



## 7.12 Nutrition and Physical Activity Policy

<b>Policy number:</b> 7.12
<b>Date last reviewed:</b> July 2023
<b>Reviewed by:</b> Child Care Team

This policy relates to	
National Quality Standards Early Childhood Education & Care	2.1.3 Healthy Lifestyle
Reference	Menu's prepared in accordance with the guidelines below

### Purpose

The food children eat affects their growth, development and overall behaviour and wellbeing. Any specific cultural, religious and health requirements should be considered. It is important that food and drink provided to children is nutritious and provided in adequate quantities to promote their development. Educators and coordinators need to work cooperatively with families to ensure that children's nutritional needs are met, that mealtimes are relaxed social occasions, and that family cultures and individual food requirements are accommodated.

### Background

Nutrition Guidelines established by Nutrition Australia ([www.nutritionaustralia.org](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org)) form the basis of the Nutrition Policy. It is the role of the service to ensure that educators and families have information to ensure that children receive nutritious food and that healthy eating choices are promoted.

### Policy

#### Goal

- For all children in Care to be provided with healthy, nutritious food and drink consistent with recommendations of the Australian Government Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings and /or the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia;
- To ensure that mealtime environments and food and drink offered to children is safe and hygienic;
- To develop and nurture healthy eating and drinking habits in young children;
- For children to experience a variety of foods including foods from other cultures;

- To promote mealtimes as relaxed social occasions, and opportunities for conversation about healthy lifestyle choices;
- For educators to role-model healthy lifestyle choices and to reinforce the importance of healthy food and nutrition;
- For children to have access to adequate and appropriate physical activity every day;
- To promote physical activity as a fun and important part of the children’s day.

**Procedure**

All educators and parents will have a copy of the current Nutrition policy. Information on nutrition, healthy recipes, recipes reflecting other cultures and guidelines for age appropriate foods will be available to parents and educators through the resource library, newsletter articles and in-service training.

**Daily Food Requirements**

Parents and educators will be encouraged to supply food that will meet the child’s nutritional needs for the time that the child is in care. It is recommended that children in care for 8 hours a day (e.g. morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea) have 50% of their recommended dietary requirements met whilst in care. Children needing breakfast or dinner need to have 75% of their nutritional needs met.

The following table is provided as a guide and shows the minimum number of serves from each food group to achieve 50% of recommended daily intake. (Source: Food and Nutrition Policy, Qld Health)

Breads and cereals	2 serves	<b><u>1 serve =</u></b> 1 slice bread <i>or</i> ½ cup breakfast cereal <i>or</i> 1/3 cup cooked rice <i>or</i> ½ cup cooked pasta
Dairy Foods	3 serves	<b><u>1 serve =</u></b> 100ml milk (1/2 cup) <i>or</i> 1/3 cup grated cheddar cheese -15 g <i>or</i> 1 slice of processed cheddar cheese <i>or</i> yoghurt – 100g or 1/2 small tub or 1/3 cup <i>or</i> custard – ½ cup or 125 ml
Meat or alternative	1 serve	<b><u>1 serve =</u></b> 45 g red or white meat <i>or</i> 1/3 cup cooked legumes (baked beans, lentils, chick peas) <i>or</i> 1 egg



Fruit	1 serve	<b><u>1 serve =</u></b> 1 medium sized piece of fruit or ½ cup tinned fruit
Vegetables	1 serve	<b><u>1 serve =</u></b> ½ cups vegetables or 1 cup salad

If children are in care for 9-10 hours, then extra food should be provided.

*Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* and *Get Up & Grow* recommends that children enjoy a wide variety of nutritious food and be encouraged to:

- Eat plenty of vegetables, legumes and fruits;
- Eat plenty of cereals (including grains, rice, pasta and noodles), preferably wholegrain;
- Include lean meat, fish, poultry and/or alternatives;
- Include milks, yoghurts, cheese and/or alternatives. Reduced fat milks are not suitable for young children under 2 years because of their high-energy needs, but reduced-fat varieties should be encouraged for older children and adolescents;
- Choose water as a drink.

Care should be taken to:

- 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 sugar and foods that contain added sugars.

Educators are encouraged to take opportunities to discuss appropriate food choices with families and provide information and suggestions. Parents will be informed of how their child has eaten during the day. Food that has not been heated or handled will be kept to take home or left for the next day. Individual cultural and nutritional needs of children and specific food preferences of children will be accommodated through discussions with parents. While children should be encouraged to try new foods and make healthy food choices, children should not be forced to eat foods they don't like or to eat more than they want.

Food should never be used as a reward or punishment for behaviour. If a child is not hungry at routine meal times, they should be provided with alternative times to eat that suit their needs.

Children are to have free access to water at all times throughout the day, and should be offered water regularly.

If the educator supplies meals, a menu must be displayed in advance, and the meals are to be consistent with the menu. Menus must be planned in accordance with the nutrition policy

guidelines according to Nutrition Australia and Get up & Grow. Physical activity is also considered with daily planning to meet each child's wellbeing.

Educators that provide food are required to do a regular (yearly) food handling course.

**Foods to avoid**

A child can choke on food more easily than an adult because they lack back teeth to chew lumps properly.

Foods to avoid for younger children include corn chips, popcorn, whole nuts, hard fruit or uncooked vegetables like carrot. Careful supervision and monitoring of children is needed.

Children who are beginning solid foods will be encouraged to gradually introduce one food at a time to ensure any allergies are detected. New foods should be introduced to children at home prior to care and discussed with educator. Foods that may be unsuitable or unsafe for a child will not be given. Educators will discuss individual requirements with parents and together plan the introduction of new foods.

**Physical Activity**

Most children find it fun to play and be active, and it is important to encourage physical activity in the early childhood years for two reasons. Firstly, early development of good habits may form a foundation for later years. Secondly, regular physical activity in early childhood can impact on immediate and long-term health outcomes.

Children should be encouraged to participate in physical activity every day from birth. This can be as simple as safe, supervised tummy time, encouraging babies to move their arms and legs, and encouraging them to reach for toys.

Older children should have access to both unstructured and planned physical play.

## Relevant Legislation

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010  
Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011  
51 (1)(a) Conditions on service approval (safety, health and wellbeing of children)  
77 Health, Hygiene and safe food practices  
78 Food and Beverages  
79 Services providing food and beverages  
80 Weekly Menu  
168 Education and care must have policies and procedures  
National Quality Standard 2.1.3

## Key Resources

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing: *Get Set 4 Life*  
[www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/47B8A7F882590379CA25759B001EE259/\\$File/GetSet4LifeBrochure.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/47B8A7F882590379CA25759B001EE259/$File/GetSet4LifeBrochure.pdf)

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing: *Food Safety*  
[www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-carer-toc~gugcarer-foodsafety](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-carer-toc~gugcarer-foodsafety)

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing: *Choking Risks for Toddlers and Young Children*  
[www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-carer-toc~gugcarer-foodsafety~gug-carer-foodsafety-choking](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-carer-toc~gugcarer-foodsafety~gug-carer-foodsafety-choking)

Diabetes Australia Queensland  
[www.diabetesqld.org.au](http://www.diabetesqld.org.au)

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing: *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*  
[www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/health-pubhlth-publicatdocument-fdcons-cnt.htm](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/health-pubhlth-publicatdocument-fdcons-cnt.htm)

Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing: *Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood – Staff and Carer Book*  
[www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-carer-toc](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/publications/publishing.nsf/Content/gug-carer-toc)  
[www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/caphs/27100.pdf](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/caphs/27100.pdf)

Nutrition Australia: *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents / Kids Brainy Breakfast Ideas / Healthy Lunches for Under 5's / Healthy Snacks for Under 5's / Food Allergy*  
[www.nutritionaustralia.org/](http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/)

Qld Government Community Child Health Service  
[www.health.qld.gov.au/cchs/nutrition.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/cchs/nutrition.asp)

Good Food in Family Day Care - Food and Nutrition Information Kit

Kid safe Qld : *Choking and Suffocation*  
[www.kidsafeqld.com.au/](http://www.kidsafeqld.com.au/)  
[www.kidsafeqld.com.au/images/stories/pdfs/inews.97362.1.pdf](http://www.kidsafeqld.com.au/images/stories/pdfs/inews.97362.1.pdf)

Qld Government Education Department: *Anaphylaxis Guidelines for Queensland State Schools* <http://education.qld.gov.au/schools/healthy/anaphylaxis.html>

Anaphylaxis Australia: Starting Kinder or Preschool with Food Allergies  
[www.allergyfacts.org.au](http://www.allergyfacts.org.au)

[www.allergyfacts.org.au/PDF/AAI%20Starting%20preschool.pdf](http://www.allergyfacts.org.au/PDF/AAI%20Starting%20preschool.pdf)

The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne: Childcare and Children's Health Vol 10 No 1 (March 2007): *Allergies and Anaphylaxis*

[www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/econnections/CCH\\_Vol10\\_No1Mar2007.pdf](http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/econnections/CCH_Vol10_No1Mar2007.pdf)

[www.rch.org.au/econnections/publications/index.cfm?doc\\_id=11283](http://www.rch.org.au/econnections/publications/index.cfm?doc_id=11283)

The Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne: Childcare and Children's Health Vol 10 No 1 (March 2007): *Good Nutrition*

[www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/econnections/CCH\\_Vol9\\_No4\\_December\\_2006.pdf](http://www.rch.org.au/emplibrary/econnections/CCH_Vol9_No4_December_2006.pdf)

Family Day Care Australia

[www.fdca.com.au](http://www.fdca.com.au)

Healthy Jarjums Healthy Eating Choices – Inala Indigenous Health

<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ihs/html/healthy-jarjums.asp>

Kay A. Toomey, PHD (2002): *SOS Approach to Feeding – Developmental Food Continuum*