

MCKAY CHILDREN'S CENTRE INC.  
INCLUDING PENOLA OUTSIDE SCHOOL HOURS CARE

**FOOD & NUTRITION POLICY**

Food and Nutrition is a key consideration at McKay Children's Centre. The Centre is a part of the Right Bite and Start Right Eat Right programs. The Centre also uses the Rainbow Eating Program as an educational resource with children and families. We encourage families to provide their children with healthy and nutritious food options when they attend the Centre. Centre educators, including the Centre Director will update their food and nutrition knowledge regularly.

**Food brought from Home**

Goal: To ensure children have food and drink that is safe, varied and nutritious.

- Families will be provided with guidelines on the amount and type of foods and drinks to send to childcare and also suggestions of nutritious and safe foods (see attached lunchbox checklist).
- Families will be encouraged to provide foods from home that meet 50% of the recommended daily intake for key nutrients, and are consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents. (Please refer to the 'lunchbox checklist').
- Families and staff will be given a copy of the Centre's Food and Nutrition policy. This is received on families' enrolment, staff induction and annually when the policy is updated. This will be the responsibility of the Director or Assistant Director.
- All dairy milk provided by the families needs to be full cream for children aged 1-2 years old, and either full cream or reduced fat for children older than 2 years old. Skim milk should not be provided.
- Parents will be advised when their child is not eating well, or of any concerns.
- An eating environment which promotes family and multicultural values will be provided.
- Staff members will sit with and supervise children during mealtimes.
- Children will be taught about food and nutrition through food awareness activities, practical food preparation activities and discussions about food.
- Families will provide a bottle of water. Drinking water is accessible from the centre at all times via a spring water dispenser. (If necessary for juice to be served it will be diluted at least 1 part juice to 2 parts water)
- If juice is served to over 1 year olds, it will be limited to 125ml per day
- Children are to be provided with healthy alternatives in their lunchboxes, not foods with high fat and sugar content.
- Food will always be available in the case of an emergency, or if children are hungry between meals and snacks.
- The centre will implement and encourage practises that assist children to receive safe food. The children's lunchboxes are kept in the fridge.
- Children's lunchboxes provided from home are to be washable to ensure hygienic storage in the Centre fridge.
- Food will be stored and handled hygienically by staff and children to minimise food contamination.
- The centre has procedures about the disposal of unused food, food storage and cleaning.

Source: Start Right Eat Right Resource Kit for Child Care Centres  
Claire Fitzgerald Start Right Project Manager  
Uline Georges: Dietician - Nutritionist for Start Right Eat Right

Policy rewritten November 2007 Updated 25/3/2010; 19/5/12; Nov 2014; March 2016, Nov 2017

- The centre will implement practises that ensure children receive food hygienically e.g. washing hands.
- Foods that should not be sent because they are a choking hazard include:
  - ❖ Hard raw vegetables and fruit are not suitable for children under 4. We suggest grated or cooked for children under 4 years of age.
  - ❖ Whole grapes
  - ❖ Chicken or fish with bones
  - ❖ Popcorn and Frankfurts
  - ❖ Tiny teddies not recommended for under 3 year olds

The centre has a procedure in place, detailing what is to be done when inappropriate food is brought from home. Staff will;

- ❖ Take inappropriate food out of lunchboxes, put this food aside and this will be sent home with the child at the end of the day.
- ❖ Explain to the child why they aren't able to eat that particular food e.g. other children are allergic or it should be left to eat at home because it is a treat.
- ❖ Inform parents either verbally or a note will be sent home in the child's lunch box with the reason why it has been sent home.
- ❖ Provide the child with 'emergency food' from the centre if they have nothing else to eat.

### **Mealtimes and the eating environment**

Goal: To provide a safe, supportive and social environment in which children can enjoy eating.

Mealtimes and the eating environment play a large role in the nutrition of children. It helps children to learn and form good food habits which become eating habits for life.

Breaks are provided for morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and late snack. Parents/carers to provide afternoon tea/late snack.

It helps children to learn a positive attitude about food and try a variety of foods. It also encourages children to learn family and community values and culturally inclusive perspectives.

- Children will be seated and supervised whilst eating at all times.
- Staff will sit with children and where possible, eat and enjoy the same food.
- Staff will promote a positive, relaxed, social eating environment with children.
- Staff promote positive discussion about the foods children are eating.
- Food will not be used as punishment or reward.
- Staff will provide positive encouragement and role modelling and table manners will be encouraged. The food preferences of the children will be respected.
- Family and multicultural diversity is an important part of our program. We regularly investigate different foods and cultures with the children. Parents are welcome to share their skills with the children
- Staff talk about health and nutrition with the children.
- Staff encourage self help and where necessary, assist children at meal times.
- Precautions to prevent and treat choking are known by all staff and implemented.

### **Curriculum**

Source: Start Right Eat Right Resource Kit for Child Care Centres

Claire Fitzgerald Start Right Project Manager

Uline Georges: Dietician - Nutritionist for Start Right Eat Right

Policy rewritten November 2007 Updated 25/3/2010; 19/5/12; Nov 2014; March 2016, Nov 2017

Goal: Children will be given opportunities to learn about food and nutrition.

Cooking is a part of each services program (childcare, kindy and OSHC). It is an important and meaningful way of conveying to children and educating them in healthy food options.

- Nutrition activities will be included in the planned curriculum and spontaneous programming.
- Children will have the opportunity to learn about food from different cultures.
- Mealtimes will be treated as an opportunity for social learning.
- Children will be involved in different food preparation and cooking activities.
- Food safety will be discussed with the children.
- Children will be taught mealtime behaviour such as serving and clearing.

### **Special Diet**

The special need of children with food allergies, food sensitivities or medical diets will be catered for in consultation with parents and the appropriate medical professionals.

- Children with individual dietary needs will need a health care plan, written by a relevant health professional e. Doctor, Paediatrician, Specialist, Dietician.
- Special diets for cultural or religious reasons will be discussed and negotiated with parents/carers. Parents will need to fill out a Special Diet form. Note: this does not require input from a health professional unless staff notice that it impacts on the child's growth and development.
- Special diets will be reviewed regularly as required

### **Food Allergies**

Our centre is allergy aware. We do not allow **egg or nut** products (kindy, childcare or OSHC) due to children with food allergies and the risk of anaphylactic reaction. The centre will not have any food containing nuts or high amounts of egg. This includes:

- ❖ Peanut paste
- ❖ Nutella
- ❖ Satay products
- ❖ Boiled eggs
- ❖ Meringue
- ❖ Pavlova
- ❖ Quiche

Where children have a known allergy or intolerance, it is recorded on the mauve coloured form that accompanies the enrolment form. The Director, Assistant Director or other staff member will discuss the allergy or intolerance on induction of the family into the Centre and all staff are made aware of it. A food allergy or intolerance should be confirmed by a specialist (Paediatrician, Dietician or Immunologist) or General Practitioner. The specialist should provide detailed information about the allergy or sensitivity and details of any emergency procedure required. Allergy and Intolerance forms will be provided to families by the Centre every 12 months to allow for opportunities for information to be updated.

- If a child has a severe allergy (Anaphylaxis) their photo and detailed instructions will be clearly displayed on the fridge with parent/guardian consent. If the management includes the use of an epipen, this will be provided by the parent.
- Epipens will be stored in the medication pouch in the kitchen. On excursions epipens will be carried in an insulated bag.

Source: Start Right Eat Right Resource Kit for Child Care Centres

Claire Fitzgerald Start Right Project Manager

Uline Georges: Dietician - Nutritionist for Start Right Eat Right

Policy rewritten November 2007 Updated 25/3/2010; 19/5/12; Nov 2014; March 2016, Nov 2017

- Cakes and muffins can be eaten at the centre because the egg is cooked and less concentrated.
- New foods should be introduced to children at home.
- Staff will ensure that any food brought by them into the centre for personal consumption which could cause an allergic reaction will be kept in an area which is not accessible to children e.g staff room. They will wash their hands thoroughly before returning to the floor after each break.

### **Feeding Practises for Babies 0-12 months**

The centre supports breast milk provision and breast feeding mothers. Breast feeding mothers are encouraged to visit the centre to feed their baby at times suitable to them and the baby.

- We encourage parents to follow the SRER Recommended Schedule for introducing solids to infants (please see attached).
- Both breast milk and prepared formula milk should be transported to childcare in insulated packs or in an esky with a freezer brick to keep them cool. The bottles are placed at the back of the fridge on arrival.
- Recommended procedures for storing, thawing and warming of breast milk and infant formula is displayed in the kitchen next to the fridge.

### **Childcare**

- Children's labelled lunch boxes need to be placed in the fridge in the correct age section.
- Send food with minimum packaging e.g. lunch box with compartments.
- Food that needs to be heated should be in a microwave safe container.
- Place one piece of fruit for morning snack on the tray each morning or dried fruit, cheese, cooked vegetables. This is cut up and shared amongst the children at morning tea. Extra fruit and vegetables should be in the child's lunch box for the rest of the day.
- Children have shared fruit mid morning and have a snack from their lunch box mid afternoon, each day.
- On a daily basis please provide clean bottles with water and individual formulas that are clearly marked. Ensure necessary instructions are conveyed to staff and or written in communication books.
- A bottle of water clearly named, needs to be placed in the cooler bags provided.
- Communication between staff and parents:
  - There are separate communication books for each child under 2 years
  - Information is communicated verbally by staff when parents pick up their child
  - Parents of children aged over 2, can request staff write down what a child has eaten throughout the day e.g if recovering from an illness.
- Information about infant feeding (formula or breast milk) and the introduction of solids is communicated to parents.

Source: Start Right Eat Right Resource Kit for Child Care Centres  
 Claire Fitzgerald Start Right Project Manager  
 Uline Georges: Dietician - Nutritionist for Start Right Eat Right

Policy rewritten November 2007 Updated 25/3/2010; 19/5/12; Nov 2014; March 2016, Nov 2017

- Hand outs are available and attached as an appendice for parents. Staff offer additional information and support as required.
- The under 2 communication books are used for staff to communicate with parents about feeding achievements

### **Kindergarten**

- Kindy lunches are not refrigerated – we recommend insulated cooler bags or lunchboxes with freezer blocks.
- Food that needs to be reheated should be in a microwave safe container.
- Only water should be provided to drink.
- For morning tea only fresh fruit, dried fruit or cheese is allowed.
- Children have the option of having something from their lunch boxes during the afternoon.
- Children will wash their hands before lunch and after lunch to ensure they don't contaminate surfaces with foods that may affect others, especially those identified as vulnerable to anaphylaxis reactions

### **OSHC**

- Fresh fruit is provided everyday for afternoon tea.
- Cooking activities have a healthy focus and children are encouraged to participate in the preparation of food.
- Drinking water is easily accessible.
- Chocolates and lollies that children have in their bag can not be consumed at the program.

### **Birthday celebrations**

The centre encourages the celebration of children's birthdays. Cakes, large or small are welcomed for morning or afternoon tea. Single patty pan cakes are preferable. A 'Special' platter of finger food which includes dip, cheese, dried biscuits and fresh and dried fruit is an alternative.

An ingredients list is required for all cakes that are provided from home or bought cakes. Any potentially hazardous ingredients such as fresh cream or custard are to be avoided due to food safety risks. Cakes can contain eggs but must not be in high proportion compared to other ingredients. Cakes must not contain any nuts.

The Food and Nutrition policy is reviewed on an annual basis or more regularly when necessary. A copy of the policy is kept in the 'Policy Folder' in the foyer and on the McKay website.

### **Staff training**

At least two staff are trained in a food and nutrition training course. All staff will have completed 'Food Safe' training within 1 month of commencing employment. This training is updated every 3 years as a refresher for staff.

### **Fundraising**

Source: Start Right Eat Right Resource Kit for Child Care Centres  
 Claire Fitzgerald Start Right Project Manager  
 Uline Georges: Dietician - Nutritionist for Start Right Eat Right

Policy rewritten November 2007 Updated 25/3/2010; 19/5/12; Nov 2014; March 2016, Nov 2017

The Centre promotes healthy lifestyles for all in the community. Fundraising activities endorsed by the McKay Governing Council reflect the values of healthy living and promotes the consumption of healthy foods.

**Appendices Attached**

- Storing/thawing/ warming procedures for breastmilk and formula
- Recommended stages for introducing solids
- Fluids allowed from birth to age 5

Source: Start Right Eat Right Resource Kit for Child Care Centres  
Claire Fitzgerald Start Right Project Manager  
Uline Georges: Dietician - Nutritionist for Start Right Eat Right

Policy rewritten November 2007 Updated 25/3/2010; 19/5/12; Nov 2014; March 2016, Nov 2017