

Rationale

Healthy Eating is fundamental to good health throughout life for all people. It underpins healthy growth and development, contributes to health and wellbeing, positive mental health and quality of life, and plays a role in preventing disease and disability. Overall for good health children need to drink plenty of water and eat plenty of fruit, vegetables, legumes and cereals.....and importantly choose foods containing less fats, less saturated fat, less sugar, and less salt. Children with appropriate nutrition have improved cognitive development, attention span, work capacity, behaviour and attendance at school and preschool. Establishing healthy eating patterns at a young age provides a critical foundation for good eating patterns (DECS Healthy Eating Guidelines 2004).

At Settlers Farm Campus Kindergarten we aim to promote nutritional eating habits in a safe, supportive environment for all children. We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in these ways:

- Short term: maximises growth, development and activity levels whilst minimising illness.
- Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life, e.g. heart disease, strokes, some cancers and diabetes.
- Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning experiences.
- Advice from speech pathologists and dentists indicates that children should be eating crunchy foods.

Therefore:

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

Curriculum

Our kindergarten'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 curriculum where possible, e.g. edible vegetable garden.
- integrates the Early Years Learning Framework, Preschool indicators of Numeracy and Literacy, and the National Quality Standard.

The Learning environment

Children at our kindergarten:

- have fresh, clean tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day
- are required to bring their own named drink bottle filled with water only
- eat in a positive, social environment with educators who model healthy eating behaviours
- eat while seated
- use the kindergarten garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods

Our kindergarten:

- 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

Our kindergarten will ensure a healthy food supply for kindergarten activities, celebrations and events, strictly limiting availability of high fat, high sugar, or processed foods to no more than twice a term, in accordance with the Healthy Eating Guidelines.

We will display nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating, and provide information updates in newsletters, email and on the kindergarten's Facebook page.

Food and water supply

Parents/caregivers are encouraged to provide healthy food and drink choices in line with the **Right Bite** strategy.

Educators will ensure that food provided to children by the kindergarten is in line with the **Right Bite** strategy and will ensure healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive. Our kindergarten has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home:

Snack Time

Parents/caregivers are encouraged to supply foods that:

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

Parents/caregivers are asked to supply foods such as:

- Fruit/vegetables
- Cheese
- Savoury sandwiches
- **Home-made savoury food (no nut or egg products such as quiches)**
- Home-made muffins (e.g banana, blueberry, apple, savoury)
- Air popped popcorn
- Dry crackers, savoury shapes, 'Grain waves', dried noodles, pretzels, mini bites (rice crackers).
- Muesli bars (No chocolate chip)

- Yoghurt (in an insulated bag with an ice pack)
- **NO NUT OR EGG PRODUCTS** – due to children's allergic reactions

From time to time there may be a restriction on certain foods if a child is attending with particular food allergies.

In 2020 2021 we have a child attending with severe Anaphylaxis through touch and digestion of Dairy, Nuts, and Eggs. To ensure this child's safety we ask no nut or egg products at Kindy and Dairy for LUNCH only (e.g. cheese, yoghurt).

Parents/Caregivers are required to provide enough snacks for two snack times (morning and afternoon) in an insulated lunchbox with a freezer brick or frozen water. Snacks are to be packed in a separate container to lunches and be kept in children's bags in a locker under the verandah. A small lunch box containing your child's lunch is to be placed in a crate and will be put in the fridge by educators.

Lunch Time

For lunch, the healthy eating guidelines will be in place.

Parents/caregivers are encouraged to follow the centre guidelines and ask educators if they have any issues/concerns.

A healthy lunch box might include:

- a sandwich
- sushi
- fruit/vegetables
- yoghurt/custard
- veggie sticks
- savoury rice (**NO EGG**)
- falafel and hummus
- pita bread
- salad wrap
- rice cakes with savoury filling

Please do not include chocolate, muesli bars, rollups, hot chips, pies, etc. This also includes home-made sweet foods (e.g. cupcakes, muffins, biscuits, donuts). Please ask educators if you are unsure.

Please note that due to food safety regulations we will not be able to heat or cook any foods for lunch. All lunch boxes will be refrigerated each day, unless as requested by parents/caregivers and signed consent form.

Educators will discourage non-healthy food choices. Children will be encouraged to eat other healthy alternatives that they have brought with them, or if life threatening (e.g. egg or a nut based sandwich such as Nutella or Peanut butter) will be offered an alternative sandwich. A note will be sent home with children to inform parents/caregivers that their food does not fit in with our Healthy Food and Nutrition Policy and guidelines.

Food safety

Our kindergarten:

- promotes and teaches food safety to children during learning/cooking activities.
- encourages educators to access professional learning as appropriate to the *Healthy Eating Guidelines*.
- provides adequate hand washing facilities and/or hand sanitiser for everyone.
- promotes and encourages correct hand/face washing procedures with children and educators.
- cook healthy options and whenever possible provide recipes for families.
- ensures all children are appropriately supervised when participating in preparing food for cooking.

Working with families, health services and industry

Our kindergarten:

- invites parents/caregivers to be involved in the review of our kindergarten food and nutrition policy.
- provides information from various sources, including the *Right Bite Strategy* to parents/caregivers through a variety of ways including:
 - newsletters, emails, kindergarten Facebook page
 - policy development/review
 - information on enrolment
 - pamphlet/poster displays
- liaises with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues.

This Healthy Food and Nutrition policy has been established after consultation with educators and parents/caregivers within the kindergarten community.

References:

Easy guide to healthy food and drink supply for South Australian schools and preschools policy (2015)

<https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/policy/child-and-student-support/the-easy-guide-to-healthy-food-and-drink-supply-for-south-australian-schools-and-preschools.pdf>

Eat well SA schools and preschools healthy eating guidelines (2004)

<https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/guideline/early-childhood/eat-well-sa-schools-and-preschools-healthy-eating-guidelines.pdf>

Right bite ready reckoner

<https://edi.sa.edu.au/library/document-library/guideline/early-childhood/right-bite-ready-reckoner.pdf>

National Quality Standard 2.1.3 (2018)

<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/nqf/national-quality-standard/quality-area-2-childrens-health-and-safety>

Right Bite Policy (2007)

Promoting Healthy Eating and Nutrition In Education and Care Services, 2012.

Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood - Staff/Carers Book, 2009.

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