

FOOD AND NUTRITION POLICY

Rationale:

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital Community Child Care Centre (TQEHCCCC) is committed to providing a healthy and safe environment of the highest standard for children, educators and parents. This relates especially to the provision of a range of nutritious and culturally diverse food.

Provision of a Healthy Menu

A variety of nutritious foods will be incorporated into the Centre's menus including:

- Breads, cereals, vegetables and fruits.
- Meat, fish, and chicken.
- Full cream milk, yoghurts and cheeses.
- Meat alternatives such as legumes.
- Meals and snacks from a variety of origins.
- Foods low in added sugar, salt and fats.
- Water, available at all times throughout the day.

Food provided is consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents and the Australian guidelines Get up and Grow: Healthy eating and physical activity for early childhood. The menu aims to provide at least 50% of the recommended dietary intake of key nutrients for children. To support this, the centre implements seasonal rotating menu that is reviewed regularly. All educators undergo online food safety training.

Educators aim to accommodate children's individual eating requirements wherever possible and additional food is made available to children who are hungry. At all times food provided will be developmentally appropriate. Food will not be used as a punishment or reward, whether by its provision or denial.

Our Centre encourages birthday celebrations and we ask families to provide vanilla, soy vanilla ice-cream or 99% fruit juice blocks as a birthday cake alternative.

Families bringing food into the Centre for social events will be asked to label food including a list of ingredients. Nuts and nut-derived products are potentially fatal to some children, so we ask families to follow the centres 'nut free' approach. (Please see anaphylaxis Policy)

Families are reminded that no drinks or food items be brought into the centre or left in children's bags.

Special Dietary Needs

The requirements of children with special dietary needs (e.g. allergies, religious beliefs), will be respected and followed by all staff, but must be provided to the Centre in writing. When a child's alternate dietary requirements are due to either a suspected or confirmed medical condition (such as an allergy or intolerance) confirmation by a Health Care Professional (Doctor, Nutritionist or Dietician) detailing possible side-effects, symptoms and a proposed Action Plan is required. When a child is on a special diet for non-medical reasons the family will be asked to fill out a Modified Diet Care Plan (see attachment). It is the families' responsibility to provide accurate and relevant information, including notification when children's particular dietary requirements are no longer required. Children with food

allergies will be clearly identified and all relevant staff will be informed of the child's Action Plan.

A Positive and Safe Eating Environment

We support safe eating practices throughout the centre by ensuring that:

- Children and educators remain seated when eating and/or drinking.
- Children are supervised at all times when eating and drinking.
- Children will not be forced to eat, and not be given food if they are at risk of choking, e.g. crying.
- For babies, meat will be cut into bite sized pieces and all chicken/meat is lean.
- All hard fruits and vegetables will be cooked (babies will be mashed).
- Unsafe foods are not provided, e.g. raw carrots, celery, popcorn, nuts, whole grapes, whole cherry tomatoes and raw apples.
- Skin is removed from fruit for Babies and Toddlers.

Educators promote a supportive and social eating environment by:

- Sitting with children and where possible, eating and enjoying the same food.
- Promoting positive discussion about the foods being served to children.
- Respecting children's food preferences.
- Cultural food events and practices are celebrated and discussed with children.
- Encouraging self- help and where necessary, assisting children at mealtimes.
- Offering choices at snack and mealtimes.

Educators promote children's understanding of food, nutrition and hygiene by:

- Discussing a balanced diet including the importance of physical activity, the body's food requirements, where foods come from, as well as the cultural, religious and medical aspects of food
- Providing planned and spontaneous experiences through the program e.g. gardening, food preparation and cooking, dramatic play, books and excursions
- Discussing and role modelling food safety and handling practices with children

Communicating with Families:

Educators communicate effectively with families about their child's nutrition by:

- Displaying the weekly menu in the kitchen and near the daily information charts in all the children's rooms
- Welcoming feedback or contributions to the menu planning
- Sharing nutritious recipes with families
- Detailing food eaten daily for all children
- The Director providing a copy of the Centre's Food and Nutrition Policy and discussing it with new families prior to enrolment
- Providing nutritional information to families, in appropriate languages where possible

Supporting appropriate dental health and hygiene:

- The centre will actively encourage good dental health practices including eating and drinking habits.
- Children will be encouraged to drink water to quench their thirst and remain hydrated. This also helps reduce the acidity in the mouth to a neutral pH and removes some of the remaining food particles on the teeth and gums.
- Providing foods at snack times which can help protect from decay e.g. milk, cheese, yoghurt. These foods increase the levels of calcium in the saliva, protecting the teeth.
- The centre will ensure that children who drink a bottle finish their drink before going to sleep. The prolonged contact of fluids such as cordials, juices and to a lesser extent milk with the teeth increase the risk of dental caries(decay)

Guidelines for Infant Feeding:

Our Centre adheres to the following guidelines for children less than 12 months:

Breast Milk

- The Centre supports breastfeeding mothers and the provision of breast milk
- Breast milk will be stored in the fridge and must be name labelled and dated
- Frozen breast milk will be thawed in a warm water bath (not in a microwave)
- Left over breast milk that has been heated will be discarded and not re-heated

Infant Formula

- Bottles will be stored in the fridge and must be name labelled
- Formula must be made up or families can supply pre-measured boiled water and formula in a dispenser and all containers/bottles must be labelled
- The contents of partially used bottles will be discarded after one hour and any unused formula sent home with the child
- Bottles will be given in the room under adult supervision when required

Warming bottles

- All bottles will be heated in a bowl of hot, not boiling water for no longer than ten minutes (not in the microwave)
- After heating, bottles are inverted several times to distribute heat evenly and the temperature is checked by testing several drops on the inside of the educator's wrist

Introducing solids

- Solid foods will be offered to infants over the age of six months however it may commence earlier after consultation between educators and parents
- Infants will only be fed foods they have been introduced to previously at home
- The Centre menu follows the recommended schedule for introducing solids, but always in consultation with parents considering the child's needs

Suitable fluids for all children

- Breast milk, infant formula and boiled water will be the only fluids offered to babies less than 12 months
- Children over 12 months will be offered full cream cow's milk or water
- No soft drinks, cordials, full strength juice or sweetened milk will be given to children

Forms and Attachments:
 Modified Diet Care Plan

Reference:

Conningham Community Child Care Centre Inc (policy adapted from)
 SA Child Care Nutrition Partnership, (second ed) 2005 *Planning Nutritious Child Care Centre Menus and Guidelines for Food and Nutrition Policy in Child Care Centres*
Get up and Grow staff Handbook 2009 available at www.health.gov.au
 National Health and Medical Research Council (2003) *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*
 Dept of Education Training and Employment (2001) *Health Support Planning in Schools, Preschools and Childcare Services*
 Guide to National Quality Framework 2018
https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2018-11/Guide-to-the-NQF_0.pdf

Reviewed	Reviewer	Approved	Next review
May 2018	Senka Jelic Assistant Director	Management Committee	July 2019