

**POLICY NO 20: HEALTH & SAFETY – NUTRITION, FOOD & BEVERAGES, DIETARY REQUIREMENTS AND FOOD HANDLING**

**Key Policy Contact Person:** Manager, Our Village Family Childcare

**POLICY STATEMENT:**

Our Village Family Childcare (OVFC) recognises that the early childhood setting has a key role in supporting children and families in healthy eating by ensuring the safe handling of food and healthy eating to promote the growth and development of children. We are committed to supporting healthy food and drink choices of the children.

**CRITICAL INFORMATION:**

- Children attending the service are served with nutritious, safe food which will allow them to grow and develop to their greatest potential.
- Children will always have access to safe drinking water.
- Each child will be encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards selecting healthy foods; enabling them to choose a healthy lifestyle for themselves

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**PURPOSE:**

OVFC will ensure:

- Children attending the service are served with nutritious, safe food which will allow them to grow and develop to their greatest potential.
- Children will always have access to safe drinking water.
- Each child will be encouraged to develop positive attitudes towards selecting healthy foods; enabling them to choose a healthy lifestyle for themselves.

**OUTCOME:**

Food and drink provided to children in OVFC will be nutritious, varied, and appropriate to the developmental and cultural needs of the children and reflect current health and safety guidelines and recommendations.

**SCOPE/RESPONSIBILITIES:**

This document applies to the Educators, Families, Coordination Unit Staff, Students and Volunteers, of OVFC.

**STATEMENT OF DIVERSITY**

Sunbury and Cobaw Community Health is committed to improving the health of our community and being accessible to all, including people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, those from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander background, people with a disability, Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Intersex and Queer (LGBTIQA+) people and other socially vulnerable groups and supporting their communities across the lifespan from birth to older age.

**DEFINITIONS:**

<p><b>Nutrition</b></p>	<p>Is the process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth.</p>
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**PROCEDURES:**

**COORINDATION UNIT AND EDUCATORS WILL**

- Provide a suitable place where mothers can breastfeed their babies or express breast milk.
- Provide support for mothers to continue to breastfeed while offering appropriate complementary foods from around 6 months of age.
- Ensure the safe handling of breastmilk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing ad bottle feeding.
- Ensure consultation with families, offer cooled pre boiled water as an additional drink from around 6 months of age.
- Always bottle feed babies by holding a baby in a semi upright position
- Always supervise babies while drinking and eating, ensuring safe bottle always feeding and eating practices.
- Offer all children in care a nutritious and safe diet that is appropriate to their age, culture, and any other individual requirements.
- Recognise different food likes and dislikes of children and be accepting of these differences.
- Always have independent access to drinking water for children e.g., individual drink bottles.
- Encourage children to learn more about nutrition and food safety.

**EDUCATOR SUPPLYING FOOD WILL**

- Ensure a weekly menu is displayed describing the food to be provided daily (in accordance with the Education & Care Service National Regulations, (current version July 1, 2023) – regulation 80 (3)).

- Regularly review the menu to ensure it meets best practice guidelines.
- Provide children with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products, lean meats, and alternative foods high in protein.
- Vary the meals and snacks on the menu to keep children interested and to introduce children to a range of healthy food ideas.
- Plan healthy snacks on the menu to complement what is served at mealtimes and ensure the snacks are substantial enough to meet the energy and nutrient needs of children.
- In partnership with families, provide meals that incorporate foods from the required food groups over the day.
- Supply food and drinks at regular intervals to meet children's needs.
- Respect and accommodate children's cultural or religious dietary practices as requested by families.
- Ensure that food and drinks provided are age appropriate. This information is provided to Educators in training i.e., the 'Eat Well, Drink Well' program and through accessing the Good Food in Family Day Care Kit
- Prepare and store food in a hygienic manner.

#### **WHEN FOOD FROM HOME IS SUPPLIED EDUCATORS WILL**

- Prepare and store food in a hygienic manner.
- Ensure children's lunch boxes are sorted upon arrival to care and food to be refrigerated that requires refrigeration e.g., meats, chicken, fish, cheese, pasta, rice, dairy products etc. and that these foods are always refrigerated when not required.
- Involve children in the sorting and storage of their lunchbox upon arrival into care.
- Involve children where possible in the preparation and serving of their food and drinks (ensuring safety guidelines are followed)
- Provide each child with clean eating and/or serving utensils.
- Provide regular activities that support nutrition and safe food practices, to promote further learning in an enjoyable way. For example:
  - Grow some vegetables, pick them, and prepare them for eating.
  - Ask the children to help wash fruit before it is eaten; let the children help with the shopping for fresh foods incorporating discussion about what the different foods are and how they can be cooked etc.
  - Use the Eat Well, Drink Well colouring, cutting, pasting activities to promote discussion and identification of healthy foods.
- Ensure that food and drink provided is stored and served in a hygienic manner.
- Respect and accommodate family choices in relation to bottle or breastfeeding.

#### **EDUCATORS WILL**

- Source and attend ongoing training sessions and available them to any additional information provided by Coordination staff.
- Provide Information to families when requested (seek support from Coordinators if required)
- Be aware of individual children's likes and dislikes regarding foods.
- Be especially aware of any allergies or reactions to specific foods or drinks (see Anaphylaxis Policy 1)
- Ensure that under no circumstances children are forced to eat or drink food that they do not want.

- Always have independent access to drinking water for children e.g., individual drink bottles.
- Ensure young children do not have access to foods that may cause choking.
- Ensure all children remain seated while eating and drinking.
- Ensure all children are always supervised children whilst eating and drinking.
- Talk to families about their child's food intake and voice any concerns about their child's eating.
- Encourage parents to the best of our ability to continue our healthy eating message in their homes.

### **SAFE FOOD HANDLING GUIDELINES FOR COORDINATION UNIT STAFF AND EDUCATORS**

- Hands must be washed thoroughly with soap and warm to hot water before food is handled.
- Paper towels to be used if possible.
- Fabric hand towels, aprons, tea towels and dishcloths must be changed daily.
- Once the food preparation is completed, the bench top and other work surfaces must be cleaned with detergent and warm water, and then sanitized with very hot water, which will help kill any remaining bacteria. If chemical "kitchen" sanitisers are used, staff and Educators must follow the manufacturer's instructions and assess the risk of use.
- Clean dishes and utensils by scraping visible food waste, wash in warm water and detergent and rinse with hot water. Dishwashers are an effective way of using hot water to sanitise.
- Have designated area for food preparation and storage.
- Uncooked and cooked meats must be stored in separate refrigeration compartments.
- Cooked foods must not be reheated more than once.
- Separate colour-coded chopping boards for halal food should be used.
- Facilities such as a stove, microwave oven, sink, refrigerator, suitable waste disposal and hot water supply should be available.
- Have a suitable bottle preparation area.
- Expressed breast milk and prepared formula should be stored on the shelf of the refrigerator not in the door of the refrigerator.
- Food and bottle preparation and storage areas should be separate from nappy change and toileting areas.
- Check expiry date on any formula containers and discard them if they are out of date. Discard any opened container of formula after a month.
- In addition, care should be taken to make sure loose clothing and hair do not contaminate food during food preparation and adequate footwear is worn.

### **COORDINATORS WILL**

- Be an ongoing source of support to Educators and families and be available to follow up requests for additional information to carers or families if required.
- Provide updated information and training to Educators on a regular basis.
- Training may incorporate ideas for activities that promote stimulating learning opportunities around nutrition and food safety.
- Provide families with any other relevant information, regarding policies, meal charges and expectations relating to these on commencement of care.
- Keep families updated with any relevant changes to policies, strategies, or meal charges.

### **FAMILIES WILL**

- When providing their child's food, include appropriate amounts and types of food relevant to their child's age and needs based on the nutritional information/tip sheets passed on by the Educator if required.
- Ensure that food is stored and transported in a safe manner.
- Alert staff and Educators to any allergies or reactions to any specific foods or drinks (see Anaphylaxis Management – 1 and Dealing with Medical Conditions – 45)
- Discuss with Educators any likes or dislikes related to food and drinks.
- Seek information regarding any aspect of nutrition or food safety from Educators or the Coordination Unit when required.
- Approach Coordination staff regarding all aspects of meal or other charges that may be incurred.

## **CREATING POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS**

OVFC Educators will:

- Sit with the children at meal and snack times to role-model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided.
- Endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying the social interactions with Educators and other children.
- Encourage older toddlers and preschoolers to assist in setting and clearing the table and serve their own food and drink, providing opportunities for them to develop independence and self-esteem.
- Respect each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he/she eats.
- Be patient with messy or slow eaters.
- Encourage children to try different foods but do not force them to eat.
- Not use food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes.
- Role-model and discuss safe food handling with children.
- Foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children's program a range of learning experiences encouraging children's healthy eating.
- Encourage children to participate in a variety of 'hands-on' food preparation experiences.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices.
- Embed the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in everyday activities and experiences.
  - Cooking with children:
    - Cooking experiences may sometimes be conducted with the children as a part of the educational program. On these occasions participating Educators will be vigilant to ensure that the experience remains safe, and relevant food hygiene practices are adhered to.

## **PARTENERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES**

- Ensure that any health-related information pertaining to the child is gathered at the time of enrolment.

- communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home.
- Work in partnership with families to gain their support in offering nutritious and safe food to their children while they are in care (**Appendix 1**)
- Provide opportunities for families and multicultural values to be included and explored.
- Support ongoing nutritional and food safety training and information for all Educators, staff, and families.
- Inform families daily what their child has consumed while in care.

**REFERENCES:**

- [Nutrition Australia](#)
- [Nutrition Australia Healthy Eating Pyramid](#)
- [Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia incorporating the Infant Feeding Guidelines for health workers](#)
- [Guide to Food Safety Standards Australia & New Zealand](#)
- [Nutrition Australia Menu Planning - Family Day Care](#)
- [Better Health Channel - Children's Diet Fruit and Vegetables](#)
- [Education & Care National Regulations, \(current version July 1, 2023\) - Regulation 80, 168](#)

**RELATED POLICIES & PROCEDURES/ WORK INSTRUCTIONS:**

- Dealing with Medical Conditions – 45
- Asthma Management - 4
- Enrolment and Orientation – 31
- Monitoring, Support and Supervision of Family Day Care Educators - 21
- Health & Safety – Administration of First Aid – 48
- Interactions with Children – Guiding Children’s Behaviour – 19
- Dealing with Infectious Diseases – 24
- Anaphylaxis, Allergies and Food Intolerances Management – 1
- Monitoring Support and Supervision of Family Day care Educators Work Instruction
- Our Village Family Childcare Playgroups Work Instruction
- SCCH Code of conduct
- SCCH Client Empowerment Policy and Procedure

**VERSION CONTROL AND LEGISLATION:**

For office use only (to be completed by the Quality, Safety & Compliance unit)			
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## **ATTACHMENT 'A'**

### **HEALTHY EATING FOR CHILDREN**

Healthy eating means a wide variety of nutritious foods from all the food groups. These foods contain lots of vitamins, minerals, and fibre. Eating a wide variety of foods from all food groups will help with growth.

Some foods contain too much sugar or fat and not many vitamins or minerals. These foods should only be eaten sometimes.

The foods we eat have been divided into three groups according to how nutritious they are. These make up what is often called the “food pyramid”. These groups can be used to help us decide which foods to eat more and which foods to eat less often.

Group 1: Eat these foods most of the time.

- o Fruit and vegetables
- o Breads
- o Cereals such as rice and pasta
- o Beans and lentils

These are all foods that come from plants. These foods contain vitamins, minerals, and fibre. Try to eat a wide variety of these foods. Try not to choose just one of these foods (such as fruit) to eat all the time. Eating plenty of all foods from this group will help you stay healthy.

Plant foods contain thousands of nutrients (small parts), which can help to prevent serious diseases. This is why it is important to eat a variety of different food types of plant foods.

Group 2: Eat these foods moderately.

These foods are important for health, so you should eat them in medium amounts:

- o Dairy products such as milk, cheeses, and yoghurts (sometimes low-fat ones should be chosen)
- o Lean Meat
- o Chicken (without skin)
- o Fish
- o Nuts



These foods are all good sources of protein. Protein helps build strong muscles and can repair our body when we hurt or injure ourselves. Some of these foods also contain some important minerals, such as calcium found in dairy foods (strong for bones) and the iron found in lean meats (to give us energy).

Group 3: Eat these foods sometimes.

These foods don't give us very many nutrients and are just 'extras'. They may contain lots of sugar or fat (or both) but often don't have many vitamins, minerals, or fibre. It's okay to have these sometimes foods if you are healthy,

active and not overweight. Most of the time they are better left for special occasions like birthday parties.

An example of one serve of these foods includes:

- o sweet biscuits (2 small)
- o Chocolate coated bars (1 bar)
- o Potato chips (30g)
- o Ice cream (2 scoops)
- o Lollies/chocolate (30g)
- o Cake or muffin (1 medium piece)

The Food Pyramid

The three food groups you eat from are often shown as a 'food pyramid'.

Group 1: The bottom of the pyramid is the biggest part. It contains the foods you should eat most of the time i.e., fruit, vegetables, breads, and cereals.

Group 2: The middle of the pyramid contains food you should eat moderately (a medium amount). They are important for health, but we need don't need too much of them. Dairy products such as milk, cheeses, yoghurts (sometimes low-fat ones should be chosen), lean meat, chicken (without skin), fish and nuts.

Group 3: The top of the pyramid is the smallest part of the pyramid. It contains foods you should only eat sometimes i.e., sweet biscuits, chocolate bars, potato chips, ice cream and cakes.

WEBSITES FOR FURTHER NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION: [www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au](http://www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au)  
[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au) [www.nhmrc.gov.au](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au) [www.asthma.org.au](http://www.asthma.org.au) [www.dhsv.org.au](http://www.dhsv.org.au)  
<https://www.nutritionaustralia.org/>



# HEALTHY EATING PYRAMID



*Enjoy a variety of food and be active every day!*



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