

## Policy Statement

This policy acts to ensure that:

- 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

## Explanation

Country Children's Early Learning Pty Ltd recognises the early years of a child's life is a critical period for their healthy development and growth. Many of the eating habits and attitudes to food developed in childhood continue throughout life.

Children develop eating habits early in life so it's important they learn about healthy eating and healthy food choices. We recognise that healthy eating and physical activity are vital for good health, as during this time of a child's life both physical and intellectual development is largely dependent upon adequate nutritional intake.

We also recognise that eating is a source of enjoyment, and it is important that Educators and staff do not become so concerned about nutrition and manners that they lose sight of children's enjoyment of food.

## Goals

- To promote a healthy lifestyle, including healthy eating and physical activity
- To support children and families' understanding about the importance of nutrition
- To work with families and children to ensure that the food and beverages we provide support children's preferences
- To incorporate children's agency and decision making around food and meals into our educational program
- To ensure that all food is stored, handled and prepared in a safe and hygienic manner

## Strategies

### Food Safety Standards

- Services must meet food safety requirements as set out in the Australia New Zealand Food Safety Standards Code
- Ensure all Service Coordinators, Responsible People and Family Day Care Educators who provide meals hold current Food Safety Supervisor qualifications

**Policy Created**  
February 2016

**Policy Last Updated**  
December 2023

**Policy Review Date**  
October 2024

- Services where food is supplied by the families and reheating is not required are exempt from the requirements to obtain a Food Safety Supervisor Certificate
- Ensure all Educators have completed food handling training, and regular refresher training is scheduled
- Where applicable maintain a record of their food safety risk management showing:
  - Safe receiving, storing, processing, displaying and transporting of hazardous food, cleaning and sanitising

### **Encourage and support breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of solid foods (Family Day Care Services)**

- Apply current national infant feeding recommendations
- Provide a suitable place within the service where mothers can breastfeed their babies or express milk
- Support mothers to continue breastfeeding until at least 12 months of age while offering appropriate complimentary foods from around 6 months of age
- Ensure the safe handling of breastmilk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding
- In consultation with families offer cooled pre-boiled water to babies as an additional drink from around 6 months of age
- In consultation with families offer a variety of foods to babies from all the food groups
- Always supervise babies while drinking and eating – ensuring safe bottle feeding and eating practices at all times

### **Promote healthy food and drinks based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the Australian Dietary Guidelines**

Where food is provided by the service:

- Provide children with a variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products, lean meats and alternatives
- Plan and display the menu that is based on sound menu planning and meets the daily nutritional requirements of children whilst in care
- Plan morning and afternoon teas that are substantial enough to meet the energy and nutrient needs of the children
- Vary the meals and snacks on the menu to keep children interested and to introduce children to a range of healthy food ideas

Where food is brought from home:

- Provide information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and that are suitable for children's lunchboxes
- Encourage children to eat the more nutritious food provided in their lunchbox, before eating any less nutritious food provided
- Discourage the provision of highly processed foods high in salt, fat, sugar and low in essential nutrients

### **Promote Safety**

- Be an "Allergy Aware" service
- Ensure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day
- Be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances and special diets, and consult with families to develop individual Risk Management Plans
- Ensure young children do not have access to foods that may cause choking
- Ensure all children remain seated while eating and drinking
- Always supervise children while eating and drinking

### **Safe Food Handling and Storage**

- The service will apply current national food safety standards and recommendations, as well as information applicable from state food authorities
- Encourage and provide opportunities for Educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about nutrition
- Provide food to children that has been stored, prepared and served in a safe and hygienic manner and to promote hygienic food practices
- Ensure food tongs are used by staff when handling "ready to eat" foods
- Before handling or eating food children and Educators wash and dry their hands using warm soapy water and paper towel
- Opened food will be stored in tightly sealed containers, away from any chemicals
- Keep all kitchen surfaces and utensils clean, and ensure regular cleaning routines are adhered to for all food preparation areas
- Kitchen equipment to be cleaned and stored appropriately
- Surfaces are cleaned and sanitised before and after food preparation
- All perishable foods will be stored in the refrigerator and the temperature should be monitored to ensure it is less than 5°C

- Do not store perishable foods at room temperature. When the fridge is not near the service operating room, or on an excursion with the children perishable food needs to be transported safely e.g. cooler bag, esky, or a car fridge with ice bricks
- When re-heating foods ensure that they are steaming hot all the way through, foods should be re-heated to at least 75 degrees Celsius
- Tongs and spoons will be used for the serving of food
- Where possible, Educators will encourage children to serve their own food and drinks to encourage the development of their food handling skills as well as acknowledging their growing sense of independence
- All cups, plates and utensils will be washed in hot, soapy water
- Ensure Tongs or Spoons are used by staff handling ready to eat foods
- Educators can choose whether to wear gloves or not provided that effective hand washing is being implemented. If gloves are used, care must be taken to avoid contaminating food by only using them for one continuous task and then discarding them. Gloves must be removed, discarded, hands washed, and the gloves replaced with a new pair before handling food and before working with ready to eat food after handling raw food
- Gloves must be removed and discarded before using the toilet, smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief, eating, drinking or touching the hair, scalp or body. They will then be replaced if food preparation continues
- All rubbish or left over food is to be disposed of immediately in lidded bins and the bins emptied daily and regularly cleaned with hot soapy water
- Children will be encouraged to be involved in food preparation to assist them to have opportunities to learn more about hygiene practices when preparing food. This participation should always be supervised, and an explanation provided to children on the reasons why hygienic conditions are maintained
- The service will regularly review and evaluate food handling practices in line with current best practice guidelines from recognised authorities
- The service will provide food handling and hygiene information to parents
- Use separate chopping boards for meat products, dairy products, bread and vegetables/fruit
- Children will be discouraged from handling other children's food and utensils
- Educators to regularly attend relevant food handling courses
- Clean tables that are to be used for meals prior to use
- Use separate cloths for floor, dishes, benches etc following the colour coding guide

**For Babies:**

- Use only sterilised bottles and teat assemblies to store expressed breast milk and made-up formula
- Refrigerate all expressed breast milk and made-up formula at the back of the fridge at a temperature of 4 degrees Celsius or less for up to 48 hours. Expressed breast milk can be frozen
- Formula needs to be made up by the Educator, not premixed before arrival to care
- Warm bottles using a bottle warmer or hot (not boiling) water in a container
- Warm bottles only once. Never reheat or re-refrigerate bottles that have already been warmed up. Throw out all leftovers if an infant has not finished the bottle within 20 - 30 minutes
- Babies should not be left in a cot unsupervised with a bottle
- Bottles must not be warmed in microwaves as hot spots can occur, and the build-up of steam can burn a baby

**Provide a positive eating environment which reflects cultural and family values**

- Ensure that Educators sit with the children at mealtimes to role model healthy food and drink choices, and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided
- Endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary difference of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food and well as enjoy the social interactions with Educators and children
- Encourage children to assist in setting and clearing the table, washing their own dishes and serving their own food and drink, providing them with opportunities to develop independence and self esteem
- Respect each child's appetite, if a child is not hungry or satisfied do not insist they eat
- Be patient with messy or slow eaters
- Encourage children to try different foods, but do not force them to eat
- Do not use food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes

## **Promote lifelong learning for children, Educators and families about healthy food and drink choices**

- Foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children's program a range of learning experiences
- Encourage children to participate in a variety of hands on food preparation experiences
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices

## **Encourage communication with families about the provision of appropriate healthy food and drinks for children while they are attending the service**

- Request that details of any food allergies, intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to the service
- Work in partnership with families to ensure children's individual dietary requirements are met
- Communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within the service
- Provide up to date information to families to assist them with providing healthy food choices at home

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Approved Provider**

- Ensure that services implement adequate health, hygiene, safe food handling and storage practices to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service
- Ensure adequate budgets are in place to provide nutritionally balanced and culturally sensitive meals
- Ensure Educators are involved in regular training and food safety and nutrition
- Ensure all requirements under the Food Standards Code and Food Act 2023 are met

## **Nominated Supervisor/Coordinator/Responsible Person**

- Utilise the Eat Smart, Play Smart and Munch and Move Programs to guide the services education and implementation of healthy eating and healthy choices for children, Educators and families
- Provide information and resources to Educators on nutrition, food preparation and safe food storage
- Provide advice and support to parents on matters relating to food and nutrition
- Encourage and support all Educators and staff to attend relevant conferences and forums, online webinars and courses
- Include nutrition training and a food safety component in new Educators induction
- Collect and record relevant information about individual special dietary requirements of children (i.e. allergies, cultural, etc) as required
- Provide Educators and families nutrition guidelines based on the services Nutrition and Safe Food Handling Policy, and in line with Nutrition Australia's recommendations, which incorporates the Eat for Health - Australian Dietary Guidelines
- Maintain all records as required by the Food Safety Standards Code and Food Act 2023
- Ensure that services implement adequate health, hygiene, safe food handling and storage practices to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service
- Ensure children have access to safe drinking water at all times and are offered food and beverages on a regular basis throughout the day
- Ensure that where food and beverages are supplied they are:
  - Nutritious and adequate in quantity
  - Chosen with regard to the dietary requirements of individual children
- Ensure that where food and beverages are provided by the service a weekly menu that accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided is displayed at the premises in a location accessible to parents

## **Educators**

- Ensure children's dietary requirements are adhered to
- Provide positive and relaxed mealtime experiences for children
- Respect the individual needs and choices of children

- Actively supervise children during mealtimes
- Use as a reference the guidelines set out in the NSW Food Authority Children's Services Voluntary Food Safety Program Template
- Adhere to the Food Safety Standards Code and Food Act 2023
- Provide information to children and parents that outline good nutrition practices, including the recommendation by Nutrition Australia that children over the age of 2 years of age be given mostly reduced fat milk, yoghurt and cheese products
- Utilise the Eat Smart Play Smart, and Munch and Move Guides to develop and implement menus
- Offer food and beverages to children on a regular basis throughout their time in care
- Where applicable provide each child with food and drinks provided by their parent, unless other arrangements are made
- Have a Water Station available at all times and/or encourage children to put their drink bottles out on a designated table
- Understand the eating habits and nutritional needs of each child
- Encourage and support children to develop independence in eating
- Respect the requests of parents relating to dietary, religious or cultural beliefs
- Attend regular professional development on nutrition and food safety practices and document changes to practice as a result

## Families

- Communicate regularly with Educators regarding children's specific nutritional requirements and dietary needs, including food preferences
- Provide nutritious and appropriate food/drinks if supplying meals for their child
- Where families provide food for their child at the service ensure that lunchboxes and drink bottles are labelled, clean and hygienic
- Contribute menu ideas and recipes

## LINKS TO

- **Education & Care Services National Law**  
Section 167
- **Education & Care Services National Regulations**  
77, 78, 79, 80, 90, 91, 160, 162, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172
- **National Quality Standards/Elements:**  
1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 3.1, 4.1.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2 6.1, 7.1
- **Child Safe Standards**  
1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10



## Continual Monitoring and Improvement

Continual improvement and monitoring will occur in the following ways:

- Incidental and planned consultation with families
- Approved Provider and Coordinators accessing current relevant information
- Approved Provider, Coordinators and Educators accessing current and relevant training
- Internal evaluation of incidences and the improvement of systems

### SOURCES

- Education and Care Services National Regulations - December 2021
- Education and care Services National Law - January 2022
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations - October 2017
- Guide to the National Quality Standard - January 2020
- Implementing the Child Safe Standards: A Guide for Early Education and Outside School Hours Care Services, NSW Department of Education, 2021
- A Guide to the Child Safe Standards, NSW Office of the Children's Guardian, 2020
- ACECQA – FDC Approved Provider compliance responsibilities – October 2017
- Be You
- My Time Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia
- ECA Code of Ethics
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Nutrition Australia
- Staying Healthy – Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, NHMRC, 2012
- Eat for Health – Australian Dietary Guidelines, NHMRC, 2013
- NSW Food Authority, Children's Services Voluntary Food Safety Program Template Food Act 2003 (NSW)
- Food Regulation 2010 (NSW)
- Eat Smart Play Smart Guide 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 2016 (NSW)
- Australian Breastfeeding Association
- [NSW Food Authority](#)

### LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

- Administration of First Aid
- Administration of Medication
- Child-Safe Environment
- Dealing with Medical Conditions
- Enrolment & Orientation
- Governance & Management
- Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness
- Regular Outings & Excursions

## 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:**

- 1/3 cup cooked green or orange vegetables (for example, broccoli, spinach, carrots or pumpkin)
- 1/3 cup cooked, dried or canned beans, peas or lentils\*
- 1/3 cup green leafy or raw salad vegetables
- 1/3 cup sweet corn
- 1/3 cup potatoes 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 (1/3 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
- 1/2 medium (40g) roll or flat bread
- 1/2 cup (75-120g) cooked rice, pasta, noodles, barley, buckwheat, semolina, polenta, bulgur or quinoa
- 1/2 cup (120g) cooked porridge
- 1/2 cup (30g) wheat cereal flakes
- 1/2 cup (90g) muesli
- 3 (35g) crispbreads
- 1 (80g) 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:**

- 85g 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 450g

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

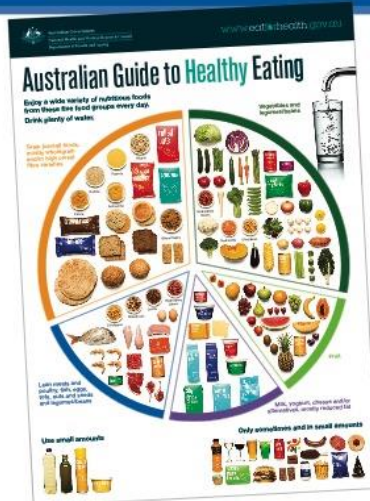
	Serves per day				
	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Boys	1½	2	2½	3½	3½
Girls	1½	1½	3	3½	3½

**A standard serve (500-600kJ) is:**

- 1 cup (250ml) fresh, UHT long life, reconstituted powdered milk or buttermilk
- 1/2 cup (120ml) evaporated milk
- 2 slices (40g) or 4 x 3 x 2cm cube (40g) of hard cheese, such as cheddar
- 1/2 cup (120g) ricotta cheese
- 1 cup (200g) yoghurt
- 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](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION GO TO [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)



## WHICH FOODS SHOULD I EAT AND HOW MUCH?

The Australian Dietary Guidelines provide up-to-date advice about the amount and kinds of foods and drinks that we need regularly, for health and well-being.

By providing your child with the recommended amounts from the Five Food Groups and limiting the foods that are high in saturated fat, added sugars and added salt, they will get enough of the nutrients essential for good health, growth and development. They may have a reduced risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity and some cancers. Your child may also feel better, look better, enjoy life more and live longer!

The amount of food your child will need from the Five Food Groups depends on their age, gender, height, weight and physical activity levels. For example, a 3-year-old boy requires 1 serve of fruit a day, but an 11-year-old boy needs 2 serves of fruit a day. A 9-year-old girl needs 4 serves of grain (cereal) foods a day, and a 14-year-old girl needs 7 serves a day. Children who are taller, more physically active or in the higher end of their age band (and not overweight or obese) may be able to have additional serves of the Five Food Groups or unsaturated spreads and oils or discretionary choices.

For further information go to [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au).

### HOW MUCH IS A SERVE?

It's helpful to get to know the recommended serving sizes and serves per day so that your child eats and drinks the right amount of the nutritious foods they need for health – as shown in the tables above. We've given you the serve size in grams too, so you can weigh foods to get an idea of what a serve looks like.

The 'serve size' is a set amount that doesn't change. It is used along with the 'serves per day', to work out the total amount of food required from each of the Five Food Groups. 'Portion size' is the amount your child actually eats and this will depend on what their energy needs are. Some children's portion sizes are smaller than the 'serve size' and some are larger. Children may eat smaller amounts more often if they choose.

### HOW MANY SERVES A DAY?

Children rarely eat exactly the same way each day and it is common to have a little more on some days than others. However, on average, the total of their portion sizes should end up being similar to the number of serves they need each day.

If your child eats portions that are smaller than the 'serve size' they will need to eat from the Food Groups more often. If your child's portion size is larger than the 'serve size', then they will need to eat from the Food Groups less often.



# Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five food groups every day.  
Drink plenty of water.



**Use small amounts**



**Only sometimes and in small amounts**

