

WCS Children's Services HEALTH – Nutrition Policy

Purpose

Good nutrition is essential to healthy living and enables children to be active participants in play and leisure. Education and care settings provide many opportunities for children to experience a range of healthy foods and to learn about food choices from educators and other children (Early Years Learning Framework; Framework for School Age Care).

Policy Statement

This policy details the service's approach to mealtimes when the food and beverages consumed by children while at the service are provided by the service. It also describes the way educators use mealtimes for a happy and social occasion, and for developing lifelong healthy food choices.

Strategies and Practices

- The service's Nutrition, Food and Beverage Policy is made available to parents/guardians at enrolment.
- At enrolment, parents provide the Service with details of their child's food and drink allergies and of any cultural preferences in food. The enrolment form has provision for parents/guardians to provide the Service with details of any special dietary requirements (e.g. allergies, culture, religion, food preferences). Parents/guardians are asked to update this information when any changes occur.
- The service provides the children's food and drink requirements over the day – with the exception of babies' bottles. The food and drink are nutritious, appropriate to each child (as detailed in the enrolment form) and consistent with Australian nutritional standards.
- The weekly menu accurately describes the food and beverages for each day and is displayed prominently for parents.
- The service maintains a list and photographs of children with special food requirements for health or medical reasons (e.g. allergies, intolerances). This information is displayed in the food preparation areas and strategically throughout the service. Relief educators are informed of these dietary requirements when they begin their shift.
- Meals served to children with dietary requirements/restrictions and allergies/intolerances may be served on distinctive plates.
- Food is presented attractively.
- The healthy eating message is promoted and positively reinforced amongst families through various means.

- Educators promote healthy eating in children by including the topic in daily routines and in other intentional teaching such as role-modelling, discussions, songs, stories, games, using different cultural meal settings, and cooking experiences.
- Meal times are relaxed, pleasant and unhurried. Educators sit and eat with the children, maintaining good personal nutrition, and talk with them on topics of interest, including, but not limited to, healthy food and nutrition.
- Developmentally appropriate eating utensils and furniture are provided for each child. Children, including toddlers, are encouraged to be independent and develop social skills at meal times.
- Food is never used to reward or punish children.
- Children are encouraged to eat, but they are not required to taste new foods, to eat food they do not like or to eat more than they want.
- Safe drinking water is readily accessible to children at all times, and educators encourage children to drink water at frequent intervals.
- Children who are hungry at other than meal times are given food.
- Educators follow all regulatory requirements for preparing and serving food.
- Parents/guardians are informed of their child's food and beverage, where relevant.
- Age appropriate foods are provided.
- Birthdays are an important part of a child's life, and educators and children care encouraged to celebrate them at the service. Parents/guardians are welcome to bring a cake to share or the Service may provide a cake.
- Where the service is a nut free zone, the Service will endeavour not to serve nuts or nut products.
- The service provides educators with appropriate training in safe food handling. They are provided with current information on nutrition for young children, with special regard to cultural preferences.
- Parents/guardians and children are encouraged to give ongoing feedback during the year about the service's menu/food provided by the service.

Additional safe practices for babies

- Educators follow the service's written Expressed Breast Milk (EBM) and Formula – Storing and Heating Procedure when storing and heating babies' bottles.
- Babies are fed individually by educators, unless a willingness for self-help skill is indicated by the child/infant.

Responsibilities of parents/guardians

- To provide the Service with details of their child's known food allergies at enrolment, and to inform the Service immediately any changes occur.

- To discuss their child's food allergies, if any, with them (older children) and to ensure they understand the importance of not sharing food.

Links Education and Care Services National Regulations 2017, National Quality Standard 2018

Regs	77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
	78	Food and beverages
	90	Medical conditions policy
	91	Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents
	162	Health information to be kept in enrolment record
	168	Education and care service must have policies and procedures

QA	2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest and relaxation.
	2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
	2.1.3	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
	2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
	5.1.1	Responsive and meaningful interactions build trusting relationships which engage and support each child to feel secure, confident and included.

Sources, further reading and useful websites

Sources

- Better Health. (2012). Breast milk – expressing.
http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/Bottle_feeding_with_expressed_breast_milk accessed 20 March 2012
- Early Years Learning Framework 2009
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, 2017
- National Quality Standard 2011, 2018
- Queensland Health. (n.d). Formula Feeding.
<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/ph/documents/childhealth/28107.pdf> accessed 21 March 2012
- Dr. B. Abbey and P. Maclean, NQS - the complete system of policies, procedures and forms, www.childcarebydesign.com.au.

Further reading

- Better Health Channel. (2011). Fact sheet: Child care and healthy eating.
[http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcvpdf.nsf/ByPDF/Childcare_and_healthy_eating/\\$File/Childcare_and_healthy_eating.pdf](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcvpdf.nsf/ByPDF/Childcare_and_healthy_eating/$File/Childcare_and_healthy_eating.pdf)
- Nutrition Australia. (2009). Get up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for early Childhood
<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/A8053821E32DED8D>

CA25762C001D60CA/\$File/P3-5616%20Family%20Book%20Combined%20SCREEN.pdf accessed 10 March 2012

- Nutrition Australia. (n.d). – Factsheets for Healthy Eating
<http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/national/resources>
- National Health and Medical Research Council. (2003). The Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia incorporating The Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers
http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/_files_nhmrc/publications/attachments/n34.pdf accessed 10 March 2012

Useful websites

- Australian Breastfeeding Association – www.breastfeeding.asn.au/
- Nutrition Australia – www.nutritionaustralia.org/vic/nutrition-services-early-learning-Services
- Queensland Health – www.health.qld.gov.au
- Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne – www.rch.org.au

Policy Review

This policy is a living document and will be monitored and reviewed as issues are identified. Proposed changes will be circulated and discussed by all programs and any external stakeholders for approval.

Person Responsible for Review:

Manager, Children's Services

Implementation Date:	3 November 2014	Review Date:	January 2020
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Modification History

Date	Sections and/or Paragraphs	Source	Details
2016/08/31	Whole Policy	WCS	New format
2018/01/31	Quality Areas	Revised National Quality Standard 2018	

Related Documents

Refer to HR Manual –cross reference to WCS documents such as: WCS Services Guide, WCS Values and Strategic Plan.

Approved by Susan Henderson, Manager, Children's Services.



Date: 16 January 2017