

Food and Nutrition Policy

Linked to National Quality Standards- Quality Area Two: Element 2.2.1

Policy Statement

The Food and Nutrition Policy reflects the following concepts, to:

- * support breastfeeding. If a child is not breastfed, support appropriate formula/bottle feeding strategies;
- * promote a child's normal growth and development;
- * promote appropriate food choices and physical activity; and
- * regularly review children's physical growth.

(National Health and Medical Research Council, 2003)

The service plays an important role in meeting the nutritional needs of children while in care.

- * The service provides children with opportunities to experience a healthy, balanced and nutritious menu and snacks.
- * The service ensures that meals and snack times are conducted in safe, clean, positive environments that promote meaningful interactions between children and other persons.

There is now clear evidence that childhood nutrition has a lasting effect on many aspects of health. Children need fresh, nutritional food and well balanced meals. Nutrition Australia (QLD) 2006 encourages the following areas:

- * Children need sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop.
- * Eat plenty of vegetables, legumes and fruits.
- * Eat plenty of cereals preferably wholegrain
- * Include lean meat, fish, poultry and or alternatives.
- * Include milks, yoghurts, cheeses and or alternatives.
- * **Choose water as a drink.**
- * Limit saturated fat and moderate total fat intake. Low fat diets are not suitable for infants.
- * Choose foods low in salt
- * Consume only moderate amounts of sugars and foods containing added sugars.

Strategies and practices

Food provided by the service

The centre aims to provide all children with at least 50% of their daily recommended daily dietary intake. We aim to take into account all children's individual requirements, and to value the children's home and cultural backgrounds.

Providing suitable foods which meet children's nutritional needs

- * The centre aims to provide a nutritious diet with foods chosen from the five food groups – breads and cereals, fruits and vegetables, dairy foods, meats and fats and oils.
- * Fresh fruits and vegetables will be used where appropriate.
- * Fats and Oils will be used sparingly.
- * Drinking water will be readily available.
- * Food will be served taking into consideration colour, texture and presentation.
- * Food will not be used as a form of punishment either in its provision or denial.
- * Children will be allowed second helpings when available.
- * The menu is on display outside the kitchen.
- * Food awareness activities will be included in the program.

Menu planning and review

- * The menu at the centre has to take into consideration many aspects- food groups, time, space, cost and logistics of feeding 74 children all at the same time.

- * The centre's Director, Cook and educators are responsible for the centre's menu. We encourage all parents to leave menu suggestion and yearly we will survey parents and ask for their suggestions.
- * The menu is reviewed yearly with the assistance of Nutrition Australia and families.

Minimising the risk of choking

- * To minimise the risk of choking on food the centre ensures that all children are seated while eating. All educators are encouraged where possible to sit and eat with the children.
- * Foods such as apples will be peeled for the children under 3 and high risk foods such as carrots will be omitted unless cooked and deemed safe for a toddler to eat.

Documenting children's nutritional and fluid input

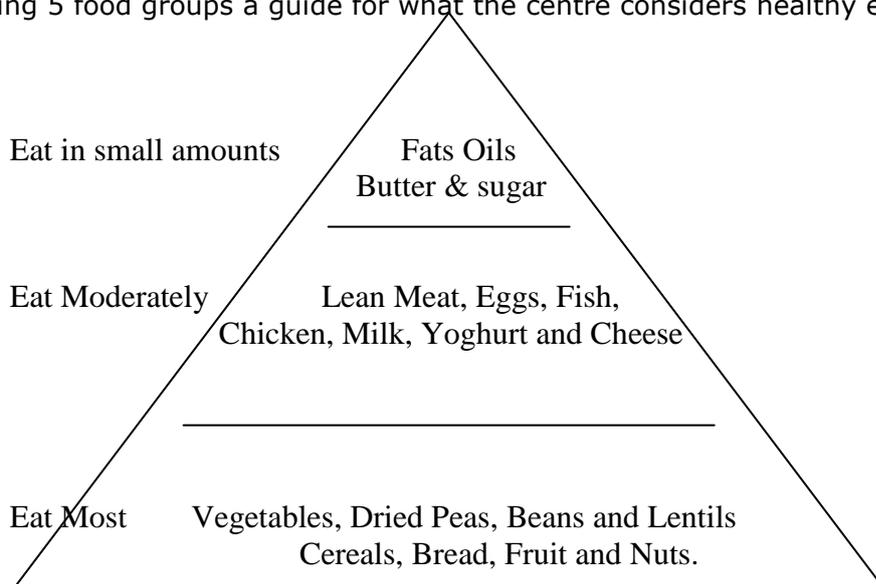
- * Monitoring fluid input is an important care giving strategy for children under three, as the risk of dehydration is higher in children than in adults. Documenting the nutritional and fluid intake of children allows the service to monitor a child's wellbeing and communicates this information to families.
- * In the Toddlers and Junior Kindy groups specific recordings will be maintained for each family to view upon pick-up as to how often their child has had fluid and how often their child has toileted.
- * Children are free to access their drink bottles and the centre bubblers at any time during the day and will also be provided with their drink at meal times.
- * If an educator feels a child is hungry outside of the scheduled meal times then the kitchen always has a supply of fruits and nutritious snacks that they can offer the child.
- * Should an infant use all of the supplied formula or nappies then families will be contacted to discuss what action they would like the centre to follow.

Meeting individual needs

Where your child has special nutritional requirements (allergies, tolerances, etc.) please inform your child's group leader or assistant and the centre director and make a note of these needs on your child's enrolment form. For more information regarding our menus please speak to the director or group leader.

Exclusions to the Healthy Eating Policy

If you intend to bring food to the centre we ask that it be nutritious and healthy. Please find the following 5 food groups a guide for what the centre considers healthy eating



Nutrition Queensland 2007

The centre will always respect a family's wishes, religious beliefs and lifestyle. Should you not want your child to participate in any food activity or menu item please list this on your child's background information sheet and enrolment form. This will then come to the attention of our educators and cook.

- * Individual requirements will be recorded on the kitchen whiteboard for educators to follow.
- * The centre will also consider the menu if a child is allergic to any aspects of the menu. With family consultation it will be decided as to whether the menu can be changed to accommodate the child's individual needs or families provide the food that the child requires.
- * The centre will develop an emergency action plan for all children with food allergies –this plan will be developed with the assistance of the child's family, medical practitioner and will be reviewed 6 monthly.

Mealtimes and Snacks

Mealtime and snack routines and safe eating behaviours

- * All children will be transitioned from their play to meal times, allowing for toileting and hand washing before they eat. Group times are a useful tool for allowing children to calm from their play and discuss hygiene practices.
- * All children will be encouraged to sit at the tables during meal time.
- * Children will be discouraged from running inside.
- * During meal times educators will sit with children, this is seen as a very important way of role modelling healthy eating and socially appropriate behaviours. Educators are to use this time to engage children in meaningful conversations.

Bottle Feeding-preparing bottles and formula

Making up formula:

- * Wash hands before making the formula.
- * Follow the instructions on the can very carefully.
- * **It is important that the formula is made to the right strength.**
- * Measure the right amount of cooled boiled water into the bottle – water first then powder.
- * Add the right amount of scoops, using a knife to level of scoop.
- * Seal the bottle with cap and disc and shake to mix.
- * If you are not using milk straight away, store bottle back in the fridge.
- * Throw away any formula not used within 24hrs.

Warming bottles:

- * The microwave may be used to heat milk but great care will be taken to avoid hot spots.
- * For fridge cold milk try
 - o 30 secs on high for 90-120mls.
 - o 45 sec on high for 150-180mls
 - o 50 secs on high for 180-240 mls
- * Actual times may vary depending on the microwave and bottle.
- * Use shorter time if the bottle is not fridge cold to start with.
- * **After heating shake the bottle to avoid hot spots which could cause burns to the child's mouth or throat.**
- * Let a little milk drop onto the inside of your wrist to check the temperature. It should feel comfortably warm or even a little cool.

Child and Youth Health 2007

Special Occasions and Celebrations

The National Heart Foundation recommends that snack foods such as cakes, biscuits and takeaway foods are limited to just once a week. However the centre does acknowledge the importance of celebrations and special occasions.

- * Birthdays are special times for children and the centre enjoys sharing the occasion. You may like to help in this regard by providing individual cup cakes with a single candle on your child's cake, having individual treats for birthdays is an excellent way of reducing the spread of droplet infections. "Staying Healthy in Childcare 4th Ed" (You may like to consult your child's Group Leader first to check on any child allergies).
- * REMEMBER we can always arrange celebration time to coincide with your availability to join us. As children get older, they often have birthday parties at home with their friends from the

centre. In order not to hurt feelings, the issuing of invitations is best handled quietly between parents outside of the centre or with the Group Leader.

Healthy Eating and Physical Activity

- * Physical activity, combined with a nutritious, balanced food intake, contributes to a child's health, wellbeing and self-esteem. Young children require at least 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity a day for general health, wellbeing and to develop healthy bones, muscles and joints.
- * The centre encourages all children to have 30 minutes or more of physical activity a day. We play an important role in promoting fitness, which assists in reducing health problems such as childhood obesity and diabetes. We endeavour to do this through individual and whole group gross motor experiences.
- * The centre will endeavour to find fun inclusive ways to build children's understanding of healthy eating choices and physical activity.

Eat well Be Active (www.eatwellbeactive.qld.gov.au)

Communication with Stakeholders on Menu

Children

- * Encouraging children to eat a balanced diet.
- * Discuss that sugary foods "are sometimes foods" and for special occasions.
- * Encourage children to drink water and brush their teeth after their main meal at the centre.
- * Involving the children in Dental week and having a Dentist/ Therapist visit the centre for a presentation

Families

- * The centre has a large range of healthy eating books and activity books within the parent library in the hall. These resources are updated regularly and are for all families please just sign the borrowing book and return in a timely manner.
- * Families are asked to complete the child Background Information form which will be passed onto the group leader, this needs to have specific dietary and health information recorded. Your child's enrolment form will be retained in the office.

Educators

- * Educators may be encouraged to attend professional development in the areas of children's nutrition, allergies, understanding and responding to anaphylaxis, diabetes, nutrition, healthy eating and exercise, understanding eating disorders, nutritional needs of babies
- * Educators will be provided with Safe Food Handling course every 2years.

Policy Review

- * The service will review the Food and Nutrition Policy and procedures every eighteen months
- * Families are encouraged to collaborate with the service to review the policy and procedures.
- * Educators are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be encouraged to be actively involved.

Useful websites

- * *Anaphylaxis Australia* - www.allergyfacts.org.au/
- * *Australian Dental Association* - www.ada.org.au/
- * *Diabetes Australia* - www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/home/index.htm
- * *Food Standards Australia New Zealand* - <http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/>
- * *National Heart Foundation Australia* - www.heartfoundation.com.au

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Review Date June 2011