COOKING MATTERS EXTRA FOR CENTER-BASED CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS

Child care providers face many of the same challenges as parents in creating healthy meals with limited resources. Recognizing this, Share Our Strength’s Cooking Matters® launched the newest of its six curricula, Cooking Matters for Child Care Professionals, a professional training program designed to empower providers to serve healthy meals and create a positive food environment for the kids in their care. Each of its five modules offer child care providers hands-on practice in the kitchen, interactive discussions on ways to make healthy choices about food served to kids, and strategies to promote positive attitudes about food among kids.

Cooking Matters EXTRA for Center-Based Child Care Professionals (CMECB) was developed in 2012 to address the specific needs of center-based teachers and caregivers, food service workers, and administrators serving young children from low-income families.

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SHARE OUR STRENGTH

Share Our Strength®, a national nonprofit, is ending childhood hunger in America by connecting children with the nutritious food they need to lead healthy, active lives. Through its No Kid Hungry® Campaign—a national effort to end childhood hunger in America by 2015—Share Our Strength ensures children in need are enrolled in effective federal nutrition programs; invests in community organizations that fight hunger; teaches at-risk families how to cook healthy, affordable meals; and builds public-private partnerships to end childhood hunger, at the state and city level.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COOKING MATTERS EXTRA FOR CENTER-BASED CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS

Q: How does a center qualify to take this course?
A: This course is available to centers that are preparing meals or snacks on site, serving less than approximately 100 children, and have a 50% or greater free and reduced price lunch percentage.

Q. Who can participate in the course?
A. This course is designed for staff working in a center-based child care setting. Feeding kids well takes teamwork so the whole team is encouraged to attend: classroom teachers, foodservice staff, and administrators. There is a minimum of 15 and a maximum of 25 participants in each course. Multiple centers may partner together.

Q: What do participants receive after taking this course?
A: Participants will receive
- Essential kitchen utensils
- 8 continuing education hours
- A participant manual, which includes:
  - Handouts
  - Healthy, low-budget recipes
  - Child-friendly activity bank

Q: Is the course available in languages other than English?
A: No. At this time, course materials are only offered in English.

Q: What format can the 10-hours of training be implemented?
A: The course was designed with flexibility in mind to accommodate child care professionals’ busy schedules. It is broken down into five two-hour modules, which may be implemented in weekly sessions, two half-day sessions, or one eight-hour day.

Q. What does Cooking Matters provide?
A: Cooking Matters will provide culinary and nutrition professionals to teach the course, food and cooking equipment, class materials, take-home items, paperwork, and activities.

Q. What does a partnering center or organization provide?
A. The center will designate a main course contact, recruit 15-25 center-based child care professionals, help secure an appropriate location to hold the training, make reminder phone calls, and be present during the class for assistance.

Q: What is an “appropriate space” to hold the course?
A: The space must be large enough for group discussions, small group breakout activities, and hands-on cooking. A kitchen is great, but not essential. The space must including running water.

Q: What is the cost of the training?
A: There is no cost for individual center staff. If possible, the center is encouraged to contribute an in-kind or monetary donation to help cover the costs of implementing the course.

Q: How do I partner with Cooking Matters?
A: Contact Chris Rubino, MS at crubino@strength.org at 303-801-0321 OR Renee Petrillo, RD at rpetrillo@strength.org or 303-801-0319.