

# 11.1 Food and Nutrition Procedure

Quality Area 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH & SAFETY

Standard 2.1.3 Healthy lifestyle

Regulation 77 Health, hygiene and food safety practices

Regulation 78 Food and beverages

Regulation 79 Service providing food and beverages

Regulation 80 Weekly menu

Regulation 90 Medical conditions policy

## PURPOSE

To ensure healthy nutritious meals are provided to children that meet the Australian Dietary requirements and Food Standards Australian New Zealand.

## SCOPE

This procedure applies to all children, educators, visitors and management of the Service

## IMPLEMENTATION

At Story House Early Learning we aim to promote good nutrition and healthy food habits and attitudes to all children and families at the service. We also aim to support and provide for children with food allergies, dietary requirements or restrictions, and specific cultural or religious practices. This procedure should be read in conjunction with the *Food Safety Program*.

### Service Manager /Nominated Supervisor/ Responsible person will:

- Provide families with opportunities to contribute to the review of the policy
- Request that details of any food allergies or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to the service and work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate response so that children’s individual dietary needs are met
- Communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within the service and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home
- Communicate regularly with families and provide information and advice on appropriate food and drink choices through newsletters, fact sheets, service displays as an example
- Display the weekly menu for all families to see for those services that provide meals
- Ensure young children do not have access to foods that may cause choking
- Ensure all children are seated for meals and are supervised by the educators while eating and drinking
- Encourage and provide opportunities for cooking to further develop their understanding of food and nutrition
- Ensure that when food is provided by the service, the meals are presented attractively and supported by enjoyable dining experience for children. Children sitting on mats as a ‘picnic’ should only be done when there are links to the program

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- Ensure age appropriate and developmentally appropriate utensils and furniture will be provided for children
- Ensure that food is never used to punish, reward or bribe children
- Ensure that children are not forced to eat food they do not like or more than they would like to eat
- Ensure that educators are trained on safe food handling practices
- Ensure fridge and freezer temperatures are taken daily, working in compliance with the National Food Authority and recorded on the *Daily Fridge Temperature Register*
- Ensure water is available at all times for children

#### Where food is provided by the service:

- Provide children with an adequate quantity and wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, wholegrain cereal products, dairy products, lean meats and alternatives
- Plan and display the service menu (at least two weeks at a time) that is based on sound menu planning principles and meets the daily nutritional needs of children whilst in care
- Plan healthy snacks on the menu to complement what is served at mealtimes and ensure the snacks are substantial enough to meet the energy and nutrient needs of children
- Vary the meals and snacks on the menu to keep children interested and to introduce children to a range of healthy food ideas
- Ensure that the individual preparing the food follows appropriate hygiene procedures including:
  - Washing their hands before preparing food
  - Keeping their personal hygiene at a high level by keeping clean and tidy and tying hair back or keeping it under a hair net
  - Removing jewellery (where possible)
  - Covering all cuts with a blue band aid and wearing gloves
- Using colour-coded cleaning cloths

#### Where food is brought from home:

- Provide information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and suitable for children's lunchboxes

#### Educators will:

##### Store, prepare and serve food in a hygienic manner by:

- Ensuring gloves or food tongs are used by all educators handling 'ready to eat' foods
- Ensuring children and educators wash and dry their hands before handling food or eating meals and snacks
- Ensuring that food is stored and served at safe temperatures i.e. below 5°C or above 60°C
- Separating cutting boards that are used for raw meat and chicken, fruit and vegetables and utensils and hands are washed before touching other foods
- Discouraging children from handling other children's food and utensils
- Using bottle warmers to heat infant formula and/or cow's milk

#### Create a positive learning environment for children by:

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- Sitting with the children at meal and snack times to role model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided
- Endeavouring to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds
- Creating a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying the social interactions with educators and other children
- Encouraging older children to assist to set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink - providing opportunities for them to develop independence and self-esteem
- Respecting each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he/she eats
- Being patient with messy or slow eaters
- Encouraging children to try different foods but do not force them to eat or force-feed them
- Never using food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes
- Fostering an awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children's program by including a range of learning experiences and encouraging children's healthy eating
- Encouraging children to participate in a variety of 'hands-on' food preparation experiences
- Providing opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices

#### Encouraging and supporting breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of solid foods by:

- Providing a suitable place within the service where mothers can breastfeed their babies or express breast milk
- Supporting mothers to continue breastfeeding until babies are at least 12 months of age while offering appropriate complementary foods from around 6 months of age
- Ensuring the safe handling of breast milk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding
- Always holding bottle-feed babies in a semi-upright position to foster autonomy while making the feeding experience pleasant for the child
- Always supervising babies while drinking and eating - ensuring safe bottle-feeding and eating practices at all times
- Ensuring water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day in both the indoor and outdoor environment
- Being aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances and special diets and consult with families to develop individual management plans

#### Breastmilk should be:

- Placed in the fridge as soon as the family arrives at the Service
- Refrigerated the milk at 4° Celsius until it is required by the child
- Warmed and/or thaw breastmilk by standing the bottle/container in a vessel of warm water
- Tested for the temperature of the milk before giving it to a child to ensure it is safe for consumption
- Returned any unused portion to the family

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