

Nutrition/Food/Beverages/ Dietary Requirements



Review Date: 22/06/2019

Introduction

Research has shown that one in five pre-schoolers are either overweight or obese. By the time children in NSW reach kindergarten, almost 18% are either overweight or obese.

The 2007 *National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey* found that the dietary patterns of many Australian children are less than optimal with high consumption of salt and saturated fat, and low consumption of fruit and vegetables.

Given that children are increasingly spending long periods of time in centre-based care, early childhood educators can role model healthy eating and encourage young children to make healthier food choices.

This will contribute to the prevention of weight problems in children, allowing children to thrive physically, socially and intellectually, and in turn contribute to prevention of nutrition-related chronic diseases.

Goals – What are we going to do?

Our care and education service will:

- role model healthy eating and activity throughout the day to all children and families;
- promote the six key *Munch and Move* messages to promote healthy, active habits in children from a young age:
 1. Encourage and support breastfeeding;
 2. Choose water as a drink;
 3. Choose healthier snacks;
 4. Eat more fruit and vegetables;
 5. Get active each day;
 6. Turn off the TV or computer and get active.
- support families in educating their children about healthy food choices.

Strategies - How will it be done?

Professional Development of Staff and Educators

Educators access Munch and Move professional development training or receive similar training and information; www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

All educators will have access to the Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings and Caring for Children: Birth to 5 years (Food Nutrition and Learning Experiences) 2014.

Provision of Food and Drinks at the Service

The Approved Provider will:

- Ensure that all children have access to safe drinking water at all times;
- Ensure that all children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day;
- Ensure that children are provided with food and beverages which are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and take each child's individual dietary requirements, growth and development needs and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements;
- Ensure that educators and staff are aware of the need to implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service.
- Ensure that functions held on preschool premises (with children in attendance) offer a balance of healthy food options. These functions will be drug and alcohol free.
- Where possible use community businesses and organisations over multi national corporations when planning celebrations and fundraising.

The Nominated Supervisor will ensure that:

- All children will have access to safe drinking water at all times;
- All children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day;
- Children are provided with adequate quantities of nutritious food and beverages. Consideration is given to:
 - growth and developmental needs,
 - known food allergies, intolerances or health requirements of specific children, in line with recommended dietary guidelines,
 - specific cultural, religious, or lifestyle choices;
- Educators and staff implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children;
- Ensure that all dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered to.
- Families receive a copy of the centre's Nutrition Policy, Parent Policy Guidelines and "Lunchbox Ideas" brochure;
- Emergency food is available.

Staff and Educators will ensure that:

- Foremost, they use their professional judgement and empathy so families feel supported and safe and not judged for their parenting style;
- They develop positive, supportive relationships with families through which to have conversations around health and nutrition;
- Healthy eating is promoted through role modelling and eating with the children;
- Children are encouraged to make healthy food choices;
- All mealtimes are positive, relaxed and social; reflecting family and cultural values;
- Children are encouraged to try new foods, and their food likes and dislikes are respected;
- They are patient with messy or slow eaters;
- Children are positively involved in mealtimes;
- Food is not used as a reward or withheld from children for disciplinary purposes;
- Families and children are encouraged to consider the environment;
- Educators implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children;
- Be aware of possible allergic reactions to food, particularly high risk foods e.g. egg, nuts, seafood, dairy and sesame;
- Follow procedures and routines in place to protect children who suffer from allergies;
- Ensure all dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered to.

Supporting Families

The service will provide families with up to date information on dietary requirements of young children to ensure optimal growth and development, and provide families with opportunities to discuss ways to maximise the health and well-being of their child/ren.

Educators discuss children's intake of food and drinks as part of daily interactions with families as required.

A suitable place within the service will be provided where mothers can breastfeed their babies if necessary.

Statutory Legislation & Considerations

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010

Sources

"What is Healthy Food?"

Reviewed in consultation with:

*Maxine Molyneux
Health Promotion Officer
Health Promotion Unit
Northern NSW Local Health District*

www.health.nsw.gov.au

Related Policies

Food Handling and Hygiene

*Medical Conditions:
Anaphylaxis Management*

Family Participation and Communication

Enrolment and Orientation

Celebrations

The service celebrates special occasions such as birthdays with limited use of "sometimes" foods and with focus on the person or event we are celebrating rather than the food.

Education and Information

Educators will engage children in learning experiences that are fun and enjoyable and incorporate key messages around healthy eating;

Implemented learning experiences will be guided by the EYLF principles and incorporate the child's identity;

Families will be provided with current information about recommended guidelines around dietary requirements, screen time and physical activity.

Policy Availability

This nutrition/food/beverages policy will be readily accessible to all staff, families and visitors, and ongoing feedback on this policy will be invited.

Review

Management and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of the nutrition/food/beverages policy regularly. Updated information will be incorporated as needed.

Evaluation

Children will enjoy appropriate and healthy food and beverages whilst in the centre. Educators will model healthy eating whilst encouraging a relaxed and social atmosphere for children.

President's Name: Belinda Fayle

Date Adopted: 22/06/2017

REVIEW DATE: 22/06/2019

Foods for Pre-School Lunches

Better Lunchbox Foods



Better foods	Examples	Justification
Fruit	Fresh, tinned Fruit diced in fruit juices Fruit puree	High in fibre, vitamins and minerals; low in kilojoules/calories
Vegetables	Salads, carrots, tomatoes, cucumber, corn cobs etc	High in fibre, vitamins and minerals; low in kilojoules/calories
Water	Plain water is the best drink to quench thirst and should always be the drink of choice	Essential for hydration.
Sandwiches, rolls, fruit bread	Preferably wholemeal or wholegrain with healthy filling such as cheese, meat, salad, but other spreads are acceptable	Children need carbohydrates for energy.
Protein foods	Baked beans, spaghetti, cooked pasta/ noodles with sauce, meat, chicken, eggs, etc.	High in protein, (carbohydrates), vitamins and minerals. Meat, chicken, eggs require refrigeration or icepack in lunchbox.
Dairy foods	Plain milk Flavoured yoghurt / fruche Yoghurt tubes, cheese Flavoured dairy desserts such as custard, creamy rice Low fat products for children over 2 years of age.	Calcium content. Flavoured or unflavoured yoghurt is a better choice than other dairy desserts. Look at the label and if the dairy snack doesn't list milk as the first ingredient, it's better left out. Products should have about 170mg of calcium per 100g. Yoghurt or dairy desserts with mixed in lollies are not appropriate All yoghurts and dairy desserts should be kept in the fridge, labelled with the child's name.
Plain Crackers	Plain crackers, rice cakes, corn thins, rice crackers. Wholemeal or multigrain are better choices	Children need carbohydrates for energy. Avoid added artificial flavours and salt.
Cheese and biscuits	Avoid small oven baked savoury biscuits.	These are popular and a good source of calcium. Some may be high in salt so rather than pre-packaged varieties, a better choice would be to make up your own crackers and cheese in a zip lock bag or small container. This reduces cost and packaging.
Un-iced cakes, muffins, slices	Plain un-iced cakes, muffins, scones, pikelets, try to use some wholemeal flour, or include fruit or vegetables in the recipe. Un-iced fruit slices especially if fruit or vegetable based and low in fat.	Lower in fat and sugar and higher in fibre than those listed in the Better left out section.
Popcorn	Plain unflavoured without butter or salt.	Popular – good alternative to chips - Lower in fat and salt.

Please Do Not Pack



Better left out	Examples	Justification
Sticky sweet foods	Muesli bars – all types. Breakfast bars, Fruit filled bars, Fruit roll ups Dried fruit leathers/ bars Rice bar treats	Stick to teeth and cause dental caries. High in sugar.
Salty, fatty foods	Potato chips / crisps, corn chips, cheesy extruded snacks, vege chips. Small oven baked savoury biscuits. 2 minute noodles.	Salt and fat content too high - can be a risk factor for heart disease and high blood pressure. Fat can contribute to obesity. Low in vitamins and minerals.
High fat and or high sugar foods	Lollies, <u>chocolate</u> , carob and yoghurt coated sweets, cough lollies, liquorice etc. Iced muffins, iced cakes or iced buns including lamingtons, chocolate cake or chocolate muffins, muffin bars, breakfast cereal bars Donuts, pastries, croissants Chocolate coated or cream-filled sweet biscuits Chocolate spread with spoon Sweet dip and biscuit packs Sweet biscuits Savoury biscuits (Shapes, etc.) Jelly	Can contribute to obesity, low in vitamins and minerals Can contribute to dental caries. Often high in fat
Sweet drinks	Flavoured milk Cordial Blackcurrant syrups Soft drinks Flavoured mineral water Any drink with caffeine e.g. Coke “Diet” soft drinks	Can contribute to obesity and dental caries. Low in vitamins and minerals Not appropriate for age group.
Fruit Juice	Fruit juice – including 100% juice and ‘fruit juice drinks’	Low in fibre but high in vitamins, can contribute to obesity if more than one glass is consumed per day. Better to eat the fresh fruit and drink water or milk.