



## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Food and Nutrition Policy

#### Policy Statement:

Time 4 Kindy Pre School & Long Day Care Centre will provide food and nutrition education that is consistent with national dietary guidelines for children, adolescents and infant feeding guidelines, state regulations, food safety principles, and that is appropriate to their age, cultural background, religion or medical needs.

#### Rationale:

Children in Long Day Care must receive 50% - 70% of their food intake whilst in care. It is therefore essential that the Service provides a menu that is designed so that adequate nutrition is provided to the children in proportion to the time spent in care.

#### Strategies, Practices and Procedures:

Children in their first five years of life are rapidly developing and require a nutritious and safe diet for their intellectual, behavioural and physical development. Educational and fun learning activities in relation to healthy eating are also important for children's development. The centre believes that healthy eating habits need to be instilled in children from a young age, and we wish to encourage this in children while they are in our care. To understand the typical physical and social/personal characteristics related to eating during the pre-school years, the table below illustrates the developmental stages.

Age	Physical Characteristics	Social/Personal Characteristics
12-18 months	Grasps and releases foods with fingers Holds spoon but use is poor Turns spoon in mouth Uses cup but release is poor	Wants foods others are eating Loves performing
18 months-2 years	Appetite decreases Likes eating with hands Likes experimenting with textures	Ritual becomes important Displays food preferences Distracts easily Develops negative behaviour
2-3 years	Holds glass n hand Places spoon straight in mouth Spills a lot Chews more foods but choking is still a hazard	Definite likes and dislikes Insists on doing it "myself" Ritualistic Dawdles Food fads Demands food in certain shapes and whole foods Likes to help in the kitchen
3-4 years	Holds handle on cup Pours from small jug Uses fork Chews most food Able to choose between 2 alternative foods Influenced by TV commercials Likes to copy food preparer Imaginative play	Improved appetite and interest in food Favourite foods requested Likes shapes/colours
4-5 years	Uses knife and fork Good use of cup Good self feeder	Rather talk than eat Food fads continue Motivated to eat by incentives Likes to help Interested in nature of food and where it comes from Peer influence increasing
5-6 years	Independent at feeding	Conforming Less suspicious of mixtures but still prefers plain foods Social influence outside home increasing Food important part of special occasions

The following Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia will be shared with families:

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- The centre will encourage and support breastfeeding.
- Children and adolescents need sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally.
- Children should enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods.
- Children will be encouraged to:
  - Eat plenty of vegetables, legumes and fruit.
  - Eat plenty of cereals, preferably wholegrain.
  - Include lean meat, fish, poultry, and/or alternatives.
  - Consume milks, yoghurts, cheese and/or alternatives (reduced fat milks are not suitable for children under 2 years of age because of their high energy needs, but reduced fat varieties should be encouraged for older children and adolescents).
  - Choose water as a drink.
- Care should be taken to:
  - Limit saturated fat and moderate total fat intake (low fat diets are not suitable for children).
  - Choose foods low in salt.
  - Consume only moderate amounts of sugars and foods containing added sugars.

### **The centre will:**

- Advise parents on minimum quantities of food that will be provided for children while in care, according to the NHMRC and state recommendations.
- Access suitable information that can help the centre provide meals and snacks that meet current standards and recommendations in relation to nutritional requirements, are appropriate to the child's age, cultural and religious background and are of a variety and quantity that ensures the child's appetites and interests.
- Promote drinking water for fluid requirements, provide safe drinking water at all times and ensure that children have an adequate fluid intake throughout the day.
- Refrigerate children's drinking water and provide it in outdoor play areas that children can access themselves.
- Allow children to eat when they are hungry, however they will be encouraged to eat as a group during the daily program.
- Request staff to sit and eat with children at mealtimes whenever possible to model table manners and initiate conversation. Mealtimes should be pleasant and relaxing for staff and children.
- Provide support for nutrition and food safety training and learning experiences for all staff.
- Include learning experiences relating to the importance of healthy eating and lifestyle.
- Only use the kitchen for preparing food (unless children are cooking).
- Provide opportunities for children to prepare their own afternoon tea so that they develop self-help skills and an interest in healthy foods.
- Not use sweets or lollies as a reward for good behaviour. This can affect food related attitudes and practices that can last throughout life.
- Not rush children to finish eating their meal, they need to be given adequate time to properly chew and swallow their food.
- Encourage breastfeeding mothers to provide breast milk in bottles, or if their situation allows, to come to the centre to breastfeed their child.

With regard to infants, the following foods are considered to be unsuitable and will not be provided:

- Honey, as it can contain the spores of *Clostridium botulinum*.
- Nuts, due to the risk of inhalation and choking and allergic reaction.
- Fruit juice, as it offers no nutritional benefit to children under the age of 6 months. After the age of 6 months, the excessive consumption of fruit juice has been associated with gastrointestinal symptoms, failure to thrive, decreased appetite and loose stools.
- Reduced fat milks.

**The Approved Provider/Nominated Supervisor will ensure that this policy is maintained and implemented at all times.**

### **Links to Other Policies:**

Dental Hygiene Policy  
Food Safety Policy

## Time 4 Kindy Pre School & Long Day Care Centre Policies and Procedures

**Policy Created:** March 2010  
**Policy reviewed:** March 2016  
**Review date:** March 2017

**Source:**

[www.anaphylaxisaustralia.org.au](http://www.anaphylaxisaustralia.org.au) accessed August 2016

Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia incorporating the Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers. NHMRC, 2003

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care 2011 Quality Areas 1, 2 and 6

Education and care Services National Regulations 2011

“Childcare and Children’s Health” Vol 9 No 4, Centre for Community Child Health, December 2006

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011

Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991

Food Standard Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994

Food Act 2003 (NSW)

Food Regulation 2010 (NSW)