

# PROVIDING FOOD WITH CARE: A GUIDE FOR HOMES IN THE CHILD CARE FOOD PROGRAM



The Food and Nutrition Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is happy to have you in the Child Care Food Program. This guide explains what you must do while your family or group day care home participates in the program. It explains how you can plan balanced and nutritious meals that meet USDA requirements, and how you would buy the food for these meals. This guide lists requirements for recording the number of children you care for, the number of meals you serve, and the menus you plan. Ways your sponsoring organization can help you with your job are also outlined. By working together and using this guide, you and your sponsoring organization can learn to do everything necessary to make your family or group day care home one of the best in the neighborhood!

United States Department of Agriculture  
Food and Nutrition Service

This is an equal opportunity program. If you believe you have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap, write immediately to the Secretary of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.



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## PLANNING YOUR MENUS

Here are some tips to help you plan menus:

**1. Use the food charts and plan your menus for the week ahead.** For **BREAKFAST** start with a fruit or vegetable or juice. Choose a bread or cereal and serve milk as a beverage, on the cereal, or both ways. Foods such as meat, cheese, and eggs should be added to breakfast as often as possible. When planning **LUNCHES** and **SUPPERS**, start with a meat or main dish and add two or more vegetables or fruits or both and a serving of bread or bread alternate, and remember to serve milk as a beverage. For **SNACKS**, pick two out of the four food choices listed here. Choose from milk; juice or fruit or vegetable; meat or meat alternate; bread, bread alternate, or cereal.

**2. Plan for a variety of COLOR.** Children like colorful foods. Avoid serving meals with all foods that are the same color. Think about the **FLAVOR** of the foods you serve. Young children may prefer foods that are not too strongly flavored or spicy. Use a combination of foods with different **TEXTURES**. Children enjoy crisp, soft, and chewy foods. Bite-sized and finger foods are easy for children to handle. Introduce new foods along with well-liked foods. Try different ways of fixing foods. Planning surprises that include foods to help celebrate holidays, and other occasions like birthdays, will add interest to the meals and snacks you serve. You should also consider the cultural and ethnic backgrounds of the children in your care when planning menus.

**3. Include foods that are good sources of vitamin A, vitamin C, and the mineral iron in at least one meal every day.**

**Vitamin A sources include:** Broccoli, carrots, greens, mixed vegetables, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, apricots, cantaloupe, fresh peaches, prunes, and canned purple plums.

**Vitamin C sources include:** Broccoli, cabbage, greens, potatoes, tomatoes, cantaloupes, grapefruits, oranges, and strawberries.

**Iron sources include:** Dark green leafy vegetables, whole or enriched grain products, dried beans, peas, meat, poultry, fish, and eggs.



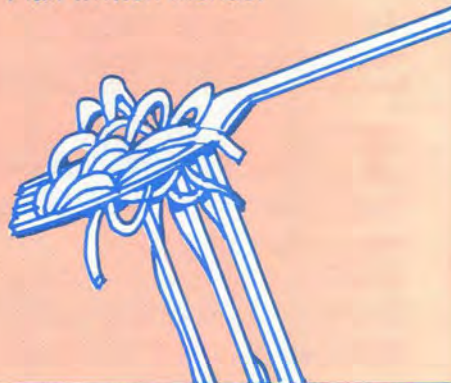
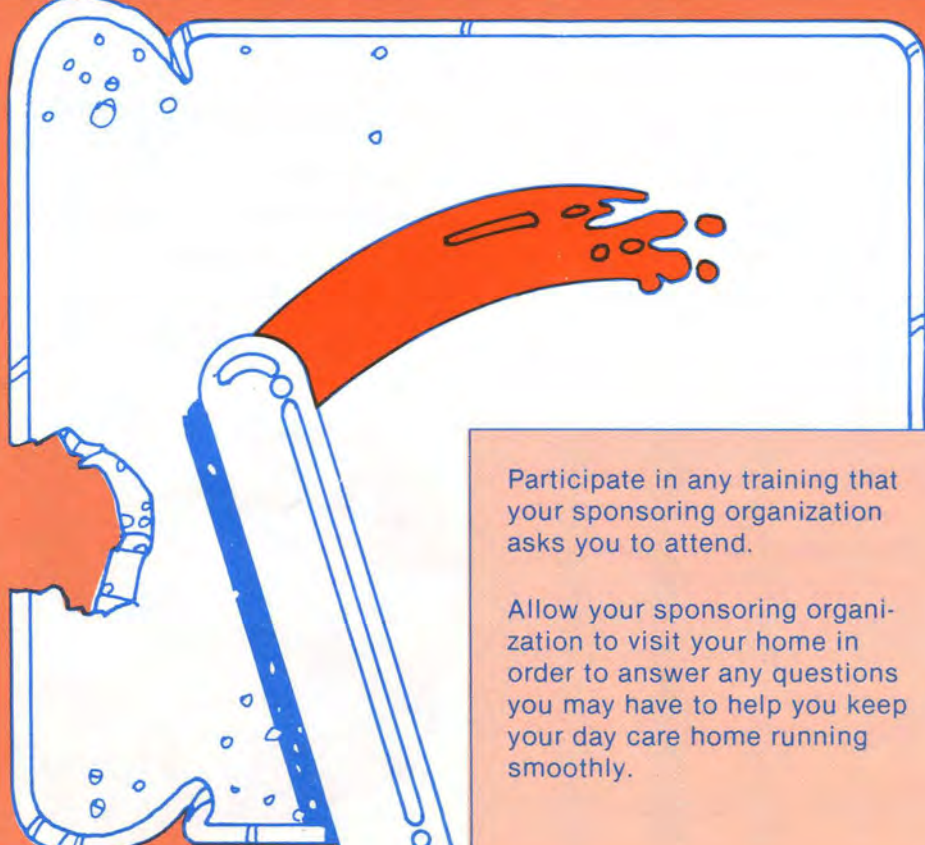

Ask your sponsoring organization for further information on good nutrition. Your local library also has this information.

When you have finished planning your menu for the week, look over the meals and snacks you have planned for each day. Make a list of the things you need to buy. A list will remind you of what you need and help you cut down on unnecessary purchases while shopping.





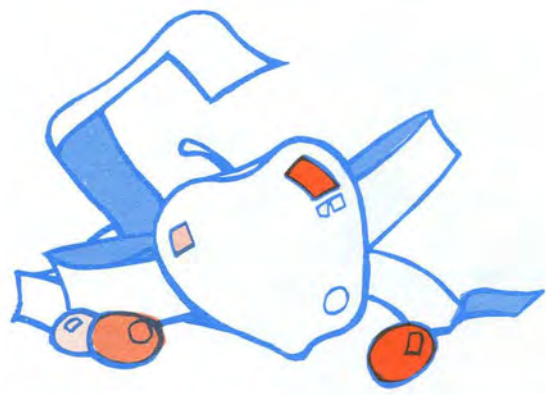
# A SCHEDULE OF THINGS TO DO

	KEEPING THINGS CLEAN	PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS TO MEET	RECORDS TO KEEP
<b>EVERY MEAL TIME</b>	<p>Wash your hands before preparing food and after using the bathroom, handling garbage, or changing a diaper.</p> <p>Have the children wash their hands before eating and before helping you handle the food.</p> <p>Wash off the lid before opening cans of food.</p> <p>Do not use eggs with cracked shells.</p> <p>Do not use insect sprays near the food.</p>	<p>In order for you to claim meals served to your enrolled children (or foster children) living in your home, make sure that enrolled children who live outside your home are present during each meal service. Only one meal per child may be claimed at each meal service.</p> <p>Serve meals only to children 12 years old and younger and to children of migrant workers 15 years old and younger. Ask your sponsoring organization about any older handicapped people that you take care of in your home. Otherwise, you might not be paid for meals you serve to them.</p>	<p>Count and record the number of breakfasts, lunches, suppers, and snacks you serve to enrolled children.</p> <p>Count and record the number of children, including your own, enrolled in your home for day care.</p> <p>(Contact your sponsoring organization about requirements for documenting family size and income information.)</p>
<b>DAILY</b>	<p>Clean up the kitchen area so it is ready for preparing and serving your first meal tomorrow.</p> <p>Cover and properly store all of the leftover food from meals served today.</p> <p>Handle food carefully. Keep hot food hot (140°F or hotter) and cold food cold (45° F or colder) at all times to help avoid food-poisoning.</p>	<p>Make sure the meals meet the requirements listed in the food charts. Serve meals without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, or handicap to the enrolled children in your day care home.</p> <p>You may serve up to three of the following meal types daily to each child: breakfast, lunch, supper, or snack. If you serve three meals, one must be a snack.</p>	<p>Record the number of children present in your home for day care.</p>
<b>WEEKLY</b>			<p>Plan written menus.</p> 
<b>MONTHLY</b>		<p>Participate in any training that your sponsoring organization asks you to attend.</p> <p>Allow your sponsoring organization to visit your home in order to answer any questions you may have to help you keep your day care home running smoothly.</p>	<p>Send copies of all your menus to your sponsoring organization. You should also keep on hand copies of these menus for program reviews. These menus and other records are important. They must be available at all times, because they document costs that your sponsoring organization will claim for reimbursement. Your records and the sponsoring organization's records must be accurate. Otherwise, you and your sponsoring organization will not receive reimbursement from the Child Care Food Program.</p> 
<b>SEVERAL TIMES A YEAR</b>			



# BUYING YOUR FOOD

Here are some tips to help you buy your food:



## BEFORE YOU SHOP

Plan your menu for the week ahead and list the items you need to buy at the grocery store.

Explore your neighborhood to find the most reasonable prices, and the best-stocked, and cleanest food store.

Decide when to buy each type of food you will need. Unless they are frozen, fruits and vegetables, milk products, breads, meat and fish will only remain good to eat for a short time no matter how well they are stored. Remember that canned and boxed foods will remain fresh if they are left unopened.

Decide if you can save money by buying large quantities (by case) or institutional packs of food items.

Plan your weekly menu on the number of children you will feed during each day. This way, you will waste less food and have fewer leftovers.

Use fresh fruits and vegetables often. When buying canned fruits, look for those packed in fruit juice or light syrup.

## WHEN YOU SHOP

Buy only the items on your list.

Buy only pasteurized, Grade A milk products.

Buy only 100 percent pure fruit and vegetable juices.

Buy bread and cereal that are wrapped well so you know they will be fresh when you serve them.

Buy meats and poultry that have the USDA stamp of approval.

Check to make sure that if a date is stamped on the food product you are about to buy, the date is not beyond the date you buy it. For example, if you are shopping on May 10, you should not purchase anything with a date stamp of May 9 or earlier.

Read labels on all food *before* you put them in your shopping cart so you know exactly what you are buying.

Know something about the way contents are listed on packaged foods. Contents are listed on food labels with the main items written first. For example, a can of beef and gravy may list the contents as: "Water gravy base, beef, salt, . . ." This label tells you that you are buying mainly water, which does not make it a good purchase.

## WHEN YOU GET HOME

Place foods that may spoil in the refrigerator or freezer.

How your meals taste, and how good they are for the children depends on the time you spend preparing the food. Be certain that foods are stored properly. Check to see that they are well wrapped and protected in between uses.



## IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

- DOCTOR:
- POLICE:
- FIRE DEPARTMENT:
- POISON CONTROL CENTER:
- AMBULANCE:
- SPONSORING ORGANIZATION:





# FOOD CHARTS

All of the meals you prepare for the children in your day care home must follow the meal patterns presented here. The amounts of food you serve to children depend on their ages.

You may serve up to three of the following meal types daily to each child: breakfast, lunch, supper, or snack. If you serve three meals, one must be a snack.

Use whole grain products often. They are good sources of B vitamins, minerals, and dietary fiber. Plan menus that are moderate in fat, salt, and sugar. Always check to

make sure the meals and snacks you serve meet the USDA meal pattern requirements listed below. You only will be paid for the meals that meet these requirements.

FOODS FOR BABIES	Ages 0-4 months	Ages 4-8 months	Ages 8-12 months
<b>BREAKFAST</b>  Infant Formula (iron fortified) Infant Cereal (iron fortified)	4-6 ounces 0	6-8 ounces 1-3 tablespoons	6-8 ounces* 2-4 tablespoons
<b>SNACK</b> (supplement)  Infant Formula (iron fortified) or full-strength fruit juice or whole fluid milk Enriched or whole grain bread or cracker-type product (suitable for infants)	4-6 ounces 0 0 0 0	2-4 ounces 2-4 ounces 0 0-¼ slice** 0-2 crackers**	2-4 ounces 2-4 ounces 2-4 ounces 0-¼ slice** 0-2 crackers**
<b>LUNCH OR SUPPER</b>  Infant Formula (iron fortified) Infant Cereal (iron fortified), strained fruit and/or vegetable (to total) Strained meat, fish, poultry, or egg yolk or cheese or cottage cheese, cheese food, or cheese spread	4-6 ounces 0 0 0 0 0	6-8 ounces 1-2 tablespoons 1-2 tablespoons 0-1 tablespoon** 0-½ ounce** 0-1 ounce**	6-8 ounces*  3-4 tablespoons 1-4 tablespoons ½-2 ounces 1-4 ounces

\* or 6-8 ounces of whole milk and 0-3 ounces of full strength fruit juice.

\*\* These items are suggested, not required. Parents should ask their doctor if they have questions about what their baby should eat.

This chart lists the amounts and types of foods to be served to children who are 1 year old and older.

FOODS FOR CHILDREN AGES 1 to 12	Ages 1-3	Ages 3-6	Ages 6-12
<b>BREAKFAST</b>  Milk  Juice or Fruit or Vegetable  Bread or Bread Alternate including cereal, cold dry  or cereal, hot cooked	½ cup  ¼ cup  ½ slice* ¼ cup or ⅓ ounce  ¼ cup	¾ cup  ½ cup  ½ slice* ⅓ cup or ½ ounce  ¼ cup	1 cup  ½ cup  1 slice* ¾ cup or 1 ounce  ½ cup
<b>SNACK</b> (Supplement) Select 2 out of the 4 components  Milk  Juice or Fruit or Vegetable  Meat or Meat Alternate  Bread or Bread Alternate including cereal, cold dry  or cereal, hot cooked	½ cup  ½ cup  ½ ounce  ½ slice* ¼ cup or ⅓ ounce  ¼ cup	½ cup  ½ cup  ½ ounce  ½ slice* ⅓ cup or ½ ounce  ¼ cup	1 cup  ¾ cup  1 ounce  1 slice* ¾ cup or 1 ounce  ½ cup
<b>LUNCH or SUPPER</b>  Milk  Meat or Poultry or Fish or egg or cheese or cooked dry beans or peas or peanut butter Vegetables and/or Fruits (to total) (2 or more) Bread or Bread Alternate	½ cup  1 ounce 1 1 ounce ¼ cup 2 tablespoons ¼ cup ½ slice*	¾ cup  1½ ounces 1 1½ ounces ⅔ cup 3 tablespoons ½ cup ½ slice*	1 cup  2 ounces 1 2 ounces ½ cup 4 tablespoons ¾ cup 1 slice*

\* or an equivalent serving of bread alternate such as a roll, biscuit, muffin, cooked enriched or whole-grain rice, macaroni, noodles or other pasta products.



# MENU PLANNING WORKSHEET

## SAMPLE WEEK'S MENU

Week of \_\_\_\_\_, 19 \_\_\_\_

Day Care Home \_\_\_\_\_

Meal Requirements	Serving Size for 3-6 year olds	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
BREAKFAST		Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____
Milk	¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup
Juice or fruit or vegetable	½ cup	Banana ½ cup	Pineapple juice ½ cup	Grapefruit sections ½ cup	Grape juice ½ cup	Applesauce ½ cup
Bread or cereal, cold or hot	½ slice ½ cup or ½ oz	Cornflakes ⅓ cup	Blueberry muffin 1	Toast ½ slice	Whole wheat toast ½ slice	Pancakes/ syrup 1
Other foods	¼ cup			Link sausage 1	Peanut butter/ honey 2 tsp	
SNACK:	(Choose 2 of 4)	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____
Milk	½ cup	Tomato juice ¼ cup	Chocolate milk ½ cup	Apricot halves ¼ cup	Milk ½ cup	Orange juice ½ cup
Juice or fruit or vegetable	½ cup	Celery sticks 4	Graham crackers 2	Raisins 1 ½ oz box	Cornflakes ⅓ cup	Peanut butter sandwich ¼
Meat or meat alternate	½ oz	Oatmeal cookie 1		Drop cookie 1		
Bread or cereal, cold or hot	½ slice ½ cup ¼ cup					
LUNCH:		Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____
Milk	¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup
Meat and/or meat alternate	1 ½ oz	Baked chicken drumstick 1	Hamburger on bun 1	Tuna salad on lettuce ½ cup, 1 ½ oz tuna	Macaroni & cheese w/ham ½ cup, 1 oz cheese,	Fish sticks (3) 1 ½ oz
Vegetables and/or fruits (2 or more to total)	½ cup	Mashed potatoes ¼ cup	French fried potatoes ¾ cup	Tomato wedge— ¼ tomato	½ oz ham, ¼ cup macaroni	Tomato wedge ¼ cup
Bread	½ slice	Green peas ¼ cup	Lettuce & pickles ⅓ cup	Cinnamon apple-sauce ¼ cup	Spinach ¼ cup	Cornbread 1 sm.
Other foods		Biscuit/honey 1 sm.		Whole wheat bread ½ slice	Orange half	Apple wedge ¼ cup
SNACK:	(Choose 2 of 4)	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____
Milk	½ cup	Milk ½ cup	Orange juice ½ cup	Milk ½ cup	Sliced fresh peaches ½ cup	Milk ½ cup
Juice or fruit or vegetable	½ cup	Chocolate chip cookie 1	Crackers 2	Cinnamon toast ½ slice	Soft pretzel 1	Zwieback 2 pieces
Meat or meat alternate	½ oz		Cheese ½ oz			
Bread or cereal, cold or hot	½ slice ½ cup ¼ cup					
SUPPER:		Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____
Milk	¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup	Milk ¾ cup
Meat and/or meat alternate	1 ½ oz	Beef vegetable stew ½ cup, 1 ½ oz meat	Batter-fried fish 1 ½ oz	Pizzaburger ½ oz cheese 1 oz meat, ½ bun	Chicken-vegetable soup ½ cup, 1 oz meat,	Beef and spaghetti- ½ cup,
Vegetables and/or fruits (2 or more to total)	½ cup	¼ cup vegetables	Broccoli spears ¼ cup	Relishes (carrot sticks, cauliflower, & pitted olives) ¼ cup	¼ cup vegetables	meat 1 ½ oz.
Bread	½ slice	Strawberries ¼ cup	Banana ½ sm.	Seedless grapes ¼ cup	Watermelon ¼ cup	Green salad ¼ cup
Other foods		Biscuit 1 sm.	Roll 1 sm.		Saltine crackers 4	Plums ¼ cup
					Cheese ½ oz	French bread ½ slice

# MENU PLANNING WORKSHEET

Week of \_\_\_\_\_, 19 \_\_\_\_

Day Care Home \_\_\_\_\_

Meal Requirements	Serving Size for 3-6 year olds	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
BREAKFAST		Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____
Milk	¾ cup					
Juice or fruit or vegetable	½ cup					
Bread or cereal, cold or hot	½ slice ½ cup or ½ oz ¼ cup					
Other foods						
SNACK:	(Choose 2 of 4)	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____
Milk	½ cup					
Juice or fruit or vegetable	½ cup					
Meat or meat alternate	½ oz					
Bread or cereal, cold or hot	½ slice ½ cup ¼ cup					
LUNCH:		Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____
Milk	¾ cup					
Meat and/or meat alternate	1 ½ oz					
Vegetables and/or fruits (2 or more to total)	½ cup					
Bread	½ slice					
Other foods						
SNACK:	(Choose 2 of 4)	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____
Milk	½ cup					
Juice or fruit or vegetable	½ cup					
Meat or meat alternate	½ oz					
Bread or cereal, cold or hot	½ slice ½ cup ¼ cup					
SUPPER:		Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____	Children Served _____
Milk	¾ cup					
Meat and/or meat alternate	1 ½ oz					
Vegetables and/or fruits (2 or more to total)	½ cup					
Bread	½ slice					
Other foods						



# POINTS TO REMEMBER FOR MENU PLANNING

Successful menu planning leads to the best possible meals at minimum cost. It also helps children to learn to eat well and enjoy a wide variety of foods. Plan your menus to include foods from the following four food groups. Check the food chart for the required amounts of each food to serve. The following points can help you plan menus that meet program requirements:

## MEAT AND MEAT ALTERNATES

Meat, poultry, fish, and meat alternates such as eggs, peanut butter, and cooked dry beans or peas are important sources of protein, iron, and other minerals and vitamins.

- You may use any meat or meat alternate listed on the food chart, or a combination, such as cheese and meat, to fill the meat requirement. If you serve peanut butter or cheese with enriched soda crackers, graham crackers, or on whole wheat or enriched white bread, you also meet the bread requirement.
- A serving of cooked meat means lean meat without bone; a serving of cooked poultry can include meat and skin.

## VEGETABLES AND FRUITS

Fruits and vegetables are good sources of vitamin C, vitamin A, and fiber. Plan to serve a variety of them.

- You must use two or more different vegetables and/or fruits for lunch and supper. For example, you may use apples with oranges, potatoes with carrots, or green beans with bananas.

- You cannot serve the same food in two different forms, such as orange juice and a whole orange, to meet the total requirements.

- Use fresh fruits and vegetables often.

- You may use full-strength juices to meet part of the vegetable/fruit requirement.

- You cannot use fruit flavored drinks or punches since most fruit drinks have less than 50 percent full-strength juice.

- You cannot serve syrup from canned fruit separately and count it as fruit juice.

- You cannot use juice for the snack when milk is the only other component.

## BREADS AND BREAD ALTERNATES

Enriched breads and cereals, especially whole wheat bread and rolled oats, are important sources of B vitamins, iron, and fiber, and also some protein.

- You must use only whole-grain or enriched breads and bread alternates to meet requirements. Cereals must be enriched, whole-grain, or fortified. Read labels on commercial products to be sure they are whole-grain or enriched.

- You may count enriched or whole-grain macaroni products, noodles, corn grits, or rice toward meeting the bread requirement. Ask your sponsoring agency for a list of other bread alternates.

- You cannot count foods such as cake and pie crust, which are customarily served as dessert items, toward meeting the bread requirement.

- You cannot meet the bread requirement with snack foods such as popcorn, hard pretzels and corn chips.

- You may not use cookies for the bread requirement at breakfast, lunch, or supper. Doughnuts or sweet rolls count only at breakfast.

## MILK

Milk provides most of the calcium in the average American diet. It also provides vitamin A and protein.

- Milk means fluid types of pasteurized whole, lowfat, and skim milk, which are flavored or unflavored, or cultured buttermilk.

- Milk must be served as a beverage at lunch and supper. At breakfast or for snacks you may serve milk as a beverage or on cereal or use part of it for each purpose.

# YOUR SPONSORING ORGANIZATION'S RESPONSIBILITIES

These are the things your sponsoring organization should do for you:

- Provide you with the forms you need to participate in the Child Care Food Program.
- Provide you with any help you feel you need.
- Provide you with training to be sure you understand the program requirements.
- Enter into a written agreement with you that spells out your responsibilities and rights, and the sponsoring organization's responsibilities and rights.
- Make certain you receive money for each meal you serve to the enrolled children.
- Visit you periodically to answer questions and offer assistance.