

FOOD AND NUTRITION POLICY

AIM

- To provide a healthy, nutritious and varied menu for babies, children, staff and families.
- To provide a positive, safe eating environment
- To teach children about food and nutrition in the curriculum
- To communicate with families about their children's nutrition
- To meet all dietary consideration for health and / or cultural and religious reasons
- To ensure health and hygiene guidelines are in place and followed during all food preparation, display and consumption including the Food for Families project, family events and staff meetings.
- Support the five food groups
- Support breastfeeding and appropriate formula/bottle feeding strategies
- Promote a child's optimal growth and development
- Promote appropriate food choices and physical activity

IMPLEMENTATION

The *Food and Nutrition policy* is consistent with the current *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* (2013). The recommended daily intakes from these guidelines will form the basis of the menu plan. Consult the attached table for more details.

The Centre chef/cook will:

- Offer a variety of bread, cereal, rice, pasta or other grains each day.
- Plan lunches with one or more serves of vegetables.
- Include a variety of vegetables in meals throughout the week
- Offer both cooked and raw vegetables during the week. Raw, hard vegetables will be served to appropriate age groups and served in a way that minimises choking hazards.
- Offer appropriate beverages including water and milk.
- Plan meals to meet the recommended nutritional needs of children of various ages in line with Australian Nutritional Guidelines. The selection of foods will be broad to maximise the opportunity for a balanced intake of vitamins and nutrients.
- Limit menu items with high levels of sugar and fat.
- Plan menus taking in mind feedback from other staff at the site and families. Feedback will be collected from staff via verbal and written feedback and from families via the communication book provided for families.
- Display weekly menus in each room and in the piazza to provide easy access to families.
- Review menus weekly to reflect seasonal produce.
- Select and prepare food to minimise risk of choking. Children's age and development will be considered when presenting food e.g. finger food, blended food and food requiring utensils. Raw fruits and vegetables likely to cause choking will be grated, cooked or mashed. Meat will be cut into small pieces.
- Ensure medical recommendations are followed where children have food allergies confirmed by a medical practitioner and ensure these are communicated to educators who directly care for the child via a Modified Diet Plan.
- Cater for variations in diet as required by health, cultural or religious needs/beliefs/concerns. Information will be shared via a Special Diet Form or Modified Diet Plan. Professional support will be sought where appropriate if concerns arise in regard to adequate nutritional intake. In order to minimise wastage, the Centre provides limited alternative foods.
- If any difficulties arise with special dietary requirements, negotiate these with the family and Director.
- Refrain from using nut products including peanut butter or Nutella in foods prepared for children as nuts are a high risk food due to potential extreme allergic reactions.
- Use halal meat is used in all meat dishes except where pork products are used.

Food for Families Cook will:

- Prepare meals in line with the procedures outlined above, including correct storage and freezing procedures. This includes recording the temperature of foods every two hours as they cool and displaying a best before date and reheating instructions on frozen meals.
- List ingredients of meals on the posters, order forms and labels with any allergens clearly stated.
- Offer vegetarian meals on a semi-regular basis.

Leadership will:

- Seek information from families regarding their child's eating patterns and special dietary needs. This information will be obtained at the time of enrolment and as circumstances regarding their child's nutritional requirements change.
- Provide recipes from the Centre menu to families on request.
- Ensure medical recommendations are followed where children have food allergies confirmed by a medical practitioner and ensure these are communicated to educators who directly care for the child via a Modified Diet Plan.
- Provide all necessary information to the cook and staff of special dietary considerations necessary for a child's wellbeing.
- Support breastfeeding and breast milk provision for staff and families including provision of a breastfeeding room.
- Cater for allergies or intolerances at staff events. i.e. providing gluten free foods, lactose free etc.
- Oversee a register of children with allergies and special dietary requirements, displayed prominently in the kitchen with photographs of the child with special requirements highlighted.

Team Leaders will:

- Ensure children are seated and supervised at all times while eating (at tables or on the floor or outside on a blanket).
- Observe children during meal times and foods eaten/enjoyed and amounts recorded. Parents/ carers are able to discuss their child's eating habits with educators on request.
- Offer amounts of food to children appropriate for their age group per *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*. Guidelines for children aged 13-23 months is limited and should be used as a guide only. Individual weight gain and development needs to be taken into consideration (adult discretion required). Children may be offered small serves more frequently depending on their nutritional needs.
- Remind families not to bring food to the Centre. Where children bring food to the Centre, particularly food not in accordance with Centre policies, the food/drink will be returned to the family at collection.
- Ensure a register of children with allergies and special dietary requirements is displayed prominently for relevant staff to see, with photographs of the child with special requirements highlighted.

Educators will:

- Provide clean and pleasant spaces for a relaxed, unhurried atmosphere for children at mealtimes.
- Discuss foods being eaten by children in a relaxed and culturally sensitive manner.
- Encourage a social atmosphere that allows children to take their time and enjoy social interactions with staff and peers at meal times.
- Not force children to eat under any circumstances.
- Not use food as a reward or punishment under any circumstances, either by provision or denial.
- Offer children healthy foods throughout the day where they have not eaten their main meal.
- Inform families about their child's eating habits each day.
- Create an opportunity to discuss different cultures and family practices, where appropriate.
- Support and model for students and volunteers appropriate behaviours and practices during meals.
- Complete the Bug Busters package or a food handler's course annually.
- Familiarise themselves with the Centre's policies and procedures around food.
- Refer to photos of portion sizes appropriate for each age group.
- Allow children access to drinking water at all times during the day.
- Offer babies up to 12 months cooled boiled water to supplement breastmilk or formula.
- Offer solid or soft food to children based on their age and development.
- Sit with children (feeding and assisting younger children) to support children during mealtimes.

- Encourage children to use eating implements when it is considered developmentally appropriate. Where appropriate, a variety of eating implements will be used. To promote children's competence, an appropriate safe variety of eating implements will be available as play equipment.
- Ask families not to bring food from home to celebrate birthdays or other events. Instead, birthdays will be celebrated with song, making cards and making pretend birthday cakes.
- Limit discretionary choices (treat foods) and discuss the differences between everyday foods and occasional foods with children i.e. pastries, cakes, fried foods, lollies, chocolates etc.
- Introduce solids in accordance with *Get Up and Grow* information handouts.
- Encourage play and learning experiences that reflect healthy eating and food choices for children e.g. home corner play, growing herbs and vegetables and cooking.
- Provide children with different experiences in regard to healthy food in conjunction with the planned program, as well as, spontaneous experiences guided by children's interests or cultural celebrations.
- Choose healthy recipes for cooking experiences with children.
- Use daily information sheets to communicate how much a child has eaten to families.

Families will:

- As the Centre provides all meals and snacks for children throughout the day, parents/guardians are asked not to bring foods to the Centre without consultation with the chef and educators. Foods provided for specific conditions or cultural diets can only be brought to the Centre if the appropriate form has been filled out (i.e. Modified Diet Plan or Special Diet Form).
- Fruit and snacks will be provided for playgroup sessions and families are not to bring food from home. This is to prevent food that can trigger allergic reactions being brought into and contaminating the environment. Guardians will be required to sign a form agreeing to the above.

EVALUATION:

This policy is viewed to be working effectively when children are provided with a variety of nutritious and culturally appropriate foods that meet their daily requirements.

National Quality Standards:

2. Children's Health and Safety

2.1.3 Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.

Implemented: January 2011

Reviewed: August 2018

Next Review: August 2020

Sources and Further Reading:

Anaphylaxis Australia (www.allergyfacts.org.au)

Australasian Society of Clinical immunology and Allergy (ASCIA) (www.allergy.org.au)

Department of Health and Ageing, *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*.

(www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-publth-strateg-food-guide-index.htm)

Department of Health and Ageing, *Get Up & Grow: healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood* (2009).

National Health and Medical Research Council. *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*.

(www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications)

Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ) (www.foodstandards.gov.au)

Kidsafe (www.kidsafe.com.au)

Resources/Associated Forms:

- [Special Diet Form](#)
- [Modified Diet Plan](#)
- Daily Information Sheets
- Emergency Contact Sheets/Allergy Sheet
- Signs detailing proper bottle heating methods

SERVE SIZES



Vegetables and legumes/beans

Serves per day

	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Boys	2½	4½	5	5½	5½
Girls	2½	4½	5	5	5

A standard serve of vegetables is about 75g (100-350kJ) or:

- ½ cup cooked green or orange vegetables (for example, broccoli, asparagus, carrots or pumpkin)
- ½ cup cooked, dried or canned beans, peas or lentils*
- 1 cup green leafy or raw salad vegetables
- ½ cup sweet corn
- ½ medium potato or other starchy vegetables (sweet potato, taro or cassava)
- 1 medium tomato

*preferably with no added salt



Fruit

Serves per day

	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Boys	1	1½	2	2	2
Girls	1	1½	2	2	2

A standard serve of fruit is about 150g (350kJ) or:

- 1 medium apple, banana, orange or pear
- 2 small apricots, kiwi fruits or plums
- 1 cup diced or canned fruit (with no added sugar)
- Or only occasionally:
 - 125ml ½ cup fruit juice (with no added sugar)
 - 30g dried fruit (for example, 4 dried apricot halves, 1½ tablespoons of sultanas)



Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties

Serves per day

	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Boys	4	4	5	6	7
Girls	4	4	4	5	7

A standard serve (500kJ) is:

- 1 slice (40g) bread
- ½ medium (40g) roll or flat bread
- ½ cup (75-120g) cooked rice, pasta, noodles, barley, buckwheat, semolina, polenta, bulgur or quinoa
- ½ cup (120g) cooked porridge
- ½ cup (30g) wheat cereal flakes
- ¼ cup (30g) muesli
- 1 (85g) crispbread
- 1 (85g) crumpet
- 1 small (35g) English muffin or scone



Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans

Serves per day

	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Boys	1	1½	2½	2½	2½
Girls	1	1½	2½	2½	2½

A standard serve (500-600kJ) is:

- 65g cooked lean meats such as beef, lamb, veal, pork, goat or kangaroo (about 90-100g raw)*
- 80g cooked lean poultry such as chicken or turkey (100g raw)
- 100g cooked fish fillet (about 115g raw weight) or one small can of fish
- 2 large (120g) eggs
- 1 cup (150g) cooked or canned legumes/beans such as lentils, chick peas or split peas (preferably with no added salt)
- 170g tofu
- 30g nuts, seeds, peanut or almond butter or tahini or other nut or seed paste (no added salt)

*weekly limit of 455g



Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat

Serves per day

	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Boys	1½	2	2½	3½	3½
Girls	1½	1½	3	3½	3½

A standard serve (500-600kJ) is:

- 1 cup (250ml) fresh, UHT long life, reconstituted powdered milk or buttermilk
- ½ cup (120ml) evaporated milk
- 2 slices (40g) or 4 x 3 x 2cm cube (40g) of hard cheese, such as cheddar
- ½ cup (120g) ricotta cheese
- ¾ cup (200g) yoghurt
- 1 cup (250ml) soy, rice or other cereal drink with at least 100mg of added calcium per 100ml

- To meet additional energy needs, extra serves from the Five Food Groups or unsaturated spreads and oils, or discretionary choices may be needed by children who are not overweight but are taller, more active or older in their age band.
- An allowance for unsaturated spreads and oils for cooking, or nuts and seeds can be included in the following quantities: 4-5g per day for children 2-3 years of age, 7-10g per day for children 3-12 years of age, 11-15g per day for children 12-13 years of age and 14-20g per day for adolescents 14-18 years of age.
- For meal ideas and advice on how to apply the serve sizes go to: www.eatforhealth.gov.au

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION GO TO www.eatforhealth.gov.au