

Gateway Children's Services

Wellness Policy

This Policy can be viewed on our webpage @ www.Gatewaychildrensservices.org.

Wellness Committee Members:

Joe Gomes, CEO Teresa Nolan, FSD Jessica Collins, Director Of Residential Services

Dustin Hayes, Recreation Assistant/Youth Worker Janessia Townsend, CMA

The Wellness Committee will meet every 3 months for assessments, reviews, and any needed adjustments to the Policy. On June 1st 2020 a WellSAT assessment will be completed and submitted as well as every 3 years following....

Gateway Children's Services Wellness Policy & Implementation Plan

System and environmental changes take time. To assist the implementation of Gateway Children's Services Implementation Wellness Policy, a three-year plan has been created. The goal is to create a plan that creates a slow, systematic approach that builds on successes of each year.

To be successful, the Staff and Administration need to support this policy and any subsequent changes. Children really do enjoy eating healthy foods and moving their bodies. As caregivers we are an important influence in our resident's lives. Modeling healthy behavior supports the development of healthy behaviors in children and there is no stronger message for the importance of healthy habits. Children watch and imitate adults, and look to them to learn proper behavior, which in turn build character. As role models, we need to monitor our own behavior so that children acquire healthy attitudes. It is recommended to identify staff that can be "Wellness Champions," or Role Models to help other Staff and others in the community to realize this. These role models, along with other interested parties, also are good candidates for a wellness committee should we choose to form one.

The Policy is divided into four topics:

Staff and Administration

Good Nutrition Practices for a Healthy Life

Nutrient Standards and Meal Service

Physical Activity

The first year of the plan focuses on creating “safe and adequate” environments in which residents can eat and do physical activities. It also focuses on training our Staff on the policy, nutrition and physical activity and on beginning to incorporate healthy messages.

One of the requirements of the policy is to measure if changes are taking place. Much of what the policy addresses in “year one” is already a reality at Gateway Children’s Services. We must keep moving forward to establish Gateway Children’s Services as a Wellness Facility that addresses every issues that prevents our residents from accomplishing complete “wellness”, remember we are all a piece in the puzzle.

Staff & Administration

The goals of this section address creating an environment that provide consistent wellness messages and is conducive to healthy eating and being physically active.

Year One:

- ***Appropriate Training shall be available to all staff on the components of the Wellness policy.***

Ways to accomplish this goal: Use Monthly Staff Meetings and other times to discuss the policy, the changes that will occur, and the importance of their role in the process. Training should include the most recent Dietary Guidelines including portion size, balance and food choices.

- ***In every way possible, the administration shall support the efforts of staff to provide a healthy diet and daily physical activity for the residents.***

Ways to accomplish this goal: Consider the needs the staff may have in making the changes needed and the ongoing support they may need in sustaining these changes.

Year Two:

- ***The goals of the Wellness Policy shall be considered in planning all staff and program activities.***

Ways to accomplish this goal: Consider physical activity and healthy food when planning, Day Trips, Staff Meetings and Parties.

- ***In every way possible, the administration shall support the staff wellness by providing on-going health and nutrition information and education.***

Ways to accomplish this goal: Evaluate personal wellness behaviors. Create and maintain personal nutrition goals, use food diaries to analyze food intake and encourage all employees that are covered under our medical insurance to achieve all wellness points through the completion and on-going participation of healthy activities and modeling the goals of the Wellness Policy.

www.nhibi.nih.gov/health/obesity/losewt/control.htm

Staff will take advantage of all health assessment opportunities such as a yearly physical check-up. Blood pressure and weight are checked as well as BMI, and cholesterol levels. The majority of the above assessment are offered at no cost by our medical insurance carrier.

Good Nutrition Practices for a Healthy Life

The primary goal of this section is to have a better understanding of good nutrition and to influence residents' eating behaviors. This can be accomplished through practical hands-on experiences, introducing new healthy foods to their diet, creating new dishes that are nutritious and delicious the residents will want designed to facilitate the voluntary adoption of eating and other nutrition-related behaviors conducive to health and well-being.

Within Gateway Children's Services, these learning experiences shall address residents' knowledge skills, attitudes, and behaviors and provide opportunities for residents to have positive food experiences. Life skills lessons and other activities shall be age-appropriate and behavior focused. Lifelong lifestyle balance shall be reinforced by linking healthy food choices and physical activity. All residents of Gateway Children's Services will participate daily in at least 45-minutes of physical activity.

Year One:

- **The Staff responsible for providing nutrition education shall be properly trained and prepared and shall participate in appropriate professional development.**

Training should include how to create opportunities for residents to have positive food experiences and should focus on how to create behavioral change over educational learning goals. Take advantage of community health organizations, such as, The American Cancer Society, the American Diabetes Association, Montgomery County Health Department and search out other community organizations for health seminars and community adult learning classes. Appropriate nutrition topics for professional development can include, but are not limited to, Food Safety, Diet related health problems, Balancing eating and Physical Activity, Nutrition and the life cycle, Food Trends and Diet Fads, Food and Culture, Hunger in America and Nutrition Education as a Life Skill.

Year Two:

- **Staff shall serve as Role Models in healthy eating and other healthy lifestyle practices.**

Ways to accomplish this goal: Nutrition Education shall be provided to residents by staff, Health Department and/or integrated into other residential activities.

Year Three: Nutrition education involving the community.

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Year One

Training should include how to create opportunities for residents to have positive food experiences and should focus on how to create behavioral change over educational learning goals.

Take advantage of community health organizations, such as, Am. Cancer Society, Am. Diabetes Assoc., Am. Heart Assoc., Local Health Department and will search out other community organizations for health seminars and community adult learning glasses.

Appropriate nutrition topics for professional development can include, but are not limited to: food safety, diet related health problems, food disorders, cooking, shopping, budgeting, meal planning, label reading, balancing eating and physical activity, nutrition and the life cycle, food trends and diet fad, food and culture, hunger in America or other countries.

Include nutrition education as a Life Skill topic.

Year Two

Staff Shall Serve as Role Models in healthy eating and other lifestyle practices.

Ways to accomplish this goal: www.dairycouncilofca.org/PDFs/ROLE_model.pdf

Nutrition education shall be provided to residents and/or integrated into other resident activities.

Ways to accomplish this goal: Have a health field professional talk to residents and staff about nutrition and diet related health problems.

Have residents make bulletin boards and posters on good nutrition in the dining room and kitchen, conduct competitions and award appropriate prizes.

Training should focus on creating hands on opportunities about good nutrition, such as plant a garden and Integrate nutrition into life skills as part of our school curricula.

Year Three

Nutrition education shall extent beyond the RCCI environment by engaging and involving the community.

Ways to accomplish this goal: Special presentations or promotions by health organizations. Classes about other cultures, special dishes and food samples from other cultures and food projects conducted to help protect the health of citizens of different countries.

Nutrient Standards and Meal Service

The goal of this section is to provide residents with opportunities to make healthy food choices. All food choices shall be made with consideration for promoting health and reducing childhood obesity. Also important to increase the nutrient density of food, to decrease fat and sugar and to provide moderate portion sizes per the requirements of the National School Lunch Program.

Year One

- Nutrition content of meals shall be available to residents and staff upon request.
- Food shall not be used as a reward or punishment.
- Nutritional value of foods and beverages brought into GCS shall be evaluated and approved, considering NSLP requirements.
- Residents shall be provided with a clean and safe meal environment.
- Meals shall be scheduled at appropriate times.
- Residents shall be provided with adequate time to eat, at least 15 minutes sit-down time for breakfast, 30 minutes sit-down time for lunch and dinner.
- Drinking water shall be available at all meals and throughout the day.

Year Two

- Staff and residents shall be, to an extent, involved in Menu Selection, as far as suggested additions to the Menu.
- Menu selection and portion sizes for celebrations shall support the goals of the Wellness Policy.
- Cooking methods used for all foods shall be evaluated and improved and appropriate portion sizes shall be served to the residents.

Year Three

- Choices made when the residents are eating out shall support the goals of the Wellness Policy.
- To the extent possible, staff shall encourage resident involvement in creating healthy Meals.

Overall goal for the first year: provide residents with opportunities to make healthy food choices in an unhurried, safe environment and make all food choices with consideration for promoting health, using NSLP and USDA guidelines.

Ways to accomplish this goal: Post Menus, help residents and staff understand the nutritional value of the meals served.

Food will never be used as a reward or punishment.

Instead of using food as a reward, other items may be used to reward client's, such as Frisbee's, NERF balls, footballs and basketballs as prizes. Go to the movies or rent one, the child's choice. Use board games, puzzles, and coloring pages.

Residents shall have access to hand washing before and after meals and snacks.

Drinking water shall be available at all meals and throughout the day.

Year Two:

Residents and Staff shall be involved in menu selection.

Ways to accomplish this goal: Have nutrient standards be your guide (see My Plate)

When planning a Menu keep these in mind:

- Keep foods with “sugar as the first ingredient” at a minimum.
- Avoid foods with trans fats and high fat foods.
- Ensure sodium isn’t higher than 1500mg per day
- Prepare more nutrient dense foods
- Add more fresh fruits and vegetables for fiber
- Milk must be 1% or Non Fat, 100% real juice at meal times and serving size not to exceed 8 oz.
- Food guidelines: 30% calories from fat. 10% calories from saturated fat, 35% sugar, 1500mg per day or less sodium.
- Moderate portion sizes
- Increase fiber in diet

Menu Selection and portion sizes for Celebrations shall support the goals of the Wellness Policy.

Ways to accomplish this goal: Celebrations and Parties will offer minimal amounts of foods that contain added sugar as the first ingredient and will provide the following: Fresh fruits and Vegetables, Water, 100% fruit juice or milk that is 1% or non-fat.

Cooking methods used for all foods shall be evaluated and improved and appropriate portion sizes shall be served to the residents.

Ways to accomplish this goal: Limit frying to once a week, accurate portion sizes, Use My Plate as a guide www.choosemyplate.gov, use more baking, steaming, broiling, grilling and sautéing.

Year Three

Choices made for residents when eating out shall support the goals of the Wellness Policy.

Ways to accomplish this goal:

- Limit Fast Food
- Help residents order healthy foods from the Menu
- Staff sets a good example
- Keep Menu selection within nutrient standards.
- Do Not Super-Size

Physical Activity

Current recommendations suggest that children should strive to accumulate 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Each resident of Gateway Children’s Services will participate in at least 45-minutes of daily physical activity. The primary goal of this section is to create a physical activity plan that provides residents with opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activities in a safe and enjoyable environment, helps residents develop the knowledge and skills for specific physical activities and maintain physical fitness and to understand the short and long-term benefits to a physically active and healthy lifestyle.

Year One

- Resident shall be provided with safe and adequate equipment, facilities and resources for physical activity.
- Part of the school curriculum will need PE classes 5-days per week
- Clients are provided the opportunity to use the Downtown Athletic Fitness Club at least 3-5-days per week, unless restricted by program rules.
- Staff responsible for leading or overseeing physical activity shall be properly trained and shall participate in appropriate professional development.
- Physical activity shall not be used as a reward or punishment.

Year Two

- Staff shall encourage physical activity in free time and support structured physical activity such as supervised walks around our facility and community, access to the use of the Downtown Athletic Fitness Club
- Staff shall serve as Role Models in the area of physical activity and other healthy lifestyle practices.
- Residents shall be provided with the knowledge necessary to understand the short and long-term benefits of a physically active lifestyle.

Year Three

- **Gateway Children’s Services** shall partner with community organizations and individuals to create opportunities and programs that support physical activity (Montgomery Co. Health, Sterling Health Solutions, Downtown Athletic Fitness Club, etc.)

Resident shall be provided with safe and adequate equipment, facilities and resources

Ways to accomplish this goal: Examine equipment and facility currently available to residents for safety, adequacy and age appropriateness. Inventory supplies currently available for sports and physical activity. Check available neighborhood resources, such as schools, playgrounds, recreation centers, and Churches as available resources for Gateway Children’s Services use.

Staff responsible for leading or overseeing physical activity shall be properly trained and shall participate in appropriate professional development.

Ways to accomplish this goal:

Gateway Children's Services highly values the health and wellbeing of every staff member and will plan and implement activities and policies that support personal efforts by staff to maintain a healthy lifestyle, establish and maintain a staff wellness committee composed of at least one staff member, health council member, local hospital representative, dietitian or other health, (The staff wellness committee could be a subcommittee of the facility health council.) The committee should develop, promote, and oversee a multifaceted plan to promote staff health and wellness. The plan should be based on input solicited from staff and should outline ways to encourage healthy eating, physical activity, and other elements of a healthy lifestyle among staff. The staff wellness committee should distribute its plan to the health council annually.