



Nutrition, Food, Beverages and Dietary Requirements Policy

Aim

Service educators will encourage healthy eating and nutrition with children, families and fellow educators. Physical activity and a healthy lifestyle is the main focus by promoting healthy eating habits and a positive influence on the health and wellbeing for every child.

We are committed to implementing and embedding the healthy eating key messages outlined in the NSW Health's *Munch & Move* program into our curriculum and to support the *National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings* outlined in the *Get Up & Grow* resources.

Strategies

- Ensure that educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided.
- Recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds through strong partnerships with families and community.
- Create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying the social interactions with educators and other children.
- Encourage older toddlers and preschool-aged children to help set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink – providing opportunities for them to develop independence, confidence and self-esteem.
- Respect each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he/she eats.
- Be patient with messy or slow eaters.
- Encourage children to try different foods but do not force them to eat.
- Never use food as a reward or withhold food from children for behaviour management purposes.



Menu Planning

- Family and child eating habits will be respected, taking into consideration individual dietary requirements and/or religious and cultural needs, allergies, intolerances and any health needs.
- The service will provide nutritionally balanced meals for all children. They will be adequate in amount, varied and offered at frequent intervals.
- Meals that will be provided will ensure the five food groups are offered in accordance with National Dietary Guidelines.
- Meals will be developed and provided to reflect a wide variety of cultures.
- Morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and late afternoon tea will be offered to all children in attendance at the service.
- The menu will be displayed in the foyer and the centre kitchen, and shared with families on Seesaw.
- The service will strive to have the menu checked by a nutritionist/relevant health authority on an annual basis.
- The preparation of food will consider infant needs and abilities.
- The service will aim to provide a six week cycle menu allowing parents and educators to know in advance what will be offered.
- The service will aim to provide a reviewed menu each season in accordance with the catered food company, suited to the weather and seasons.
- Educators will work with families in gaining feedback regarding the services menu.
- The service will provide families with the services recipe ingredients upon request.

Educators

- Educators will incorporate good eating habits by reinforcing nutrition regularly.
- Educators are seen as positive role models when deciding on nutritional food choices.
- Regular education of nutrition will be provided to parents through recipe ideas, curriculum planning in line with Munch and Move key messages, newsletters and educational program experiences.
- Cooking activities are encouraged within the service.
- Educators will be positive role models for good nutrition.
- Educators will refrain from eating or drinking “junk” food in front of children.
- Educators are to have an active role in further educating both children and families on nutrition and its value.
- The service cook will hold a recognised food handling and menu planning certificate.
- The service will aim to have most educators regularly update appropriate training accordingly in line with nutrition and healthy eating.
- The programs will cater to teaching and educating children on nutrition and good dental practices.



- The role of educators is to support breastfeeding and note its importance to further increase Australia's breastfeeding duration rates.
- Service educators will follow good hygiene and health practices when dealing with food handling procedures including food storage, handwashing, safe serving temperatures and using separate chopping boards for raw meat and fruit/vegetables.
- Allergy lists and dietary requirements will be updated for every new enrolment. These lists will be forwarded to the service cook and each room.
- Educators will work with families in gaining feedback regarding the services menu.

Dental Care

- Dental hygiene practices will be implemented only water and milk are offered to children.
- Babies will not sleep with their bottles.
- Children will be encouraged to drink water after every meal to rinse their mouth.
- The service will aim to invite a Dentist annually to discuss dental hygiene with the children, educators and families.

Breast feeding, storage of breast milk and introduction of solid foods

- Offer families information on breastfeeding and the importance of this during enrolment and on an ongoing basis during their time enrolled at the service from the beginning during orientation stage.
- Support mothers to continue breastfeeding until they are at least 12 months of age.
- Provide a clean, quiet space for mother's to breastfeed their child or to express breastmilk.
- Provide necessary refrigerator/freezer space for storage of breastmilk.
- Establish and maintain connections with local breastfeeding networks such as the Australian Breastfeeding Association. Share this information with families as necessary when support is needed for breastfeeding and advice of further information is required.
- Families to label all expressed breastmilk with child's name, date and time expressed. If breast milk has been frozen and then thawed it will still have the child's name, date and time thawed.
- Ensure safe handling of breast milk including transportation, storage, thawing and preparation.
- Abide by the current national *Infant Feeding Guidelines*.
- Offer a variety of nutritious foods to infants from all of the food groups in line with the *Australian Dietary Guidelines*.
- Always supervise infants closely while drinking and eating.



- Ensure appropriate foods are introduced around six months of age including iron rich nutritious foods as infant's first foods.
- Adjust the texture of foods offered between six and 12 months of age to match the infant's developmental stage.

Formula feeding and storage of formula

- Follow the manufacturer's instruction if preparing formula milk.
- Unused formula is to be discarded.
- Formula milk is to be stored in the fridge, not in fridge doors.
- Bottle warmers are to be used when heating and not microwaves at any time.
- Bottles that are warmed in a microwave are to be shaken to distribute heat and are to be tested on inside of wrist, by sprinkling a small amount.

The following foods will not be part of the menu:

- Chocolate: chocolate coated muesli bars, chocolate bars, chocolate coated biscuits, and chocolate filled items.
- Any form of confectionery: lollies and lollypops.
- Soft drinks, juices or cordials.
- Nut products of any kind.
- Products that cause an anaphylactic reaction to a child that has certain allergies. Eg: eggs or dairy.
- Processed meats in high amounts.
- Snack style potato chips.
- Products high in sugar or fat.

Birthdays and celebrations

- We will celebrate birthdays with the children as it is an important life event. Cakes or cupcakes will be included and served in moderation with recommended smaller serves especially for the younger children.
- Families can provide cakes or cupcakes for the children when celebrating a birthday, and should communicate about this with the educators, room leaders or Director to plan accordingly.
- Allergies should be taken into account when this happens, and the educators will inform families of any allergies prior to the birthday celebration.
- Cupcakes are preferable over larger cakes so that the serves for children are small and easier for the educators to manage.
- Healthier alternatives are welcomed when cakes are made and bought into the centre e.g. lower sugar content, fruit based cupcakes, small amounts of icing, other alternative such as fruit skewers for example.



Relevant Legislation

National Quality Standards, Education and Care Services National Regulations and Early Years Learning Framework

National Quality Standard

Standard 2.1 – Each child's health is promoted

Element 2.1.3

Standard 5.1 – Respectful and equitable relationships are maintained with each child.

Element 5.1.1, 5.1.2

Standard 5.2 – Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.

Element 5.2.1

Standard 6.1 - Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.

Element 6.1.1, 6.1.2, 6.1.3

Standard 7.1 - Governance supports the operation of a quality service.

Element 7.1.1, 7.1.2, 7.1.3

National Regulations

Part 4.2 Children's health and safety

Section 3(2)(a); 167– Protection of children from harm or hazards

Regulation 77 – Health, hygiene and safe food practices

Regulation 78 – Food and beverages

Regulation 79 – Service providing food and beverages

Regulation 80 – Weekly menu

Regulation 90 and 91 – Medical conditions

Early Years Learning Framework

Learning Outcome 1 – Children feel safe, secure and supported

Learning Outcome 2 – Children are connected with and contribute to their world

Learning Outcome 3 – Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing

Learning Outcome 4 – Children are confident and involved learners

Learning Outcome 5 – Children are effective communicators

United Nations Convention On The Rights Of The Child

Article 3 - All organisations concerned with children should work towards what is best for each child.

Article 24 - Children have the right to good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that they will stay healthy. Richer countries should help poorer countries achieve this.



Resources

- *Education and Care Services National Regulations October 2011*
- *Belonging, Being & Becoming: The Early Years Framework for Australia*
retrieved from : https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-02/belonging_being_and_becoming_the_early_years_learning_framework_for_australia.pdf
- *National Quality Standard* retrieved from:
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard>
- *United Nations Convention On The Rights Of The Child* retrieved from:
<https://www.unicef.org.au/Upload/UNICEF/Media/Our%20work/childfriendlycr.c.pdf>
- *Healthy Kids NSW: Munch and Move* retrieved from:
<https://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/campaigns-programs/munch-move-resources.aspx>
- *Caring for Children: Birth to 5 years (Food, Nutrition and Learning Experiences)*, NSW Ministry of Health, 2014
- *Infant Feeding Guidelines*, 2012, www.eatforhealth.gov.au
- *Australian Dietary Guidelines*, 2013, www.eatforhealth.gov.au
- *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th edition), 2013.
- NSW Food Authority information for children's services
www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au/retail/childrens-services
- Food Standards Australia, for information on food safety and food handling
www.foodstandards.gov.au.
- Anaphylaxis Australia www.allergyfacts.org.au

Monitoring and Review

- Review the *Nutrition, food, beverages and dietary requirements Policy* every 12 months.
- Provide families with opportunities to contribute to the review of this policy.