

Nutrition, Food, Beverages, & Dietary Requirements

POLICY

POLICY STATEMENT

Our organisation recognises the importance of healthy eating for the growth, development and wellbeing of young children and is committed to promoting and supporting healthy food and drink choices for the children in our care.

BACKGROUND

The *Education and Care Services National Regulations* require approved providers to ensure their services have policies and procedures in place in relation to nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements.

LEGISLATION

- National Regulations – 77–80, 90, 91, 160, 162, 168, 170–172
- National Quality Standard – 1, 2.1.2, 2.1.3, 2.2.1, 3.1, 4, 5, 6.1, 7.1

RELEVANT POLICIES

- Administration of First Aid
- Anaphylaxis Management
- Dealing with Medical Conditions
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Excursions
- Governance and Management
- Health, Safety and Wellbeing
- Incident, Injury, Trauma & Illness
- Interactions with Children
- Staffing Arrangements
- Bush Kinder

LOCATION OF INFORMATION

- Centre Policy and Procedure Handbook
- Kids on Mullum Child Care Centre Website

MONITORING AND REVIEW

This policy is required to be reviewed at least annually by the approved provider, in conjunction with nominated supervisors, responsible persons, staff, families and children.

- Dates of Review: January 2025
January 2024
January 2023
January 2022

Nutrition, Food, Beverages, & Dietary Requirements

PROCEDURES

FOUR WEEKLY MENU

- A nutritious four-weekly menu is provided daily in-house by service cooks and kitchen staff. They prepare a fresh and varied breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and late snack, which meets all Australian dietary guidelines and nutritional recommendations for children.
- The menu is pre-planned on a four-week rotating cycle. It is displayed in the foyer, on the service website and can be emailed upon request.
- The menu reflects foods and ingredients from a variety of cultures, and consists of a variety of nutritious dishes, prepared with specific attention to texture, colours, flavours and presentation. Meals are prepared so they can be easily chewed & digested.
- Children are frequently provided with a wide variety of foods including:
 - fresh fruit and vegetables
 - wholegrains, breads and cereals
 - legumes and beans
 - milk, yoghurt, cheese and dairy alternatives
 - lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs and meat alternatives
 - tofu and plant-based alternatives
- Breakfast consists of a range of healthy breads, wholegrains and cereals.
- Morning and afternoon teas consist of a range of healthy snacks including dips, breads, yoghurts, pastries, cheeses, sandwiches, crispbreads, muffins, and crackers, as well as a variety of fresh and seasonal fruit and vegetables.
- Lunches consist of a range of healthy meals including casseroles, stews, stir-fries, soups, bakes, pasta and rice dishes which incorporate a variety of seasonal vegetables, fish and meats.
- A late snack is provided for children in attendance towards the service's closing time. Generally, crackers or fruit are provided at this time.
- Vegetarian, gluten-free, dairy-free, soy-free, tomato-free and vegan alternatives can be catered for and these diets are frequently reflected throughout the menu.
- Dairy foods are offered daily including fresh milk and cheese.
- Younger babies will be served pureed, mashed vegetables or steamed vegetables sticks and fruits according to their individual needs and developmental abilities.
- Children with cultural requirements, allergies, sensitivities, intolerances, dietary needs, medical conditions and/or food preferences are appropriately catered for. On occasion, individual allergies and restrictions need to be catered for separately, with those children receiving a special meal which may differ from the main meal.
- Family suggestions are always welcome and are encouraged.

- Families are consulted on their children's eating patterns and preferences.

WATER AND BEVERAGES

- Clean drinking water is readily available to children at all times, in all indoor and outdoor environments, and is regularly offered throughout the day.
- Water is provided at all mealtimes.
- Full cream milk and/or alternative milks are offered daily with breakfast and morning tea.
- Infants are offered fluids in accordance with their daily routine.
- In consultation with families, babies are offered cooled, pre-boiled water as an additional drink from around 6 months of age.
- Older children are encouraged to pour their own drinks to develop their self-help and independence skills.
- Drinking cups are available at all times and can be taken outdoors.
- Children are encouraged to bring along their own water bottles. These are also available at all times and can be taken outdoors.
- Staff supervise children, while drinking, to ensure good hygiene.
- Children are encouraged to eat fruit and vegetables containing water each day, *e.g., watermelon, cucumber, grapes, apples, pears, fruit salad.*
- Hot drinks can only be prepared and consumed in areas inaccessible to children.

MENU PLANNING

- Children are provided with a variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain products, dairy products, lean meats and alternative foods high in protein.
- Healthy snacks are provided on the menu that complement what is served at mealtimes and are substantial enough to meet the energy and nutrient needs of children.
- Meals and snacks provided on the menu are varied to keep children interested and to introduce children to consume a wide range of healthy meals.
- The menu is regularly reviewed in consultation with children, families, staff and health professionals to ensure it meets best practice guidelines.
- Children's cultural or religious dietary practices are respected and accommodated for.

ALLERGIES AND DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

- The organisation aims to be a completely **NUT-FREE** organisation. This includes, but is not limited to, ingredients, foods or meals containing any type of nut, nutella, pesto, peanut butter, and/or any products containing nut oils, *e.g., some nappy creams.*
- Staff are aware of all children with allergies, sensitivities, intolerances, cultural requirements, dietary needs, and/or medical conditions and consult with families to develop individual medical management plans.

- Lists of children with allergies, sensitivities, intolerances, cultural requirements, dietary needs and/or medical conditions are displayed in the kitchen, office, and children's rooms.
- Any child enrolled in the service with an allergy or medical condition is required to have an individual health management action plan completed and signed by their medical practitioner outlining the management of the allergy or condition. Families must provide this plan, along with any prescribed medication.
- Children with severe food allergies or specific health requirements may need to be planned for individually in consultation with families. Food for these children may need to be brought from home to ensure their utmost safety.
- On occasion, individual allergies and restrictions need to be catered for separately, with those children receiving a special meal which may differ from the main meal.

BREASTFEEDING AND BOTTLE FEEDING

- Breastfeeding parents are encouraged to visit during the day to feed their child.
- The service can provide a quiet space for breastfeeding or expressing milk, if required. Alternatively, the parent can feed in their child's room or a location of their choosing.
- The service encourages and supports breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of solid foods.
- Safe handling of breastmilk and infant formula is enforced including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding.
- In consultation with families, babies are offered cooled, pre-boiled water as an additional drink from around 6 months of age.
- In consultation with families, babies are offered a variety of foods from all the food groups.
- Babies are closely supervised while drinking and eating, ensuring safe bottle feeding and eating practices at all times
- Families must provide an adequate supply of formula or prepared breast milk in bottles labelled clearly with their child's name and the date of preparation or date expressed.
- Expressed milk must be brought in chilled, to be kept refrigerated. Expressed milk can also be frozen provided it has been correctly labelled, and correct defrosting procedures are adhered to.
- Breast milk and formula will be warmed just prior to feeding. Breast milk must be warmed in boiling water or a bottle warmer. Formula can be warmed in a microwave for no more than 20 seconds, but must be shaken and temperature tested before being offered to the child.
- Unfinished formula bottles may be re-offered to the child within one hour or then be discarded.
- Breast milk in bottles can be kept at room temperature for up to 4 hours and then discarded.
- Staff watch for and respond to hunger cues, rather than working by the clock.
- Hands are washed and dried before and after feeding.
- Great care is taken to ensure formula or breast milk is never given to the wrong child.

- Older babies who have the required motor skills bottle feed themselves.
- Bottles are removed from children when they have finished drinking.
- Babies are never left in a cot unsupervised with a bottle.

MEAL TIMES

- The service provides whole group and progressive mealtime routines regularly throughout the day. These are safe, relaxed, unhurried, pleasant and social experiences.
- Children are given adequate warning before a mealtime commences and that it has commenced.
- Adequate time is allocated for children to have a comfortable meal without being rushed.
- Tables and chairs are the appropriate height for children, utensils are child appropriate and cups are small enough for children to hold comfortably.
- Children are encouraged to be independent and to strengthen their self-help skills during meal times by pouring their own drinks, serving themselves, scraping their bowls, setting the table, helping to clean up, helping to wash their own dishes, and wiping their own hands and faces.
- Children are never forced to eat meals or to join the meals table.
- Food is never forced upon a child or withheld as a punitive measure, nor is food used as a bribe or a reward.
- Meals are served to children with respect to individual requirements for taste, quantities and cultural preferences.
- During meal times, staff sit with the children, role modelling healthy eating and hygiene practices, and engaging in discussions about nutrition and healthy habits, as well as general conversation.
- Children are encouraged to sit down and are closely supervised while eating and drinking.
- Children are encouraged to try new foods and are praised and encouraged for their efforts.
- Staff are respectful of children's appetites and preferences and are patient with messy, fussy or slow eaters.
- Children who do not eat during routine mealtimes, or children who are hungry, will be provided with foods at periods other than mealtimes or snack times.
- Children are supported to be fed individually by staff if needed.
- Children are encouraged to take one piece of food at a time, to take turns and avoid wastage.
- Babies are encouraged to feed themselves finger foods and use a spoon when this is developmentally appropriate.
- Staff closely supervise infants and children with allergies to ensure they do not come into contact with discarded or spilled food.
- During progressive mealtimes, children are regularly reminded that food is available and are encouraged to join the table.

CHOKING RISKS

- Due to the risk of choking in children less than 5 years of age, the following foods are not served:
 - Nuts
 - Peanut butter
- Due to the risk of choking, the following foods are served but very closely supervised:
 - hard food that can break into smaller lumps or pieces
 - raw carrot, celery and apple pieces
 - whole apples
 - popcorn
 - tough or chewy pieces of meat
 - sausages and hot dogs
- Staff ensure babies are developmentally ready to eat before offering solids.

FOOD SAFETY

- Meals are prepared, stored and served at a safe temperature and in a hygienic manner.
- Children are encouraged to wash and dry their hands before all mealtimes. Babies' hands are wiped with a face washer.
- Staff wash their hands thoroughly, wear gloves and use utensils. Gloves are changed regularly between tasks.
- Surfaces and equipment are cleaned and sanitised before and after food preparation.
- Regular cleaning routines are adhered to.
- Separate cutting boards are used for raw and cooked foods.
- Children are discouraged from sharing their food and utensils.
- Food is cooked and stored at correct temperatures, ensuring it doesn't go into the temperature danger zone.
- Cooked and reheated food is cooled for a short period of time to allow it to drop to a safe temperature for children to consume.
- Food is inspected for foreign bodies and temperature prior to serving.
- Any item that falls to the floor is removed, replaced and discarded immediately.
- Food handling staff hold food handling qualifications. All remaining staff are trained in food safety.
- Tongs are used to pick up foods when serving.
- Damaged packaging such as dented cans or leaking packages are discarded.
- Food products are stored in sealed containers to prevent access from pests and vermin.
- All perishable foods are stored in the refrigerator.
- Food stored in the refrigerator or freezer are covered with a lid or cling film, labelled and dated.

- Check 'use by' and 'best before' dates when receiving food and before preparing food.
- All rubbish and leftover food is disposed of in lidded bins which are emptied daily.
- Fridge and freezer temperatures are checked daily.
- Raw foods are stored below cooked foods in the refrigerator.
- Foods that may cause problems if not stored, handled or prepared safely:
 - raw and cooked meat or foods containing raw or cooked meat
 - dairy products and foods containing dairy products
 - seafood and foods containing seafood
 - cooked rice and pasta
 - processed fruit and vegetables such as salads
 - processed foods containing eggs or other protein-rich food
 - foods that contain any of the foods above, e.g., sandwiches
- Food handlers:
 - Wear clean clothing and a clean apron.
 - Tie back long hair or cover it with a hair net.
 - Remove hand and wrist jewellery when preparing food.
 - Keep their nails short and clean, with no nail polish.
 - Adhere to strict hand-washing routines.
 - Wear gloves when preparing and serving food.
 - Never smoke, chew gum, spit, or eat in a food handling or food storage area.
 - Never cough or sneeze over food or where food is prepared or stored.
 - Cover cuts and wounds with coloured, water-resistant dressings.
 - Change disposable gloves regularly.
 - Are excluded if suffering from illness.

HYGIENE

- Staff wash their hands before:
 - Starting or recommencing work
 - Handling food or drinks, including a baby's bottle
 - Eating or drinking
 - Putting on disposable gloves
 - Changing a nappy
 - Giving medication
 - Applying sunscreen
 - Going home
- Staff wash their hands after:
 - Attending the toilet
 - Changing a nappy or assisting a child with toileting
 - Eating or drinking
 - Wiping a nose or using a tissue
 - Handling raw products
 - Playing outside
 - Removing gloves
 - Coughing or sneezing
 - Touching their face or hair
 - Disposing of rubbish or waste products
 - Cleaning up blood, faeces, vomit or bodily fluids
 - Smoking or vaping

- Hand sanitiser is used as a minimum standard, if supervision will be compromised by attending the bathroom. Hands are washed as soon as possible after the use of hand sanitiser.
- Children are encouraged to follow the basics of personal hygiene, including:
 - Flushing toilets after use.
 - Washing and drying hands thoroughly after going to the bathroom.
 - Washing and drying hands thoroughly before and after meals.
 - Blowing their nose with a disposable tissue, disposing in rubbish bin and then washing and drying their hands thoroughly.
 - Using their own drink bottles exclusively.
 - Using their own plates, bowls, cups and utensils exclusively.
 - Using tongs when serving own food.
- Signs and visual prompts are on display throughout the service to reinforce the importance of good personal hygiene and maintaining correct food handling procedures.

ORAL HEALTH

- Dental health discussions and resources are included in the educational program.
- Staff do not put children to sleep with milk or formula in their bottles.
- Annual dental health check visits by dental health professionals are organised for children.
- Sweetened drinks, such as juice, cordial, flavoured milk and soft drink, are not provided by the service and families are discouraged from bringing them into the service.
- Children undertake oral hygiene practices in the service where appropriate.
- Staff report any signs of dental health problems to families, e.g., swelling gums, problems with chewing, or injuries to teeth, tongue and/or gums.

FOOD FROM HOME

- The organisation is a completely **NUT-FREE** organisation.
- This includes, but is not limited to: ingredients, foods or meals containing any type of nut, nutella, pesto, peanut butter, and/or any products containing nut oils, e.g., *some nappy creams*.
- Families are discouraged from sending their child into the service with any food from home, unless pre-approved, to avoid severe allergic reactions.
- Nuts, peanut butter, nutella, lollies, chocolates, muesli bars, and/or confectionary are not to be brought into the service.
- Children are discouraged from entering the service whilst consuming food.
- If a child has eaten nutella or peanut butter before entering the service, families must ensure that they have washed their child's hands and faces before arrival.
- Any food brought into the service, e.g., *birthday cake or baby food*, must be approved by the nominated supervisor, responsible persons or food safety supervisor. These guidelines have been developed to minimise the risk of exposure to children whom are at risk of anaphylaxis.
- Families are discouraged from leaving food in their child's bag.

BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS

- Staff and children love to celebrate birthdays and special occasions at the service.
- When the family would like their child to celebrate their birthday or a special occasion at the service, they must notify staff about bringing in a special **NUT-FREE** treat, *e.g. birthday cake, cupcakes*. Alternatively, the service may be able to provide a cake made by kitchen staff.
- Cakes must be purchased from a bakery, supermarket or grocery store and must be enclosed in a sealed container to meet food and safety regulations.
- Families must provide a list of ingredients to ensure staff can protect children with allergies or dietary restrictions. These details also need to be recorded in the kitchen food register.
- Families are encouraged to provide candles and any additional decorations or party supplies they require.
- Staff will provide each child with cake or a special treat at either afternoon tea time or after lunch.
- On birthdays, children will be encouraged to sing the 'Happy Birthday' song to the birthday child.
- Families are welcome to attend their child's celebration. They will be informed in advance regarding the time the celebration will take place.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

- Staff reflect upon mealtime routines as part of the programming cycle, to ensure best practices.
- Children are given opportunities to provide feedback on the menu.
- Cooking experiences are provided which exposed children to new foods, and educate children about nutrition, healthy choices and cooking skills.
- Discussions around food are positive and focus on the taste, shape, colour, variety and benefits. Topics such as diets, dieting, or restrictions are avoided.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Approved Provider	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate health and hygiene procedures are followed, as well as safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food. • Ensure all staff comply with the Food Safety Act. • Ensure that all facilities and equipment for food preparation and storage are clean, and in good repair and working order. • Facilitate the removal of pests and vermin from the service premises. • Ensure children have access to safe and fresh drinking water at all times, in both the indoor and outdoor environments. • Ensure that food and beverages are made available to children at frequent and regular intervals throughout the day. • Ensure the food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, are chosen based on each child's dietary requirements, and meet any specific cultural, religious or health needs. • Display a weekly menu which accurately describes the food and beverages provided by the service each day. • Ensure that enrolment records include any special dietary considerations for the child, such as cultural, religious or health-related dietary restrictions.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of children with food allergies, intolerances, restrictions, dietary requirements and/or medical conditions, and consult with families to develop individual medical management plans. • Ensure risk minimisation plans are developed for children with allergies or medical conditions that may be impacted by food. • Ensure measures are in place to prevent cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies and/or medical conditions. • Ensure children do not have access to foods that may cause choking. • Ensure all children are always supervised children while eating & drinking. • Ensure age and developmentally appropriate utensils and furniture are provided for each child. • Prohibit food being used as a form of punishment or as a reward or bribe. • Prohibit force-feeding children, enforcing children to eat food they dislike or making children eat more than they want to. • Appoint a food safety supervisor. • Provide a calibrated thermometer, suitable for food preparation areas, to monitor temperatures. • Ensure that healthy eating and living practices are promoted. • Ensure that the service environment and educational program supports children and families to make healthy choices relating to nutrition, health, eating, oral health and active play. • Ensure there is a suitable space for breastfeeding and storage of breast milk is available. • Ensure hot drinks are only prepared and consumed in areas inaccessible to children, and that they are not consumed in, or taken into or through, any area where children are in attendance or participating in the program. • Ensure that staff who are responsible for menu planning participate in regular nutrition and safe food handling training, and are kept up-to-date with current research, knowledge and best practice. • Read, understand, follow and enforce the organisation's policies and procedures.
Nominated Supervisor and Responsible Persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate health and hygiene procedures are followed, as well as safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food. • Ensure all staff comply with the Food Safety Act. • Ensure children have access to safe and fresh drinking water at all times, in both the indoor and outdoor environments. • Ensure that food and beverages are made available to children at frequent and regular intervals throughout the day. • Ensure the food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, are chosen based on each child's dietary requirements, and meet any specific cultural, religious or health needs. • Display a weekly menu which accurately describes the food and beverages provided by the service each day. • Ensure that enrolment records include any special dietary considerations for the child, such as cultural, religious or health-related dietary restrictions. • Be aware of children with food allergies, intolerances, restrictions, dietary requirements and/or medical conditions, and consult with families to develop individual medical management plans. • Ensure risk minimisation plans are developed for children with allergies or medical conditions that may be impacted by food. • Ensure measures are in place to prevent cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies and/or medical conditions.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that a system for ongoing communication is developed and maintained between families, staff and cooks, so updates to children's dietary requirements, medical conditions and/or allergy status are shared. • Ensure children do not have access to foods that may cause choking. • Ensure all children are always supervised children while eating & drinking. • Prohibit food being used as a form of punishment or as a reward or bribe. • Prohibit force-feeding children, enforcing children to eat food they dislike or making children eat more than they want to. • Ensure that healthy eating and living practices are promoted. • Ensure that the service environment and educational program supports children and families to make healthy choices relating to nutrition, health, eating, oral health and active play. • Ensure there is a suitable space for breastfeeding and storage of breast milk is available. • Encourage and support breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of foods. • Ensure the safe handling of breastmilk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding. • Ensure hot drinks are only prepared and consumed in areas inaccessible to children, and that they are not consumed in, or taken into or through, any area where children are in attendance or participating in the program. • Ensure that staff who are responsible for menu planning participate in regular nutrition and safe food handling training, and are kept up-to-date with current research, knowledge and best practice. • Ensure staff are supported to lead a healthy lifestyle by providing healthy options in the staff room, at staff meetings and during professional learning. • Ensure that discretionary food and beverages do not appear in any sponsorship, fundraising or marketing activities. • Ensure celebrations and service events promote healthy food options and limit discretionary options. • Provide resources about road safety and active travel. • Encourage families to keep children who are unwell at home to prevent the spread of infection. • Read, understand, follow and enforce the organisation's policies and procedures.
Food Safety Supervisor, Cook, and Kitchen Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate health and hygiene procedures are followed, as well as safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food. • Ensure all staff comply with the Food Safety Act. • Ensure children have access to safe and fresh drinking water at all times, in both the indoor and outdoor environments. • Ensure that food and beverages are made available to children at frequent and regular intervals throughout the day. • Ensure the food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, are chosen based on each child's dietary requirements, and meet any specific cultural, religious or health needs. • Display the menu which accurately describes the food and beverages provided by the service each day. • Review the menu on a regular basis, following consultation with children, families, staff and health professionals. • Be aware of children with food allergies, intolerances, restrictions, dietary requirements and/or medical conditions, and consult with families to develop individual medical management plans.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure risk minimisation plans are developed for children with allergies or medical conditions that may be impacted by food. • Ensure measures are in place to prevent cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies and/or medical conditions. • Ensure that a system for ongoing communication is developed and maintained between families, staff and cooks, so updates to children's dietary requirements, medical conditions and/or allergy status are shared. • Ensure children do not have access to foods that may cause choking. • Ensure storage of breast milk is available. • Ensure the safe handling of breastmilk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding. • Ensure hot drinks are only prepared and consumed in areas inaccessible to children, and that they are not consumed in, or taken into or through, any area where children are in attendance or participating in the program. • Participate in regular nutrition and safe food handling training, and keep up-to-date with current research, knowledge and best practice. • Ensure staff are supported to lead a healthy lifestyle by providing healthy options in the staff room, at staff meetings and during professional learning. • Ensure celebrations and service events promote healthy food options and limit discretionary options. • Complete an appropriate food safety certificate. • Implement and document a food safety program. • Wear disposable gloves when handling food. • Ensure fridge and freezer temperatures are taken daily. • Ensure food is appetising and presented attractively. • Ensure children are not able to enter the kitchen. • Develop an appropriate cleaning and sanitising schedule that outlines daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual cleaning & sanitising responsibilities. • Implement effective hygienic systems for cleaning. • Ensure cloths are cleaned, stored separately and replaced regularly. • Identify potential hazards that may occur at each stage of the food handling and preparation cycle and develop procedures to minimise these hazards. • Dispose of eating or drinking utensils that are chipped, broken or cracked. • Clean all food contact surfaces, appliances and equipment after use. • Cover all wounds with brightly coloured wound strips or bandages. • Notify the nominated supervisor or responsible persons of inability to work if affected with vomiting or diarrhoea within the past 48 hours. • Complying with internal and external audit requirements. • Provide children with opportunities to try new foods. • Share recipes and encourage feedback about food provided. • Read, understand, follow and enforce the organisation's policies and procedures.
Educators and Staff Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure adequate health and hygiene procedures are followed, as well as safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food. • Ensure all staff comply with the Food Safety Act. • Ensure children have access to safe and fresh drinking water at all times, in both the indoor and outdoor environments. • Ensure that food and beverages are made available to children at frequent and regular intervals throughout the day. • Monitor children's food and beverage intake to ensure it is adequate and appropriate to their needs.

- Be aware of children with food allergies, intolerances, restrictions, dietary requirements and/or medical conditions, and consult with families to develop individual medical management plans.
- Ensure risk minimisation plans are developed for children with allergies or medical conditions that may be impacted by food.
- Ensure measures are in place to prevent cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies and/or medical conditions.
- Ensure that a system for ongoing communication is developed and maintained between families, staff and cooks, so updates to children's dietary requirements, medical conditions and/or allergy status are shared.
- Ensure safeguards are in place to prevent children being served the wrong food or beverage.
- Ensure children do not have access to foods that may cause choking.
- Ensure all children are always supervised children while eating & drinking.
- Prohibit food being used as a form of punishment or as a reward or bribe.
- Prohibit force-feeding children, enforcing children to eat food they dislike or making children eat more than they want to.
- Ensure that healthy eating and living practices are promoted.
- Ensure that the service environment and educational program supports children and families to make healthy choices relating to nutrition, health, eating, oral health and active play.
- Provide a variety of cooking and food experiences that support children to develop food literacy and positive habits relating to food.
- Develop programs that promote healthy eating and knowledge of nutrition.
- Provide opportunities for children to learn about, and develop skills for oral health, including age-appropriate tooth brushing.
- Plan and provide road safety, active play and movement experiences that are age-appropriate, inclusive of diversity and abilities, and support children to develop fundamental movement skills.
- Ensure screen-based activities do not exceed health recommendations.
- Discuss healthy choices with children, and role-model positive behaviours.
- Handle, prepare and store food using food safety practices.
- Provide positive and relaxed mealtimes.
- Respect the individual needs and choices of children.
- Encourage children's independence at mealtimes.
- Involve children in decision-making about healthy food & beverage choices.
- Ensure there is a suitable space for breastfeeding and storage of breast milk is available.
- Encourage and support breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of foods.
- Ensure the safe handling of breastmilk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding.
- Ensure hot drinks are only prepared and consumed in areas inaccessible to children, and that they are not consumed in, or taken into or through, any area where children are in attendance or participating in the program.
- Participate in regular nutrition and safe food handling training, and keep up-to-date with current research, knowledge and best practice.
- Ensure celebrations and service events promote healthy food options and limit discretionary options.
- Provide resources about road safety and active travel.
- Encourage families to keep children who are unwell at home to prevent the spread of infection.
- Discourage children from sharing utensils, bowls, cups or drink bottles.
- Educate children how to wash and dry their hands effectively.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform the nominated supervisor or responsible persons of any outbreaks of gastroenteritis or possible food poisoning at the service. • Wear disposable gloves when handling food. • Read, understand, follow and enforce the organisation's policies and procedures.
Parents, Guardians and Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the service is advised of any dietary requirements relating to their child's growth and development needs, as well as any specific cultural, religious or health requirements. • Communicate regularly with staff regarding dietary requirements, medical conditions, allergy status, specific needs and/or food preferences. • Ensure a risk minimisation plan is developed with staff for any children with allergies or medical conditions that may be impacted by food. • Read the service's weekly menu and provide feedback or suggestions. • Provide clean and sterilised bottles that are clearly named daily. • Provide the required number of bottles per day. • Promote healthy eating and living practices at home. • Discuss healthy choices, and role-model positive behaviours at home. • Encourage independence at mealtimes. • Ensure hot drinks are only prepared and consumed in areas inaccessible to children, and that they are not consumed in, or taken into or through, any area where children are in attendance or participating in the program. • Keep children who are unwell at home to prevent the spread of infection. • Read, understand and follow the organisation's policies and procedures.

SOURCES

- ACECQA – *Creating Positive Mealtimes* – February 2019
- ACECA – *Keeping Children's Food Safe* – March 2020
- Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority
- Australian Government – *Australian Dietary Guidelines* – February 2013
- Australian Government – *Infant Feeding Guidelines* – February 2013
- Australian Government – *Get Up and Grow* – April 2013
- Child Australia – *Promoting Healthy Eating and Nutrition in ECEC Services* – July 2012
- Children, Youth and Families Act 2005 – September 2023
- Department of Education and Training
- Department of Health
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics 2016
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 – July 2023
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 – July 2023
- Food Standards Australia and New Zealand
- Guide to the National Quality Framework 2018 – July 2023
- Healthy Eating Advisory Service
- HEAS – *Developing a Healthy Eating Policy* – January 2016
- HEAS – *Menu Planning Guidelines for Long Day Care* – January 2020
- HEAS – *Promoting Healthy Eating in Early Childhood Services* – January 2016
- Healthy Early Childhood Services Achievement Program
- Munch and Move
- Nutrition Australia
- Starting Blocks – *Nutrition in Children's Education and Care Services*