

# CACFP BOOT CAMP HEAD START

December 4, 2025



**\$149\***

Discover how nutrition and CACFP regulations work hand in hand with Head Start programs to support children and families. From infant feeding to family style dining, these sessions will give you practical tools and fresh inspiration to strengthen your program. Walk away with strategies you can apply right away to build healthier habits and brighter futures in Head Start.

*Available on demand for attendees through December 17, 2025.  
Earn 6.5 hours of CEUs; Certificate(s) Provided*

## Topics Include:

- » The Power of Head Start
- » CACFP & Head Start Food Service Regulations
- » Early Head Start: Feeding Infants Through Their First Year
- » Healthy Starts Here: CACFP Meal Components and Child Well-Being
- » Family Style Dining: Basics to Best Practice
- » Ask Us Anything: CACFP Head Start

Register today at [cacfp.org/head-start-bootcamp](https://cacfp.org/head-start-bootcamp)

\*Register by November 20 for early registration (\$149 for members and \$199 for non-members)  
Visit our website to see more rates.

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All times listed are Eastern

11:00 am - 11:30 am

## The Power of Head Start

From the bottle to the first bite of broccoli, Head Start programs are laying the groundwork for a lifetime of healthy habits. Get inspired and learn how Head Start programs integrate comprehensive nutrition services into early childhood education, ensuring children receive nutrient-dense meals, nutrition education and family support that align with the CACFP meal patterns.

- Understand how Head Start programs implement CACFP infant and child meal patterns.
- Apply findings from the SNACS II study to improve CACFP meal planning in Head Start settings.

*Isabel Ramos-Lebron, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

11:45 am - 12:45 pm

## CACFP & Head Start Food Service Regulations

Understand the performance standards that shape child nutrition and see how they connect with CACFP to support healthy meals for children in Head Start. Explore the latest updates to the standards so you're fully up to speed on what's new.

- Understand the Head Start Program Performance Standards.
- Identify the Head Start regulations that govern the food program.
- Learn how the performance standards align with the CACFP regulations.

*Stephanie Manchester, CMP, CCNP, Acelero Learning*

1:00 pm - 1:30 pm

## Early Head Start: Feeding Infants Through Their First Year

Caring for infants is a whirlwind of growth, discovery and feeding transitions! Look at the critical stages of infant nutrition, from bottle feeding to the introduction of solid foods around 6 months of age. Then, look at how feeding practices shift with the CACFP meal pattern for children ages 1–2. We'll explore developmental readiness cues, texture progression and how to support families in making informed, confident feeding decisions

- Identify developmental signs of readiness for transitioning from bottle feeding to solids and onto the meal pattern for ages 1 and 2.
- Apply best practices for introducing new textures, flavors and self-feeding skills.

*Melinda Nguyen, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

## Meet Our Speakers



### Isabel Ramos-Lebron, MS, RDN, LDN

Senior Nutrition Education Specialist  
National CACFP Association

Isabel is committed to serving the CACFP and SFSP communities through nutrition education, program operations support and promoting access to nutritious foods. She has a strong background in working with low-income communities of various cultures through graduate research projects and was previously employed at a nonprofit food bank for eight years. Isabel has a Master of Science in Nutritional Sciences from Rutgers University and completed her dietetic internship through Aramark.



### Stephanie Manchester, CMP, CCNP

Food Service Coordinator  
Acelero Learning

Stephanie has over 15 years of experience in food and nutrition, more than a decade in child care, and over 10 years working with the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). Having personally experienced food insecurity, she is deeply committed to developing innovative strategies that encourage children to try new foods and ensure they receive nutritious meals. She holds a bachelor's degree in psychology from Georgian Court University and a certification in culinary arts.



### Melinda Nguyen, MS, RDN, LD

Nutrition Education Specialist  
National CACFP Association

Melinda is dedicated to showing her passion for nutrition education by developing creative ways to reinforce knowledge. She began her career in Massachusetts by obtaining her Master of Science in Food and Nutrition from Framingham State University. She worked at Head Start, planning meals for toddlers before moving to Texas to work for Whole Foods Market as a Recipe Data Specialist then taking on a role with a State agency. Melinda joined NCA's education team in 2025.

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**2:00 pm - 3:00 pm**

## **Healthy Starts Here: CACFP Meal Components and Child Well-Being**

The CACFP Meal Pattern is more than just rules on a chart, it's a foundation for supporting lifelong health and well-being. We'll explore the "why" behind the meal patterns, how it reflects the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and why it matters in Head Start programs. Learn how these requirements not only meet regulations but also help develop healthy eating habits, school readiness and positive development for young children in your care.

- Understand how the CACFP meal patterns supports child well-being and long-term healthy habits in Head Start.
- Recognize how the meal pattern connects with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans to shape nutritious, balanced meals.
- Identify practical ways to apply the "why" of the CACFP meal patterns in daily program practices that meet both Head Start and CACFP goals.

*Jami Rokala, MS, RDN, LD, CLC, Headwaters Nutrition Counseling*

**3:15 pm - 4:15 pm**

## **Family Style Dining: Basics to Best Practice**

Discover the who, what, when, why and how of family style dining in early childhood settings and at home. Understand how this approach fosters independence, creativity, kindness and lifelong learning skills. Plus, get practical tips for engaging picky eaters and creating a calm, enjoyable mealtime experience for everyone.

- Identify the fundamentals of family style dining.
- Understand the developmental benefits of family style dining.
- Learn how to implement family style dining in your program.

*Misty Sheppard, MPH, CMP, CCNP, Gateway Community Action Partnership*

**4:30 pm - 5:00 pm**

## **Ask Us Anything: CACFP Head Start**

Wrap up the day with our most popular session—an open-floor, fast-paced Q&A where you set the agenda. Bring the questions you've been holding on to (or the ones we didn't get to earlier) and ask our panel of experts directly. This is your chance to get clear, practical answers and leave with the knowledge you need.

*Melinda Nguyen, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

*Isabel Ramos-Lebron, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

*Brittany Uribe, National CACFP Association*

## **Meet Our Speakers**



### **Jami Rokala, MS, RDN, LD, CLC**

Founder/Owner  
Headwaters Nutrition Counseling

Jami received her MS in Nutrition from the University of North Dakota. She has worked as a child nutrition professional since 2013 and currently

contracts with Head Start agencies as an RDN throughout the country. Jami has served on the board for NCA and currently serves on the board of directors for the Association of State Public Health Nutritionists and the University of North Dakota's Nutrition and Dietetic Advisory Committee.



### **Misty Sheppard, MPH, CMP, CCNP**

Nutrition Manager  
Gateway Community Action Partnership

Misty has spent 13 years improving the health of children and families. She specializes in CACFP compliance, menu planning, and culturally responsive

programming. She believes mealtimes can foster learning, connection, and lifelong healthy habits. Outside of work, she enjoys music, fashion, traveling, and time with her husband and two daughters. Misty has an MPH in Nutrition.



### **Brittany Uribe**

Senior Event Specialist  
National CACFP Association

Brittany plans and coordinates all webinars and virtual events for NCA, including those during the National Child Nutrition Conference. Brittany

graduated from Florida State University with a BS in Family and Child Science. She began working for a CACFP sponsor in South Florida in 2013 and grew passionate about expanding CACFP training opportunities and educational resources.

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## ON DEMAND

### Emergency Preparedness in Head Start

Discover ways to integrate emergency preparedness and planning into your facility operation plans while including all departments. Practice writing your own emergency plans to support your program and outline your next steps.

*Sheila Tompkins-Hess Nevada Department of Health & Human Services, Division of Child and Family Services*

### Fun and Flavorful Themed CACFP Menu Planning

Who doesn't like a good theme? Themed parties, costumes and even menus! Explore how to design menus inspired by seasonal events, cultural celebrations and kids' favorite stories. Take home a month's worth of menus for any celebratory or festive occasion by bringing new flavor to your CACFP program — one theme at a time.

- Discover different themes for use in your menu planning.
- Understand how to implement a theme menu planning approach.
- Obtain a menu compliance checklist for checking menu accuracy.

*Melinda Nguyen, MS, RDN, LD, National CACFP Association*

## Meet Our Speakers



### Sheila Tompkins-Hess

Program Officer  
Nevada Department of Health & Human Services,  
Division of Child and Family Services

Sheila has been a supporter of Head Start for much of her life. She attended Head Start as a child and then worked as a teacher, a director and a supervisor for Head Start and Early Head Start programs. Sheila loves working with children and helping staff to increase their skills with the children they support. Sheila has been a trainer at NAEYC, state conferences and ECE trainings in Las Vegas. She attended the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

## Registration Rates & Deadlines

### Member Pricing:

**\$149 Standard Registration**

\$199 Late Registration Starting November 21

### Non-Member Pricing:

**\$199 Standard Registration**

\$249 Late Registration Starting November 21

**“Thank you CACFP Head Start training; such a wealth of knowledge. I look forward to reviewing the videos on repeat to gain a further understanding to better serve our families and children.”**

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## Schedule At-a-Glance by Time Zone

**Thursday, December 4**

**11:00 am - 5:00 pm Eastern**

Eastern	Central	Mountain	Pacific	Session
11:00 am - 11:30 am	10:00 am - 10:30 am	9:00 am - 9:30 am	8:00 am - 8:30 am	The Power of Head Start
11:45 am - 12:45 pm	10:45 am - 11:45 am	9:45 am - 10:45 am	8:45 am - 9:45 am	CACFP & Head Start Food Service Regulations
1:00 pm - 1:30 pm	12:00 pm - 12:30 pm	11:00 am - 11:30 am	10:00 am - 10:30 am	Early Head Start: Feeding Infants Through Their First Year
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4:30 pm - 5:00 pm	3:30 pm - 4:00 pm	2:30 pm - 3:00 pm	1:30 pm - 2:00 pm	Ask Us Anything: CACFP Head Start

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