

Marin Child Care Council Growing Strong Award

Growing Strong Award certificate program

The Growing Strong award certification is a free and voluntary opportunity for all child care providers. This program assesses child care sites on their nutrition and physical activity practices. Participants receive support through Marin Child Care Council HEAL grant. Through self-assessment, goal setting, resources and training by MC3 coaches we work with providers to help make improvements. Best practices will be recognized in areas that help empower children and their families in making life long healthy behaviors.

Self- Assessment:

Providers will fill out CHOICE survey which help direct areas of improvement.

Goal setting and policy making:

After completing CHOICE survey coaches will help give feedback on potential areas of improvement. Providers focus on areas which they would like to see improvement. Support is given on creating action and accomplish goals.

Resources:

Resources are given through one on one coaching and support. They also can be found on the HEAL website. HEAL has a Lending Library available for all participants through the Growing Healthy Award. Books, cooking material, movement and fitness supplies and other great resources can be checked out at MC3. Monthly newsletters provide themes, activities and handouts for staff and family.

Classes and Workshops:

MC3 offers multiple workshops through HEAL. Topics cover elements of the Growing Healthy Award. HEAL coaches also can schedule classes at child care facilities for staff and families. These workshops cover information on nutrition, policy development, best practices and physical activities to share.

Technical Assistance:

At any time, providers can call email and schedule a visit with our HEAL coaches. They can receive site visit that cover gardening activities, fitness fun and nutrition and cooking recipes and support.

Benefits

Child care providers who participate in this free program will:

- Learn best practices when it comes to nutrition and physical fitness
- Learn the programs strengths and challenges in these areas
- Receive assistance in setting goals and policy development.
- Receive newsletter, resources, workshops and one on visits
- Attend training and workshops that provide

Recognition

There are many ways that participating in the Growing Strong Award will provide. Through actively engaging in HEAL initiative, staff and facility will be improved through hand on training and resources. During the Mc3 yearly provider appreciation dinner awards will be given for those who have made improvements in their child care facility through the Growing Strong. In addition, each site will walk away with a Growing Strong Award certification. In addition, every child care center or family child care home will be listed under the Mc3 website for the public to see.

Award levels

See below document for elements to expand upon

Growing GOLD Award: Three required elements + one elective

Strong SILVER Award: Three required elements + 2 electives

Bronze Award: Three required elements + 3 or more electives

| Elements | HEAL Award Criteria |
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| Professional Development (required) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a leadership team that support Heal work at child care site. • Have staff participate in at least two educational classes provided through HEAL (onsite or at mc3 and or partner sites) |
| Family Engagement & Partnerships (required) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage families in healthy eating and wellness through resources and education. Such as: Emails and or bulletin boards that provide information on wellness topics/ recipes. • Create partnership and understanding with families on birthday non treats options and snack/lunch guidelines. |
| Wellness Policy Develop (required) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a written wellness policy around edible gardening, breastfeeding, meal quality, nutrition education, family education, staff wellness/training. |
| Nutrition Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A healthy eating environment that displays healthy food posters, story books and other material. • Provide nutrition experiences with children at least twice a month. Cooking, taste test, hand on learning. |
| Edible Gardening | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly garden learning and activities weekly • Utilize outdoor garden in class learning and enrichment |
| Mealtime Environment | <p>Serve meals and snacks <i>Family Style</i>:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children have a calm eating environment with adequate time to eat food • Staff sit and eat with children. Modeling healthy eating. |
| Eco Healthy Child Care Standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have attended at least 2 Eco Healthy Child Care trainings at Mc3. • Have incorporated 3 of Eco healthy practices into your facility. • Provide parent education through handout and or bulletin board. |
| Physical Activity Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unstructured physical activities for 60 min for Full day and 30min for half day program • Structured Physical Activities for 60 min for full day and 30 min for half day program • Integrate Physical activity into child care program with positive messages and activities and education to families and children • Media use is limited and only used for educational purposes |
| Nutrition Policy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following Guidelines set forth by USDA: • Follow appropriate meal scheduling, serving size and safety principles. • Meals and snacks meet USDA~CACFP Guidelines |
| ECO Child Care | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopting 7 areas of Eco child care check list. • Share educational material from Child Environmental Health Network |