



Nutrition, food and beverages Policy and Procedure

Policy Statement

As part of our commitment to children's health, safety and wellbeing, we role-model food safety and hygiene practices, as well as supporting healthy food and beverage choices according to each child's needs. We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit children by healthy growth and development by minimising long term health risks. The *Education and Care Services Regulations* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements.

Principles

- We prioritise children's health, safety and wellbeing. This includes safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, as well as providing food and beverages that are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and chosen based on each child's dietary and medical requirements.
- We promote a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating and physical activity. We support children and families' understanding about the importance of nutrition and food choices.
- We value our families and their cultures, customs and religious traditions. We work with them to ensure that the food and beverages we provide to their children reflect their preferences.
- We incorporate children's agency and decision-making into our educational program. We plan meal times and other food-related experiences that enable this.

Implementation

Curriculum

Our Centre's food and nutrition curriculum:

- Is consistent with the '[Get Up & Grow – Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood](#)', '[Australian Dietary Guidelines](#)', and the '[Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements \(ACECQA Policy Guidelines\)](#)'
- Includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health.
- Includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food.
- Integrates nutrition across the curriculum where possible, for example foods from a variety of cultures.
- Is inclusive of children with intolerances, allergies and cultural beliefs.
- Is part of the Early Years Learning Framework (Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing) and National Quality Standards (Quality Area 2 – Children's Health and Safety).
- Educators encourage exploration of healthy foods through play.

The Learning Environment

Children at our Centre:

- Are actively supervised while eating and drinking.





- Have access to fresh, clean tap water available always and are encouraged to drink water regularly throughout the day.
- Are encouraged to bring a named drink bottle containing water only.
- Eat in a positive, appropriate, social environment with staff who model healthy eating practices.
- Are encouraged to minimise packaging options which create landfill to care for our natural environment
- Food or drinks provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and each child's dietary requirements are considered – considering their growth and development needs and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements
- Will use produce grown in our garden during 'Kids in the Kitchen' experiences
- Children's preferences and autonomy are respected. Educators provide guidance and support but never use food as a reward, punishment, or bribe, and do not force children to eat.
- Taught to turn away from food and cough or sneeze into their elbow when they need to,
- and then to wash and dry their hands.

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Food supply

Our Centre provides the following guidelines for families for food brought from home:

- Shared Fruit Time
 - Families are asked to supply fruit and vegetables at snack time to:
 - Share during small group time
 - Provide children with important minerals and vitamins
 - Encourage a taste for healthy foods
 - Encourage chewing which promotes oral muscle development
 - At times, shared fruit times may also consist of foods prepared as part of the 'Kids in the Kitchen' program.
 - We understand that some children are still acquiring a taste for fruit and vegetables. While these foods will still be offered, a healthy sandwich or plain unsalted crackers are suitable alternatives.
- Lunch Provision
 - Families are responsible for providing lunch for their children
 - Access to the kitchen fridge is available and encouraged for storage of yoghurt, meat, cheese and other perishable foods
 - Families are encouraged to follow the guidelines set below
- We will work to develop partnerships with community to promote healthy eating and discourage:
 - Foods high in salt such as chips
 - Foods high in sugar such as cakes, lollies, roll ups and biscuits
 - Chocolate bars, chocolate custard, muesli bars or LCM bars
 - Cordials, soft drinks and sweetened fruit juices
 - Foods containing nuts pose serious risk to children with allergies. Nut products are not permitted





- Foods which are wrapped in foil, plastic or commercial packaging – we encourage waste free food

As part of our Centre's commitment toward healthy eating and sustainability we promote our children and staff bringing 'Nude Food' each day. Nude Food is simply food that is not wrapped in foil, plastic or commercial packaging, The best type of nude food consists mainly of fresh food, so that is it healthy and nutritious PLUS environmentally friendly.

Special Events

Our Centre:

- Will ensure a healthy food supply for preschool activities, planned celebrations and special events, strictly limiting availability of high fat, high sugar, or processed foods like chips, pastries, cakes, lollies, and crisps to no more than twice a term, in accordance with the Healthy Eating Guidelines
- Will facilitate visits to the canteen as part of our continuity of learning program no more than twice each term
- Allows families to share cake during celebrations providing the product is inclusive of other children's dietary needs – please speak to your child's teacher who may suggest an alternative depending on the needs of the children in that group
- Will display nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating, and provide information updates in newsletters

Food safety

Our Centre:

- Promotes and teaches food safety to children during food learning/ cooking activities
- Provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- Promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children
- Provides recipes for families where possible
- Will ensure all fridge's used by children and staff will remain at temperatures between 0-5 degrees Celsius
- Has a separate policy & procedure for preparing, storing and heating bottles
- Ensures eating areas are cleaned before and after children eat

Food-related health support planning

Our Centre:

- Child enrolment records must include details of any special considerations for the child, such as: health, cultural or religious dietary requirements.
- Liaise with families regarding their children's healthcare needs, including any health-related dietary restrictions, medical conditions or allergies.
- Develop a risk minimisation plan in consultation with families of children with a specific health care need, allergy or relevant medical condition.

Working with families, health services & industry





Our Centre:

- Provides information from health professionals to families and caregivers on the *Healthy Eating Guidelines* through a variety of media such as:
 - Notices
 - Policy consultation
 - Information on enrolment
 - Pamphlet/Poster displays
- Provides support to families around feeding babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers via our Occupational Therapist

Related Legislation

- [Education and Care Services National Regulation](#)
 - Section 2A – Paramount consideration – safety, rights and best interests of children
 - Regulation 77 – Health, hygiene and safe food practices
 - Regulation 78 – Food and beverages
 - Regulation 79 – Service providing food and beverages
 - Regulation 90 – Medical conditions policy
 - Regulation 91 – Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
 - Regulation 160 – Child enrolment records to be kept by approved provider
 - Regulation 162 – Health information to be kept in enrolment record
 - Regulation 168 – Education and care service must have policies and procedures
 - Regulation 170 – Policies and procedures must be followed
 - Regulation 171 – Policies and procedures to be kept available
 - Regulation 172 – Notification of change to policies or procedures
- [Education and Early Childhood Services \(Registration and Standards\) Bill 2011, Schedule 1 Education and Care Services National Law \(South Australia\)](#)

Sources

- [National Quality Standards](#)
 - Element 2.1 Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted
 - Element 2.1.3 Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child
- [Get Up & Grow – Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood](#)
- [Australian Dietary Guidelines](#)
- [Australian Guide to Healthy Eating](#)
- [Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements \(ACECQA Policy Guidelines\)](#)

Revision Register

Version Number	Details of Changes Made	Date Issued
1	Policy creation	April 2013





	Nil	April 2015
3	Reflects nude food initiative	September 2016
4	Encouraging exploration of healthy foods – added Birthday celebrations – added	November 2019
5	Legislation and Sources – added Fridge temperature check and use of garden-fresh produce – added	November 2021
6	Nil	November 2022
7	Principles and additional legislation and sources added	May 2024
8	Updated to include Child Protection rights	August 2026

