



**Alignment of The Dr. Yum Preschool Food Adventure (6th edition)  
with National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC)  
Early Childhood Program Standards and Accreditation Criteria**

**Standard 1 RELATIONSHIPS**

*1.A. Building Positive Relationships among Teachers and Families*

The Dr. Yum Preschool Food Adventure encourages parents and teachers to be part of a team with the goal of teaching children how to enjoy healthy foods. Teachers are provided with a training manual outlining the approach of the program and parents are also provided with a parent version of this manual meant to increase consistency between home and the classroom. Teachers are encouraged to invite parents to be volunteer helpers during the lessons so they can also see the approach first hand. For every lesson, teachers provide feedback sheets (in English or Spanish) that are sent home with students outlining the recipe and how the child interacted with the food using all of their senses. Both teachers and parents also receive monthly e-newsletters about ways to raise a healthy eater with seasonal content, ideas and tips.

*1.B. Building Positive Relationships Between Teachers and Children*

Teachers are guided on how to introduce fruits and vegetables in a fun and joyful way that respects a child's choices and considers their possible sensitivities and hesitancy to trying new foods. A multisensory approach that celebrates interacting with the foods with all five senses, not just tasting, makes it easy to foster a positive and encouraging interaction between teachers and students when presenting the lesson. They are also trained to guide students to talk about food in a positive way using descriptive words and to take a mindful approach to exploring and eating new foods.

*1.C. Helping Children Make Friends*

The Dr. Yum Preschool Food Adventure allows children to work together to prepare a snack that they can then enjoy together. They also learn to use kind, positive words with each other when describing their food preferences. Teachers can invite kids to be on the same "team" when they have interacted with the fruit or vegetable of the day using any one of their senses. More adventurous eaters can encourage more hesitant eaters to interact with food.

*1.D. Creating a Predictable, Consistent and Harmonious Classroom*

The Dr. Yum Preschool Food Adventure gives children the chance to learn about discussing food in a positive and respectful way. It also encourages mindfulness around eating and trying new foods. Children learn to work together to create a recipe that they can enjoy together. There are also many ways to extend the food lesson using movement and music activities as well as

language, science , mathematics and art activities that encourage working together and sharing ideas between students.

### *1.E. Addressing Challenging Behaviors*

Trying new foods can be particularly challenging for some students. Through teacher training, teachers learn some of the root causes of picky eating and other problem behavior so that they may have a better understanding of how to address it in the classroom. Teachers are also shown some specific techniques for helping kids to feel comfortable around new foods. They are taught that gentle encouragement and a respect for a child's abilities and comfort around new foods, are the best ways to help children progress through problem eating behaviors. In teacher training modules, teachers are shown how they may be helpful in identifying particularly challenging behaviors that may require an evaluation by a child's medical team.

### *1.F. Promoting Self-Regulation*

Teachers are shown ways of helping to encourage positive interactions with food with a number of strategies that are introduced in teacher training and the teacher training manual. A joyful and consistent approach even helps children with feeding disorders to be able to enjoy the curriculum. Children are provided opportunities to participate in each lesson as much as they are comfortable. They learn to wait for instructions and follow food safety and cleanliness rules when preparing food. They also learn to share and take turns while preparing a recipe with classmates.

## **Standard 2: Curriculum**

### *2.A. Curriculum: Essential Characteristics*

Dr. Yum's Preschool Food Adventure aims to be a solution for the problem of obesity and feeding issues in preschool aged-children. This is a proven interactive program written by a pediatrician and pediatric feeding specialist which introduces preschoolers to simple culinary skills using fresh fruits and vegetables. The lessons present students with nutrition information about each fruit or vegetable and a multi-sensory experience with whole foods. With unique teacher training modules that focus on feeding development and key parent education components, the program has been implemented in a variety of early childhood centers across a spectrum of socio-economic backgrounds. It is also inclusive of children with special needs, a population which often has feeding and nutrition challenges. Research which analyzes parent and teacher survey data, proves its effectiveness in changing attitudes and eating behaviors at home and school.

### *2.B. Areas of Development: Social-Emotional Development*

Students are encouraged to have positive interactions with team activities like food preparation during the lessons presented in Dr. Yum's Preschool Food Adventure. Children are taught respectful ways of socializing around food preparation, during mealtimes, and are encouraged to help each other to build positive relationships with food.

### *2.C. Areas of Development: Physical Development*



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Students are introduced to gross motor activities in several of the lessons in conjunction with music. All of the lessons include multiple fine motor activities that are exercised while students prepare healthy foods. Many of these activities utilize safe child-oriented cooking tools provided as part of the program to each classroom. Using these tools help them to build food preparation skills they will use for life. Dr. Yum's Preschool Food Adventure aims to familiarize children with healthy foods, which when eaten regularly can also enhance a child's physical development and well-being.

#### *2.D. Areas of Development: Language Development*

When students are introduced to a new fruit or vegetable they are encouraged to share language that describes the food as they experience it with all of their senses. Teachers are instructed to help introduce new words that describe their experience and build vocabulary. Suggested books are included as a way to further explore ideas and language along the theme of each lesson.

#### *2.E. Curriculum Content Area for Cognitive Development: Early Literacy*

Age appropriate books which encourage healthy eating are provided for use in Circle Time as part of the curriculum kit. Each lesson also lists additional storybooks that can be purchased or borrowed to share with students to help enhance the understanding and connection to the featured fruit or vegetable.

#### *2.F. Curriculum Content Area for Cognitive Development: Early Mathematics*

While preparing simple recipes students using Dr. Yum's Preschool Food Adventure, children are encouraged to practice counting and are introduced to units of measurement like teaspoons and cups, commonly used in cooking. Lessons in temperature and weight are also introduced in some lessons. As children chop various ingredients, they can be sorted into different bowls by type, color, or size. They can also be sequenced for a math activity. Other activities include graphing favorite ingredients or making predictions about a completed recipe.

#### *2.G. Curriculum Content Area for Cognitive Development: Science*

Students are taught about how different fruits and vegetables grow in different ways (i.e., on a vine, under the ground, on a tree) and how they are able to eat different parts of a plant. Many of the lessons have a suggested classroom garden activity in which students can participate first hand in growing an edible. Nutrition concepts are shared in age-appropriate terms and students learn about how certain vitamins and minerals contained in foods can help their bodies work their best. Students are also introduced to the concept of temperature and how temperature can transform foods into different forms. Lessons also introduce the concept of the microbiome and how the fiber from fruits and vegetables feeds the friendly microbes in our gut.

#### *2.H. Curriculum Content Area for Cognitive Development: Technology*



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There are no passive technology components to this program. However, teachers are encouraged to find their own extension activities which could include active technology components that would enhance understanding of the concepts presented in the lesson. Also parents are encouraged to visit the doctoryum.org website for more recipes and ideas. On this website is a free feature, the Meal-O-Matic (also an app) that allows children and parents to select ingredients on hand to make a customized recipe.

### *2.J. Curriculum Content Area for Cognitive Development: Creative Expression and Appreciation for the Arts*

Extension activities include forms of expression, including art, dance, imaginative play, music, drawing, painting, writing (usually via dictation), music, and movement. Art activities are an important part of the Dr. Yum Preschool Food Adventure and serve as a way to explore and familiarize students with the foods introduced in each lesson. There are several movement activities which involve music and also serve as a playful way to explore new foods.

### *2.K. Curriculum Content Area for Cognitive Development: Health and Safety*

The central mission of the Dr. Yum Project Food Adventure is to familiarize children with a number of fresh fruits and vegetables so that they are eventually incorporated in their diet. A diet rich in these whole foods is central to health and development of children. Children are introduced to basic nutrition concepts so they start to understand the connection between food and their overall health. Children are also taught about safety around food prep, tools and the importance of hand washing, especially when preparing foods.

### *2.L. Curriculum Content Area for Cognitive Development: Social Studies*

Extension activities include an “Around the World” section. Students are taught where the featured fruit and vegetable may originate, where it may have traveled, and may be taught about recipes, their origins and cultural traditions. Teachers are encouraged to invite community members or family members to share their own cultural food and food traditions with the class.

## **Standard 3: Teaching**

### *3.A. Designing Enriched Learning Environments*

Dr. Yum’s Preschool Food Adventure consists of 24 lessons with core activities which are centered around different featured fruit and vegetables. Children are encouraged to exercise mindfulness by using all of their senses to appreciate a new fruit or vegetable. Even children who are more sensitive or hesitant to new foods are offered ways to interact with foods that are explorative and joyful. Lessons have core activities that maximize an understanding of a featured food including nutrition concepts, discussion of how a food grows, vocabulary to describe it and ways to interact using all senses when using the food to prepare a snack. Extension activities can be used to maximize learning with activities highlighting literacy, art, science, motor/music, and community connections.



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### *3.B. Creating Caring Communities for Learning*

This program includes lessons intended to be shared and experienced in a cooperative group environment. Students are invited to be part of a team that appreciates and interacts with a new fruit or vegetable and to participate in a group cooking activity and shared recipe. Students are also taught respectful language around food and to respect each other's food preferences.

### *3.C. Supervising children*

Training materials for teachers stress the importance of supervising children in key activities like handwashing, and food preparation tasks, including those which utilize kid-safe kitchen tools. Supervision around tasting activities is also encouraged.

### *3.D. Using Time, Groupings, and Routines to Achieve Learning Goals*

The structure of the lesson is meant to be flexible so it meets the needs of a variety of school settings. Core activities in circle time provide a routine of learning that precedes the food preparation and sensory activities. Extension activities can be scheduled by the teachers during the same day or throughout the week or month that a lesson is presented in order to provide further enhancement and additional learning.

### *3.E. Responding to Children's Interests and Needs*

Teachers are given lessons with flexible core and extension activities which the child can choose from. Participation is encouraged but is left to the child's comfort level. Children are taught about fruits and vegetables using a variety of methods including sensory activities and simple food preparation. Because children have differing histories and abilities, they are encouraged to interact with the foods only in ways that are comfortable for them. If they are not ready to taste a new food, they are encouraged to touch, smell, or describe the ways it looks or sounds when they interact with it. Even children with a variety of special needs can successfully partake in the lessons, gaining an increased level of comfort with healthy, whole foods.

### *3.F. Making Learning Meaningful for All Children*

The Dr. Yum Preschool Food Adventure has a special mission to help kids of all abilities learn to love food and has been tested in many settings including centers serving children with special needs. Often children with special needs have developmental challenges that can make trying new foods difficult. These children may therefore have a very narrow range of foods they are comfortable eating, and many of the foods on their list may not be the most nutritious. Because of the flexible nature of the lessons and how they are presented, a teacher may take a very slow, consistent, steady and joyful approach when introducing new foods to all children. This approach can be particularly important and effective in helping to provide a relaxed, fun class environment where children with special needs can be introduced to a wide variety of healthy foods at a pace that is more comfortable. Each lesson contains a "Coach Mel Tip" written by pediatric feeding therapist Melanie Potock, which helps kids who are hesitant to try new foods gain more confidence. Generally these tips can be useful and enjoyable for kids of all abilities to enjoy new foods.



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### *3.G. Using Instruction to Deepen Children's Understanding and Build Their Skills and Knowledge*

The Dr. Yum Preschool Food Adventure has carefully planned lessons to help children gain a deeper understanding and appreciation of fruits and vegetables, with the goal of helping them to make healthy food choices. Nutrition concepts help them understand the connection between the foods they eat and their effects on the human body. Circle Time activities highlight a mindful appreciation of new foods using all of the senses. Teachers encourage language development by helping them to describe what they see, hear, smell, feel and taste when experiencing a new food. In Circle Time children are also shown an illustration of a featured fruit or vegetable and are taught how that food grows and which part of the plant is edible. Many lessons include a garden activity that demonstrates how students can grow the food themselves in a classroom or school garden. Extension activities further deepen their knowledge by sharing where a food may originate and cultural traditions that may be pertinent to the food. A deeper joyful experience and connection may be made to a new food by other activities like music, movement, art, science, storybooks and community connections.

## **Standard 5: Health**

### *5.A. Promoting and Protecting Children's Health and Controlling Infectious Disease*

This goal aims to improve a child's relationship with healthy whole foods and establish healthy habits for a lifetime. Parents and teachers are offered proven strategies to accomplish this goal in children with a spectrum of abilities. Improving intake of healthy, whole foods and preventing diet-related illness and childhood obesity are the core mission of this program. Key activities like handwashing help children control the spread of disease in the short term, while learning to eat nutrient dense foods help them build strong immunity for a healthy body in the long term.

### *5.B. Ensuring Children's Nutritional Well-being*

One goal of the program is to address the problems of feeding disorders and childhood obesity in young children. Many of these problems arise because parents and teachers are not exposed to basic concepts around feeding development and how to encourage healthy feeding practices in stress-free and constructive ways. With consistent exposure to fresh fruits and vegetables during Dr. Yum's lessons in school and key parent education materials to continue education at home, the research has shown improvement in nine key areas of feeding attitudes and behaviors. These include an increase in enjoyment of food, decrease in food refusals, and increase in willingness to try new foods. Research has also shown that parents gained an appreciation for cooking with their children at home and realized the importance of introducing plain water as a preferred beverage which can reduce the incidence of tooth decay and obesity.

### *5.C. Maintaining a Healthful Environment*

In teacher trainings and written training materials teachers are introduced to the idea that the classroom can be an ideal place for creating a culture of wellness, including healthy eating habits. Teachers are encouraged to serve as role models when it comes to healthy eating, even overcoming their own taste preferences to show children that even adults can learn to try new foods. They are also given information about how food rewards can set up an unhealthy



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relationship around food and that children often prefer non-food rewards. Teachers are shown that reducing exposure to sugar and processed foods in the classroom can help improve children's overall health. Teachers are offered a "Class Party Toolbox" with ideas on how to celebrate holidays with healthy whole food recipes from the curriculum and [doctoryum.org](http://doctoryum.org), the Dr.Yum Project website.

## **Standard 7: Families**

### *7.A. Knowing and Understanding the Program's Families*

Parent involvement is key in helping students carry the experience of trying healthy foods at school to the home environment. Teachers are encouraged to invite interested parents to volunteer during the lessons so they can experience how the lesson works firsthand. They are also given other educational materials and feedback sheets for ongoing communication about the lessons and additional exposure to techniques they can use at home to promote healthy eating.

### *7.B. Sharing Information Between Staff and Families*

Teachers are asked to distribute paper or electronic copies of a Parent Manual which gives an overview of the program. This manual also gives a comprehensive understanding of the problem of obesity and feeding disorders in children and how parents can continue the proven techniques for fostering an appreciation of healthy foods at home. After each lesson, teachers send home a feedback sheet which summarizes the recipe that the class made and a description of how their child experienced the lesson using all of their senses. Parents are also directed to another recipe using the same featured ingredient from the free [doctoryum.org](http://doctoryum.org) website. Monthly newsletters also highlight specific techniques for fostering healthy eating habits in young children and how to overcome barriers to healthy eating in different situations or seasons.

### *7.C. Nurturing Families as Advocates for Their Children*

In addition to a parent manual, classroom volunteering experiences, monthly feedback sheets and newsletter, parents are also introduced to the [doctoryum.org](http://doctoryum.org) website and other books and resources for more information on how to create a culture of wellness in the home. Doctoryum.org is a place where families can learn to tackle the very real barriers to healthy eating in the home, namely cost, convenience and taste. The limitless free recipes, website tools for cooking, blogpost links, ideas and downloads makes up a comprehensive toolbox which families can use years after children have completed the Dr. Yum Preschool Food Adventure.