

HACKHAM WEST CHILDREN'S CENTRE

2.3 NUTRITION

AIM

The Centre aims to develop positive eating habits & provide a wide variety of nutritious, safe and culturally appropriate foods to meet children's daily requirements.

PROCEDURE

PLANNING & PREPARATION

- Information will be sought from families regarding their child's eating patterns, cultural background and special dietary needs. This information will be obtained at the time of enrolment and as circumstances change.
- The Cook will undertake professional development relating to nutrition in young children and food handling.
- Menu planning will be a team effort involving the Cook, families, Director, Assistant Director & Educators.
- Weekly menus will be displayed to provide easy access to families.
- Recipes from the Centre menu will be made available to families on request, and from time to time displayed in the centre.
- The menu will continually be reviewed and updated.
- Children's age and development will be considered when providing food - eg finger food, blended food and food requiring utensils.
- Precautions to prevent choking will be followed according to the Child and Youth Health Network guidelines '*Chocking on food and other objects*' including:
 - hard fruits and vegetables likely to cause choking will be very finely sliced, grated, cooked or mashed.
 - pips, stones and hard seeds will be removed.
 - round foods like grapes and cherry tomatoes will be cut in half
 - meat will have any gristle, bones or skin removed and cut into small pieces, minced, shredded or slow cooked.
 - other high risk foods will not be provided eg – popcorn, nuts, lollies, corn chips and hard crackers that don't dissolve or break up easily.
- Preschool children will be guided by the DECD '*right bite Easy Guide to... Healthy Food and Drink Supply for South Australian Schools and Preschools*' to select food and drink to promote healthy eating.'
- Preschool children will be encouraged to keep fruit in own bag and eat whole pieces of fruit.

INFANTS

- Our Centre supports and encourages breast feeding.
- Breast milk will be heated by being placed in a container of hot water. Formula will be made with water provided by parents or pre boiled water supplied by the centre. The water/premade formula will be heated in the microwave in 10 second bursts. Once heated all bottles will be shaken and tested for correct temperature before being given to children. Refer to CYN '*Bottle feeding – feeding your baby with formula*'
- Families will be consulted about the menu for their babies and the introduction of new foods. Refer to National Health and Medical Research Council '*Infant Feeding Guide*

DIETARY GUIDELINES

- National Health and Medical Research Council, Australia Dietary Guidelines recommends that '*Children and adolescents should eat sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally.*'
- The menu will be planned to provide a balanced intake from the five food groups:
 1. Grains and Cereals: Pasta, rice, bread, breakfast cereals and other products
 2. Fruit: and
 3. Vegetables: a broad range including a variety of colours, textures, vitamins and nutrients
 4. Meat and Alternatives: unprocessed meat, fish, eggs, legumes and lentils

5. Dairy Foods: milk, yoghurt, cheese and custard.

- The selection of foods will be broad to maximise the opportunity for a balanced intake of vitamins and nutrients.
- Foods will be selected to reflect a variety of colours, textures, flavours, odours, shapes, sizes, etc.
- Families are asked to provide a whole piece of fruit each day to contribute towards morning or afternoon fruit platters.

SPECIAL DIETARY REQUIREMENTS

The Centre will undertake to cater for variations in diet as required by health, cultural or religious needs/beliefs/concerns.

- Families are asked to discuss these issues at the time of enrolment and as situations arise.
- All necessary information must be provided to the Centre to clearly inform staff of children's special requirements.
 - For medical dietary requirements a '*Modified diet care plan*' form needs to be completed by a health professional.
 - For non-medical requirements a 'Change of Details' form needs to be completed by a Parent/Guardian.
 - If these requirements need updating a new form must be completed and provided to the centre.
- Families may be required to provide special diet foods if the centre does not normally stock these items.
- Information regarding all children's allergies, special dietary requirements and medical conditions will be prominently displayed in the kitchen and in the Under 3 and Over 3 spaces. This information will be prepared by the sites Work Health Safety representative.
- Our Centre has chosen
 - not to give honey to children under 12 months
 - to be a nut aware centre
 - to not use any products that a child or staff member at the centre has an anaphylactic allergy to

GUIDELINES

Fat

- Very little fried food is served to the children, eg sauté as a cooking process.
- Cooking methods which use little or no fat are used: eg curries, casseroles, bakes or stir-fries.
- High fat foods are limited eg processed meats, high fat crackers and pastries.
- Children over 1 year will be offered cow's milk that is pasteurised and homogenised, from age 1 to 2 years full cream, and either full cream or reduced fat once over 2 years old.
- Lean meat will be used.

Fibre

- A variety of cereal foods and breads are used, eg rice, noodles, spaghetti, pasta, wholemeal and grain bread and wholemeal flour.
- At each snack time, a fruit or vegetable or bread/cereal based food will be offered.

Salt

- No salt is added to the food whilst cooking or at the table.
- Canned foods will be used when alternatives are not available and low salt varieties will be used where possible.
- Fresh meat and vegetables are used in preference to preserved foods.

Sugar

- Minimal sugar is added to food (only when it is vital for the cooking process)
- Foods will be sweetened by the use of grated carrots, dried fruits, fresh fruits such as bananas and, apple juice and pureed fruits
- Preference will be given to fruit canned in natural juices (unsweetened).
- No cordial or juice will be used unless for medical reasons.

Water

- Filtered water will be available at all times and educators will ensure it is offered frequently to protect from dehydration.

Infant fluids

- Water, infant formula or expressed milk will be given as a drink to infants until 12 months of age, unless the families instruct educators otherwise using a 'Change of Details' form.
- Families will be required to supply appropriate infant formula or expressed breast milk.

Vitamins and Minerals

- To ensure adequate iron, lean red meat will be offered four times a fortnight and white meat or fish offered three times a fortnight.
- When white meat is served another iron rich food will be included
- Vitamin C rich foods will be offered with vegetarian meals.
- Preference will be made to provide wholegrain or wholemeal bread.

Preservatives and food colourings

- Fresh food is used in preference to preserved or packaged foods.
- Frozen or dried foods are used in preference to canned foods or meats which have preservatives added, such as corned beef and cold meats.
- Canned tuna is used to avoid complication with bones.

Health, hygiene and education

- Our Centre will provide clean and pleasant surroundings to create a relaxed and safe environment to make meal times a positive experience.
- Educators will sit with children and supervise children at all times when they are eating.
- Foods being served to the children will be discussed with them to encourage children to eat well and try new food experiences.
- Children will not be forced to eat. Parents will be advised when their child is not eating well.
- Food will not be used as a punishment, either by its provision or its denial.
- The amount that individual children consume will be recorded daily for parent's perusal.
- Food will be accessible between regular meals if required to meet a child's individual needs.
- Children will be encouraged to use a variety of eating implements when it is considered developmentally appropriate.
- Children will be encouraged to serve and clean away for themselves at meal times.
- Children will be provided with opportunities to be involved in the food preparation under educator's supervision, allowing them to learn about healthy food.
- Families will be provided with information about good nutrition and balanced, varied meals, via pamphlets, newsletter articles and notices.

Birthdays and special occasions

- Families wishing to supply a special treat to share at the centre for their child's birthday are asked to bring in a whole piece of fruit eg a watermelon or rockmelon as we cannot accept cakes or other foods that do not meet this nutrition policy.
- Healthy food options will be considered for theme days and fundraising.
- The centre does not use chocolates in fundraising activities.

EVALUATION:

The policy is viewed to be working effectively when children are encouraged and observed to be having a healthy and balanced diet. Children and staff enjoy healthy options.

NEXT REVIEW: November 2019

SOURCES:

- Child and Youth Health, South Australia; *Bottle Feeding – Feeding Your Baby Formula* 2017
- Department for Education and Child Development – right bite
www.decd.sa.gov.au/eatwellsa/files/links/EAT_WELL_BOOKLET_FINAL.pdf
- Australian Government - National Health and Medical Research Council – Department of Health and Ageing – Eat for Health Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013
- Australian Government - National Health and Medical Research Council – Department of Health and Ageing – Infant Feeding Guidelines (Summary) 2013