

## Nutrition, Food Safety and Oral Health Policy

### Purpose

EY@PP is committed to ensuring that children in care are provided with safe foods and a portion of their daily nutritional requirements while creating an environment that supports healthy behaviour including good oral health practices. It is understood that providing meals for young children is not simply about meeting their daily nutritional requirements, it is also to provide children with routines, social and eating experiences, development of self-help skills, sound hygiene practices as well as providing good oral health and early childhood dental hygiene.

Meal times are seen as an important component of the daily programme and are used to maximise children's learning opportunities both in good eating and drinking habits and good oral health behaviour, to reduce the incidence of dental caries and to facilitate the prevention and management of dental trauma in children.

### Definition:

**Dental Hygiene** - The practice of keeping the mouth, teeth, and gums clean and healthy to prevent disease, as by regular brushing and visits to a dentist.

**Healthy eating:** Healthy eating means eating a variety of foods from the five food groups each day. These are:

- fruit
- vegetables and legumes/beans
- grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain
- milk, yoghurt, cheese, and alternatives
- lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans.

These give you the nutrients you need to maintain your health, feel good, and have energy. These nutrients include protein, carbohydrates, fat, water, vitamins, and minerals. Nutrition is important for everyone.

**Oral health:** Oral health is multi-faceted and includes the ability to speak, smile, smell, taste, touch, chew, swallow and convey a range of emotions through facial expressions with confidence and without pain, discomfort and disease of the craniofacial complex.

**Nutrition:** Nutrition is nourishment or energy that is obtained from food consumed or the process of consuming the proper amount of nourishment and energy. An example of nutrition is the nutrients found in fruits and vegetables. An example of nutrition is eating a healthy diet.

**Sometimes/discretionary food and drinks:** Some foods and drinks do not fit into the Five Food Groups because they typically have very little nutritional value, and are foods that are high in saturated fat and/or sugar, added salt or alcohol and low in fibre. These 'sometimes' foods and drinks are referred to as 'discretionary choices.' Examples of discretionary foods and drinks include:

- chocolate, confectionery, jelly
- sweet biscuits, high fat/salt savoury biscuits, chips
- high sugar/high fat cakes and slices
- cream, ice cream
- deep fried foods (e.g. hot chips) and pastry based foods (pies, sausage rolls and pasties)
- most fast food and takeaway foods
- some processed meats (e.g. sausages, frankfurts/hot dogs, salami, strasbourg, devon, some commercial chicken nuggets and fish fingers)
- soft drinks, fruit juice and fruit drinks, cordial, sports drinks, energy drinks, flavoured milk and flavoured mineral water.

## Procedure and Responsibilities

- Staff will provide education to children and their parents/guardians about healthy food, healthy eating habits and good oral health through posters, displays, handouts, discussions and intentional teaching.
- Staff will provide and maintain a healthy Nutrition, Food Safety and Oral Health policy that is consistent with advice from recognized authorities. The food is low in sugar, high in calcium, to support dental health. Also offers a wide variety of nutritious food from the 5 food groups.
- Children will be provided with their own drink bottle and be encouraged to drink fresh water frequently throughout the day. Plain milk and water will be provided at meal times. Cooled boiled water offered to infants. No carbonated drinks, flavoured milk and fruit juices will be offered to the children.
- Infant are not to be put to sleep while drinking from a bottle. An infant cup can be introduced from 6 month with communication with the family.
- Meals will be timed to meet children's needs with meal areas set up in a way that is attractive, inviting and pleasant to encourage social learning and positive interaction with a flexible approach to serving and consuming food. Staff will limit the number of times snacks are offered each day between the hours 7am to 6pm, breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea, supper.
- Food will be provided in servings that are appropriate to the children's changing dietary needs and eating ability.
- Staff will sit with the children at the lunch table, have a small serve of the lunch [remembering that the food is prepared for the children] to model appropriate behaviour and to encourage children to eat with independence skills and social interaction to be encouraged through conversation. Food will never be used as a form of a rewards, bribe or punishment.
- Staff will actively discuss sound oral health and nutrition practices, appropriate for the age of the children within the curriculum experiences.
- Staff encourage and support families in seeking dental care where appropriate and communicate with parents about their child's food intake through menu display, and white boards in rooms
- Develop policies and strategies in consultation with health organisations, parent committee and staff along with the Australian National Dietary Guidelines that are sourced to ensure meals served to children include the nutritional and dietary requirement appropriate for their age group. Meals will be low in sugar, salt and fats. The Health Eating Advisory Service's FoodChecker tool will be used to assess menu's and ensure they meet the guidelines. The centre will comply with all legislative requirements.
- Kitchen Garden Sustainability program is run with all groups of children and incorporates learning experiences around healthy foods to grow and eat.
- The kitchen staff will provide individual meals for children with individual requests, allergies, and special dietary needs. Food choices related to cultural and religious beliefs are respected.
- The staff will report to the families any signs of tooth cavities, any accident, injury or suspected injury to teeth and gums, gum swelling, infection of the mouth, or problems, pain or discomfort the child has with chewing, eating or swallowing.

- Staff will follow the guidelines for oral hygiene and prevention of cavities to help reduce the incidence of cavities in young children, including no dummy's dipped in sweet substances and not putting babies to bed with a bottle.
- EYPP will provide appropriate dental and oral health education and health promotion, including in home languages when necessary.
- Early Years @ Phoenix Park will partner with local organisations to support healthy eating and oral health practices including local Health Promotion Units for information and organising a Dental hygienist annually within the centre for children 3 and over
- All members of the service can contribute to and be responsible for the provision of healthy eating and dental program.
- Staff will familiarize themselves with the Food Safety Program and will ensure the practises are maintained at a high level.
- Spaces for breastfeeding and storing breastmilk are available at all times
- A high level of hygiene standards must be maintained at all times
- Morning and afternoon teas are held in an informal manner where children may choose when to partake, plain milk and water are offered.
- Parents will inform staff of any foods their child is not able to eat for any reason by adding the relevant information to the child's enrolment form and advising staff of any changes to this requirement.
- Children are only allowed to bring food into the centre when they are enrolled in the sessional kinder programs (Room 7). A list of healthy food options is provided to the families and discretionary food and drink options are discouraged in the service and being brought from home.
- All other rooms the children's food is provided.
- Under no circumstances are children allowed to bring in any nut products into the centre as we have a number of children who have allergies to these products that are life threatening.
- Educators are supported to consume healthy foods/drinks at work and are provided with weekly fresh fruit and healthy meal options during onsite professional development.
- Educators and staff are supported to access professional development and resources, enabling them to deliver oral health and healthy eating education.
- Healthy food options in line with this policy will be provided to staff and educators for meetings, celebrations and events
- Fresh water is available and staff are encouraged to have drink bottles, containing water, in the rooms on a daily basis. Staff Bathroom is available if staff wish to clean their teeth.
- Food safety audits are undertaken in accordance with legislation.
- The head cook holds a Certificate in Safe Food Handling.
- The service has a Food Safety Supervisor as required by the Food Act
- The service has a Food Safety Program that is adhered to.

- The service has an audit of the food safety program annually. The certificate is displayed in the foyer

#### **Mealtimes – Sessional Kindergarten Room 7 only.**

- Parents are responsible for supplying snack and lunches and are encouraged to supply healthy and nutritious food.
- Children’s birthdays are celebrated with traditions that do not include the use of food, so families are not to bring in treats or cakes for birthdays. Educators will inform families of the celebratory style used in each group.
- Parents are asked not to provide foods containing nuts or nut products (e.g. Nutella and peanut butter) as they may cause life-threatening anaphylaxis to other children.

#### **Sources:**

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations

Reg.: 77, 78,79,80, 168 (2ai)

National Quality Standards:

Quality Area 2- Children’s Health and safety. Standard 2.2 Element 2.2.1

Quality Area 6 – Collaborative Partnerships with families and communities

Quality Area 7 – Governance and leadership

Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013

Australian Dental Association [www.ada.org.au](http://www.ada.org.au)

Belonging, Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia 2009

Get Up and Grow, Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood 2009

Infant Feeding Guidelines 2012

Menu planning guidelines for long day care, HEAS, 2012

Department of Human Services, (n.d.) *Oral Health Promotion: A Practical Guide for Children’s Services*, Victorian Government Department of Human Services, Melbourne, Vic.

Centre for Community Child Health, 2002, *Care of your Child’s Teeth*, Royal Children’s Hospital, Vic.

Ismail A. I. (1998) Prevention of Early Childhood Caries. *Community Dentistry and Oral Epidemiology*: 26: (supplement1)

NSW Multicultural Health Communication Service website ([www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au))

Dental Health Services Victoria – Smile 4 Miles 4 Families

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework For all Children from Birth to Eight Years 2016

**Review**

This policy will be shared with the whole service community (including staff, educators, management, families and children) with opportunities to provide feedback/input.

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**Reviewed:** June 2019

**Planned review:** June 2021

**Endorsed by:** Early Years @ Phoenix Park August 2019