

## **NUTRITION AND FOOD SAFETY POLICY**

Aldinga Beach Children's Centre is NUT FREE

We promote nutritional eating for all children and believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing life long healthy eating habits.

Children benefit as healthy eating maximises growth and development and reduces illness. In the long term healthy eating minimizes the risk of diet related disease.

The food and nutrition curriculum is consistent with the *Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* and the **Right Bite** Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools.

We are a breast feeding friendly centre.

We review this policy annually but also make changes depending on the needs of children who attend each year.

### **Learning for children**

Activities and opportunities are included to promote knowledge, attitudes and skills to make healthy food choices and to learn about the variety of food available for good health.

Opportunities are available for children to develop practical food skills including preparing and cooking healthy food as well as safety and hygiene. Food is considered and utilized as a resource to introduce children to other cultures, varieties of foods, tastes and textures.

Children will help to develop a garden to learn about growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods.

We promote water as the preferred drink. Fresh, clean tap water is available at all times and children are encouraged to drink water throughout the day. Children need to bring their own named drink bottles each day. It is the responsibility of families to clean and refill the water bottle with safe clean water.

Children may eat when they are hungry but must wash their hands and then sit while eating to reduce the risk of choking. Lunch times will be social times where all children eat together and sit with staff who model healthy eating behaviours.

### **Food Supply**

Toast and or fruit could be supplied to children in Occasional Care or Kindy for breakfast as required.

There will be a "Crunch and Sip" time each day for children to eat fruit, vegetables, cheese or yogurt supplied by their family. This provides important minerals and vitamins and encourages a taste for healthy foods. It also encourages chewing to promote oral muscle development. Staff can assist children to peel fruit or vegetables.

Families need to supply a healthy lunch such as a sandwich or wrap, fruit, yogurt. Please be aware our staff are unable to heat food. Ideas are available for healthy options in our centre. Lunch is eaten as a group in a safe, supportive and social environment which encourages self help skills and independence. Children have access to their food throughout the morning and afternoon.

### **Unsuitable foods include**

- ❖ Any nut or nut products or foods containing nuts such as Nutella – as we are a NUT FREE centre to support children with serious nut allergies. For children with Anaphylaxis this is serious and can be fatal.
- ❖ Muesli bars as they are high in sugar and most contain nuts
- ❖ Cordial and sweetened juices and soft drinks
- ❖ Chocolate bars, or chocolate coated fruit bars, roll ups and foods high in sugar such as lollies. These are sometimes foods, which are best to eat at home.

### **Food Safety**

We promote and teach food safety as part of the learning program and during cooking activities.

We provide adequate hand washing facilities and promote and encourage correct hand washing by children and adults.

Children need to wash their hands before eating and sit at a designated eating place.

On hot days lunches will be kept inside as per our Hot Weather Policy.

We liaise with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children who require a health care plan related to food issues or allergies. Special dietary needs may be specified for a variety of reasons which include medical, allergy, intolerance, family preference, cultural and religious reasons. Any needs for a child relating to food, nutrition and eating are to be indicated on the Preschool Enrolment Form when a child is enrolled and health care plans submitted to ensure the child's safety.

If we enrol a child with a serious food allergy we will inform families and update our policy to modify what children can bring to our centre programs.

We encourage staff to access training as appropriate to the **Right Bite** strategy.

### **Celebrations, Special Events and Birthdays**

We will ensure a healthy food supply for children for activities, celebrations and events and will limit the availability of high fat, high sugar and highly processed food such as chips, pastries, cakes and lollies no more than twice a term in accordance with the Healthy Eating Guidelines. Special events held at the centre will include healthy food options.

Children's birthdays will be celebrated in all programs with non food related forms of celebration such as singing birthday songs, certificates or stickers.

Brochures and information about healthy food and nutrition are available at our centre.