



### CAO Mealtime Philosophy

- ◆ Always have children and adults wash their hands with soap and water before eating.
- ◆ Make some time to relax before the meal is served.
- ◆ Have some finger foods on hand for children eating in high chairs if they are hungry before the meal is served.
- ◆ Serve food family style, with children serving themselves.
- ◆ Let children decide how much and what types of food they wish to eat.
- ◆ Understand and accept day-to-day variations in appetite.
- ◆ Encourage children and adults to try new foods.
- ◆ Serve all foods at the same time rather than withholding milk, fruit, etc. until they have eaten other foods.
- ◆ Food is not to be used as a reward or punishment.
- ◆ Have teachers sit with the children and eat the same food the children are eating.
- ◆ Encourage children and adults to eat by saying positive comments about the meal served.
- ◆ Plan to serve some snacks that the children can make themselves.
- ◆ Use mealtime to work in some nutrition education, for example: “Carrots can help us see,” “Milk has calcium and that helps our bones get strong.”
- ◆ Incorporate multi-cultural foods in the menu as often as possible.
- ◆ For great information on Adult Nutrition, see the NYS Office for the Aging website ([www.aging.state.ny.us](http://www.aging.state.ny.us)). Click on [Aging Well](#) then [Eating Well](#).