



**Children's
Centre**
for Early Childhood
Development and Parenting



***Right Bite* Food Supply and Nutrition Policy**

Healthy Food Supply and Nutrition Policy of Mount Gambier Children's Centre

Rationale

This Children's Centre promotes safe, healthy eating habits in line with the ***Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools*** and relates to the DECS wellbeing strategy.

We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in three ways:

1. Short term: maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health.
2. Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life.
3. Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning activities.

Therefore:

- staff at this centre model and encourage healthy eating behaviours
- food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children
- parents and caregivers are encouraged to supply healthy foods that fit within the ***Right Bite*** strategy for their children at this centre.

This food policy has been established after consultation with staff and parents within the Children's Centre community.

Curriculum

Our centre's food and nutrition curriculum:

- is consistent with the *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*, and the *Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*
- includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health
- includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food
- integrates nutrition across the Early Years Learning Framework where possible, **relating to the Developmental learning outcome: 'Children have a strong sense of wellbeing'**

The Learning environment

Children at our centre:

- have fresh, clean tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day
- will eat routinely at scheduled break times
- eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- use the preschool garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods

Our centre:

- provides rewards/encouragements that are not related to food or drink
- understands and promotes the importance of breakfast and regular meals for children
- teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum
- is a breastfeeding friendly site

Food supply

Our centre:

- encourages healthy **food and drink choices** for children, families and staff in line with the *Right Bite* strategy
- encourages food choices which are representative of the foods of the preschool community
- ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive
- ensures a healthy food supply for centre **activities and events** in line with the *Right Bite* strategy
- displays **nutrition information** and promotional materials about healthy eating
- has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home or provided by staff within preschool time:

Snack Time:

Parents and carers are encouraged to supply fruit and vegetables at snack time to:

- o provide children with important minerals and vitamins
- o encourage a taste for healthy foods.

Food and drinks provided to children:

- o parents and carers are encouraged to provide healthy food and drink choices in line with the *Right Bite* strategy
- o staff will ensure that food provided to children by the centre is in line with the *Right Bite* strategy.

Food safety

Our centre:

- promotes and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum
- encourages staff to access training as appropriate to the *Right Bite Strategy*
- provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.

Food-related health support planning

Our centre:

- liaises with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues.

Working with families, health services & industry

Our centre:

- invites parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our whole of site food and nutrition policy
- provides information to families and caregivers about the *Right Bite Strategy* through a variety of ways including:
 - o newsletters
 - o policy development/review
 - o information on enrolment
 - o pamphlet/poster displays
- promotes the alignment of fundraising with the *Right Bite* strategy.

If the centre has a child with a serious **food allergy** (eg. nuts), a separate policy for the duration of that child's involvement with the preschool should be developed and communicated to parents and staff.

The staff at Mount Gambier Children's Centre thank you in advance for your support of this policy.