

Answer Sheet : Activity 2 - Recipe Review

Nutrition in long day care

This resource is part of the Mini Professional Development package on the topic of Nutrition in early childhood. These have been developed by the Healthy Eating Advisory Service to support health promotion professionals in delivering engaging and practical sessions for Cooks Network meetings

Activity 2 - Recipe Review

Small tweaks like swapping in wholegrains, adding legumes, or using yoghurt instead of cream, can make a big difference in helping children get the nutrients they need to grow, learn and thrive. In this activity we are going to look at how we can make these small changes to recipes that you might prepare in your kitchen.

Important Note:



Foods such as white bread, white flour, rice, and pasta are all acceptable and in line with current menu planning guidelines. This activity may include suggestions such as choosing wholemeal or wholegrain alternatives; however, this is not intended to imply that white versions are not allowed. The purpose is to highlight that wholemeal options can offer additional nutritional benefits, not to restrict or exclude white flour products.

Objectives

- Interpret key nutrition recommendations from the Menu planning guidelines for long day care
- Review recipes to identify areas for improvement in nutritional quality
- Identify small changes or ingredient swaps that could enhance the nutritional value of recipes
- Build confidence in applying the Menu planning guidelines to adapt existing recipes

Required resources



- [Menu planning guidelines for long day care](#)
- [Menu planning checklist for long day care](#)
- Cook to bring in some recipes from their centre OR use sample recipes below
- Optional: You can share the [Healthy food swap resource](#) from the HEAS website to use for discussion

Instructions

1. Choose a recipe from the examples provided (or use a recipe from your current menu).
2. Read through the ingredients and method.
3. Use the checklist and table below to identify simple changes that could make the meal more balanced and nutritious.
4. You can also use the Menu planning checklist for long day care available on the HEAS website to get some more guidance on preparing menus and meals with food variety.

Nutrition review checklist:



As you review the recipe, consider:

- Can I use wholegrain or high-fibre versions of an ingredient?
- Can I add vegetables or legumes to increase fibre and nutrients?
- Can I add variety with plant-based options?
- Can I reduce added sugar or salt?
- Can I use yoghurt instead of cream?
- Does this recipe include a mix of food groups (fruits, vegetables, grain foods, meat and meat alternatives, dairy and dairy alternatives)?

Please note: There isn't necessarily a right or wrong way to answer the questions in this activity. In this activity, we are looking for the cooks to think about different ways they can apply change to their recipes to improve its nutrition.

Recipe changes table

Recipe Name	What would you change?	Why make this change?
Example: Banana Muffins	Swap white flour for wholemeal flour OR Use 50/50 white flour and wholemeal flour	Adds fibre and keeps you full for longer
<p>The Sample Recipe page below has some examples of changes that could be made to each recipe. You can refer to those examples or consider some of these to help the cooks in your session think of ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include an extra serve of vegetables in a meal • Add some sliced vegetables to snacks • Use reduced salt stock options • Swap ingredients for wholegrain options 		

Group Discussion Questions

1. What small changes did you identify in your recipes?

- The responses to this question will vary.
- Some ideas discussed might include:
 - changing to reduced salt options
 - increasing vegetable amounts
 - changing to wholegrain options of bread or pasta.

2. What kinds of swaps or additions are easiest to make in your kitchen?

- Again, responses to this question will vary. There will likely be different challenges faced by different cooks depending on how their centre runs.
- Participants might discuss:
 - not adding salt to food items
 - buying salt reduced stock for recipes.

3. How could you involve children in making or serving this dish?

- This question will offer cooks an opportunity to be creative and think about different ways that can include children in the meal preparation.
- Ideas could include:
 - children plating their own food
 - making a poke bowl type meal with rice, vegetables and a protein
 - building their own sandwich or tortilla with vegetables and a protein
 - allowing children to cut up some ingredients as safely allowed.

Sample Recipes

Sample Recipe 1: Savoury Veggie Fritters

Ingredients:

- 2 cups grated zucchini and carrot
- ½ cup self-raising flour
- 2 eggs
- ¼ cup cheese
- Oil for cooking

Sample answers for improvements:

- Use wholemeal flour for added fibre
- Add a spoonful of cooked lentils or chickpeas → extra protein
- Serve with a side of plain yoghurt dip or sliced tomato for variety

Sample Recipe 2: Creamy Pasta Bake

Ingredients:

- 250g pasta
- 1 cup cream
- 1 cup grated cheese
- 1 cup cooked chicken
- ½ cup peas

Sample answers for improvements:

- Use wholegrain pasta for added fibre
- Replace cream with plain yoghurt for lower saturated fat content
- Add extra vegetables like spinach, zucchini or capsicum for variety of colour and nutrients

Sample Recipe 3: Minestrone soup

Ingredients:

- 1 small onion
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 medium carrots
- 1 L Vegetable stock
- 1 can Crushed tomatoes
- 100g pasta
- Oil for cooking

Sample answers for improvements:

- Use wholegrain pasta for added fibre
- Include more vegetables – add some celery, zucchini
- Use reduced salt stock

Sample Recipe 4: Tuna and corn patties

Ingredients:

- 1 can tuna
- 2 medium potatoes
- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 1 can corn kernels
- 1 egg
- ¼ small onion
- ½ cup breadcrumbs
- Oil for cooking
- 6 slices white bread

Sample answers for improvements:

- Use wholegrain bread for added fibre
- Serve with cut up tomatoes, cucumbers and avocado slices for extra vegetables
- Use salt reduced corn kernels

Sample Recipe 5: Chicken risotto

Ingredients:

- 1 small onion
- 350g chicken thigh fillets
- Olive oil for cooking
- 1 cup uncooked basmati rice
- 1 litre chicken stock
- 1 Tablespoon parmesan cheese

Sample answers for improvements:

- Add baby spinach and pumpkin to the recipe to increase vegetable serves
- Use a reduced salt chicken stock

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