-6100

The Advantages of Family Style Meals

Key Takeaways:

- Teachers use different tips and tricks to engage children and create successful meals.
- Children need to learn how to make family style meals happen.
- Child sized cups, plates, and serving utensils are key!
- Children are more likely to eat a variety of healthy foods if they serve themselves.
- Items on a plate help everyone visualize portions.
- You can start with passing napkins and utensils even if the kids in your class bring their own lunches.
- It takes time for children learn to serve themselves. Don't rush them.
- Family style empowers children!

Providers' Professional Development Video

- View examples of "Family Style Dining"
- Hear messages from child care providers about their experience with family style meals.
- Get tips for creating family style in whatever setting you work in.
- Watch the [VIDEO](#) here.

Want to [quiz yourself or staff](#) on CACFP meal counts, claims or financial requirements? Check your knowledge of [USDA/CACFP Meal Pattern Guidelines](#) when it comes to breakfast, lunch, dinner and snacks in order to receive reimbursable meals. You can also [catch up on webinars](#) hosted by the Minnesota Department of Education.

Not only is meal time important for building healthy habits for a lifetime, it is also a great place to observe if children are advancing in so many of the skills laid out in the [MN Early Childhood Indicators of Progress](#).

Brush up on Language Literacy Communications, Cognitive Mathematics, Approaches to Learning, Physical Movement, Social Emotional, Social Systems Cognitive & Scientific Thinking.

