



COLLEGE COMMUNITY CHILD CARE CENTRE

Healthy Eating & Food Handling Policy

RATIONALE & POLICY CONSIDERATIONS:

College Community Child Care Centre understands it has a duty of care to ensure that children's nutritional needs are met, and food is prepared and stored safely within the education and care service. Good nutrition is essential to healthy living and enables children to be active participants in play and leisure.

All children have the right to develop to their full potential in an environment which provides for their health and wellbeing. Appropriate strategies need to be implemented for children with special dietary needs and cultural food requirements.

Children are especially prone to food borne illness because their immune systems are still developing, and they cannot fight infection as well as adults can. The main causes of food borne illness are inadequate cooking; improper holding temperatures, contaminated equipment; unsafe food sources; and poor personal hygiene.

The Education and Care Services National Law Act 2012 requires that approved provider/nominated supervisor take reasonable care to protect children from foreseeable risk of harm, injury and infection. The service will obtain professional guidance through initiatives such as Eat Smart Play Smart, the Australian Healthy Eating Guide, the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia, and the Australian Government Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings, and professional bodies such as Nutrition Australia and Food Standards Australia New Zealand. Get up and Grow is one of the primary national resources that should be referred to in this document.

Philosophy

Our Educators provide a safe and healthy environment and believe in holistic approaches to teaching and learning and the connectedness of the mind, body, and spirit.

Legislation and Government Requirements

Food Act 2008

Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2012(WA)

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012 (WA)

Children's needs

Balanced diet: their food preferences to be respected; food allergies responded to; special diets followed; appetising, colourful food; opportunities to try new foods; regular mealtimes; satisfaction of hunger between meals; children allowed to eat at their own pace

Families' needs

Their religious and cultural beliefs and practices and lifestyle choices in relation to food are respected; input into and feedback about what and when their child eats.

Educator/Staff needs

Appropriate resources and facilities to provide for each child's daily nutritional and cultural needs.

Management needs

Be informed of any issues in relation to food provision that may impact on the management of the service.

NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2012 (WA)

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2012– Part 4.2 Division 1 – 77,78,79

National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care – 2.1; 2.1.3; 6.1.3:

Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – Outcomes 1, 2, 3

POLICY STATEMENT:

Meal and snack times will provide positive learning experiences for children who will be encouraged to develop healthy eating habits. Parents/Guardians will be consulted and asked to share family and multicultural values and experiences to enrich the variety and enjoyment of food planned to meet each child's daily nutritional needs. The service will strictly follow recommended safe food storage and preparation guidelines contained within the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* to ensure children's protection from food borne illness. College Community Child Care Centre believes that it is important to establish and reinforce good dental health practices for each child. The centre will therefore provide a learning environment that raises dental health awareness and supports the development of valuable life skills and habits for children and families.

STRATEGIES FOR POLICY IMPLEMENTATION:

Training and professional development

- Educators and food preparation staff will be provided with on-going professional development opportunities to refresh their knowledge of: children's dietary needs; food handling and hygiene practices.
- Educators, students and volunteers role model healthy eating behaviours and practices and follow the Healthy Eating and Food Handling Policy.
- Increase awareness in the school community of the benefits of eating healthy food, drinking water, being physically and mentally active, and protecting against UV (ultraviolet) radiation.

Provision of healthy nutritious snacks and meals.

College Community Child Care Centre does not provide the lunchtime meal.

- Food will be prepared; stored and served hygienically. Educators follow the service's procedures for the safe storage and heating of food and drink.
- Food preparation facilities will be maintained in a hygienic condition in accordance with Health, Hygiene, and Infection Control Policy.
- The service will ensure it meets all requirements for food handling premises set down in the **Food Act 2008 and administered by a Local Government Environmental Health Officer.**
- Families will provide children with balanced snacks and meals consistent with the *Australian Government Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings*, and/or the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*, that meet the recommended daily nutritional needs of children within each age grouping, are adequate in quantity, and consider the child's growth and development needs. College Community Child Care Centre will supplement these meals with Morning Tea as per the rotational menus displayed in each activity room as well as fresh seasonal fruit for Afternoon Tea.
- We encourage that all foods should be enjoyed in moderation. Ensure child's diet is balanced and contains a variety of foods from all the five food groups.
- Avoid negative language around less healthy foods such as 'bad' or 'fattening'. It's not the type of food that's bad, it's the amount and how often the food is eaten that can be problematic. Instead, refer to these foods as "occasional" or "extra" foods and keep portion sizes small (healthy-kids.com.au).
- Encouraging and supporting parents/ carers to provide their children with healthy lunches, snacks and treats at school and they ensure healthy eating practices are reinforced at home.

Celebrating Mealtime

- At CCCCC we recognise that snack and mealtimes are social occasion, a ritual to be celebrated as a group We believe that mealtimes are celebrations of culture connecting us, creating a sense of community. Educators will sit with the children and interact with them to encourage healthy eating habits and an appreciation of a variety of foods. Children will be assisted where required but will be encouraged to be independent and to help themselves wherever appropriate.
- The menu will be nutritious and varied. CCCCC will accurately describe the food and beverages to be provided by the service each day. Wherever possible fresh seasonally available produce, which is free of preserves and additives, will be used. Menus will be planned with input from children, families, food preparation staff, educators, the management committee, centre co-ordinator and other staff, and displayed in the food preparation area in a prominent position visible to families. Families will be notified of any changes to the planned menu.
- Snacks/meals will be appetising and provide the pleasure of many senses—smell, touch, taste, sight, and even hearing.
- Snack and mealtimes provide routine and assist in predicting the time and day of the week which is an important aspect at this stage of life. E.g We have lunch before rest, morning tea/afternoon tea before play time, Monday is weetbix, Tuesday we have toasties. Seasonal adaptations will reflect the changes in season, the relationships between nature and humans.
- Water will always be readily available and will be regularly offered to children. Parents are encouraged to provide their child with an age-appropriate water bottle.
- Snack and mealtimes will be set to a regular schedule, but individual needs will be accommodated and children who are still hungry will be offered small nutritionally appropriate snacks.
- Children will be encouraged to try new foods but will never be forced to eat. Their food likes and dislikes and the families religious and cultural beliefs or family lifestyle i.e., vegetarianism will always be respected. The service

will discuss with families which mealtime practices that can be accommodated within the service and those which cannot be due to health or hygiene concerns.

- At CCCCC we believe that Children benefit greatly by assisting in snack preparation themselves. Activities such as grinding grain, chopping vegetables, kneading dough, stirring batter, etc., nourish the child's physical body by allowing the child to develop healthy motor skills. Participating in the preparation of snacks and meals also gives children a sense of accomplishment and belonging and allows them to feel an important part of the environment.
- The provision or denial of food will never be used as a form of punishment.
- The importance of good healthy food, and hygienic and safe food handling and storage practices will be discussed with children as part of their daily program. We encourage children to be mindful and listen to hunger cues. Most children are great at eating to their hunger, allowing children stop eating when they don't want anymore.
- All children and educators/staff will wash their hands prior to preparing, serving or eating food. Hand washing will be repeated after preparing, serving, or eating food.
- We incorporate mealtime learning into our educational program and reflect that what we put into our bodies can either heal or harm us in many ways, concluding that the quality of our food very much determines the quality of our lives. Discuss where food comes from, making connections with the natural environment and the community around us.
- We take all medical conditions, allergies, and intolerances very seriously and will endeavour to keep each child safe whilst in our care. Morning tea menus will be adjusted to suit wheat/gluten and/or dairy/lactose intolerances. All staff will be trained in first aid, anaphylaxis, and asthma management. We are an ALLERGY AWARE centre.

Feeding babies

- Dependant Babies are always fed individually by educators.
- The service will discuss choices regarding breast and bottle feeding with families, will support families who choose to breastfeed their child while they are at the service by providing a comfortable and private place for breastfeeding, and will also facilitate the safe storage and heating of breast milk for families who wish to leave expressed feeds at the service for their baby.
- Educators will document bottle feed amounts to monitor fluid input/output; especially when the weather is warm and young children are at risk of dehydration. Educators will record the information on a day sheet for each child and provide this information to parents on arrival.
- Bottles will be heated by placing the bottle in warm water/bottle warmer and undergoing heat testing to ensure the bottle is warm but not hot before feeding children, especially infants. **Microwaves will not be used for heating bottles.**
- Introducing food and/or solids to babies and toddlers will be done in consultation with families, and in line with recognised nutritional guidelines.
- Children 12 months of age or under will not be served any foods listed in the "Unsuitable foods and beverages" section of the *Child and Antenatal Nutrition Manual – Introduction to Solids*. Eg: eggs; honey etc.
- Careful consideration will be given to reducing the risk of choking when choosing foods for young children.

Consulting and communicating with families

- Families will be consulted about their child's individual needs and likes and dislikes in relation to food and any culturally appropriate food needs.
- Families will be encouraged to share aspects of their family life and culture in relation to mealtimes.
- The children may participate in cooking activities which will reflect a wide variety of cultures, and especially the cultural backgrounds of families and the local community. Recipes from these activities and for healthy meal choices will be available to families.
- Where children are on special diets the parents/guardians will be asked to provide a list of suitable foods and their child's food preferences. Medical confirmation of a child's allergies may be required. Refer also to the service's Anaphylaxis Policy, and Medications and Medical Conditions Policy.
- Parents/guardians of infants and toddlers will be advised of their child's food intake each day. Parents/guardians of older children will be advised as appropriate.
- Information on nutrition, age appropriate diet, food handling and storage will be displayed at the service and provided to parents/guardians.
- As families provide for the nutritional requirements of their child, they will be encouraged to follow current recommendations from recognised authorities. The service will provide information for families on recommended nutritional intake for their child.
- College Community Child Care Centre recognises that birthdays are an important event in children's lives. Our staff have developed alternative ways in which to recognise and celebrate these special days. Due to health, allergy, hygiene, dietary guidelines and special dietary needs, we ask that birthday cakes not be brought into the service. In the event that a birthday cake is supplied, these will be sent home with each child for individual parents to provide at an appropriate time. Rest assured that each child will be made to feel special on their special day.
Ensuring that all staff and students have opportunities to be active, increase their sense of belonging and have meaning and purpose in their life.

Dental Health

- The service liaises with families to establish dental health practices that are workable at home and at the service.
- The service systematically incorporates information on dental health practices into the children's program, including tooth brushing, 'tooth friendly' snacks, and going to the dentist.
- The service will encourage the drinking of water to quench thirst.
- Children will be encouraged to rinse their mouths with water to remove food debris after every meal or snack.

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

The following policies may be linked to this policy:

- Diversity and Inclusion
- Health, Hygiene and Infection Control
- Maintenance of a Safe Environment
- Medication and Medical Conditions
- Occupational Safety and Health
- Partnerships and communication with families
- Supervision

PROCEDURES

The following procedures may be linked to this policy:

- Anaphylaxis
- Hand washing
- Washing of Toys and Equipment
- Exclusion of Children
- Parent Participation

FURTHER SOURCES:

Australian Government Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings – Retrieved 01.06.2022 from

https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/food-and-nutrition/about?utm_source=health.gov.au&utm_medium=callout-auto-custom&utm_campaign=digital_transformation

Celebrating Mealtimes by Daniela Masaro - Retrieved 01.06.2022 from

<https://www.worldfamilyschool.org/celebrating-mealtimes>

Children Youth and Women's Health Service – Parenting and Child Health – Food Safety – Retrieved 01.06.2022

<http://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicDetails.aspx?p=114&np=303&id=1618>

Children Youth and Women's Health Service – Parenting and Child Health – Teeth – Dental care for children – Retrieved 01.06.2022 from

<http://www.cyh.com/HealthTopics/HealthTopicDetails.aspx?p=114&np=301&id=2519>

Diabetes Australia website – information about living with diabetes – Retrieved 01.06.2022, from

<http://www.diabetesaustralia.com.au/>

Food Standards Australia New Zealand – food standards, consumer information, fact sheets – Retrieved 01.06.2022, from

<http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/>

Healthy Kids Association – information on nutrition and healthy eating – Retrieved 01.06.2022, from

<http://www.healthy-kids.com.au/>

Healthy Kids website – Provides information resources and ideas on physical activity and healthy eating for children and young people – Retrieved 01.06.2022, from

<http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/>

Heart Foundation – Eat Smart Play Smart – order manual, download information sheets and recipes – Retrieved 01.06.2022, from

http://www.heartfoundation.org.au/Healthy_Living/Healthy_Kids/Eat_Smart_Play_Smart/Pages/default.aspx

Nutrition Australia – resources and fact sheets – Retrieved 01.06.2022, from

<https://nutritionaustralia.org/category/fact-sheet>

The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating – Retrieved 01.06.2022, from

<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating>

FOCiS – Federation of Canteens in School- retrieved 01.06.2022 from

<http://www.focis.com.au>

West Australian School Canteen Association Inc – retrieved 01.06.2022 from

www.waschoolcanteens.org.au

Meerilinga Nutrition Team factsheets –retrieved 01.06.2022 from

<http://www.meerilinga.org.au/health-wellbeing/nutrition>

Shaping Positive Eating Behaviours – Retrieved 01.06.2022 from

<https://healthy-kids.com.au/parents/developing-positive-eating-behaviours/>

Food: Identity of Culture and Religion – Retrieved 01.06.2022 from

<https://www.wathi.org/food-identity-of-culture-and-religion-researchgate/>

Crunch & Sip – Retrieved 01.06.2022 from

<https://www.crunchandsip.com.au/teachers/about-the-program>

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