



BACKGROUND:

Children in Education and Care settings for 8 hours per day should receive a minimum of 50% of their daily nutritional requirements whilst in care (i.e. morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea). This percentage increases to 75% if care is between 9-10 hours and includes a breakfast or a dinner.

The food children eat affects their growth, development and overall behaviour and well-being. It is important that food and drink provided to children is nutritious and provide adequate quantities to promote their development. Educators and coordinators need to work cooperatively with families to ensure that children’s nutritional needs are met, that mealtimes are relaxed social occasions, and that family cultures and individual food requirements are accommodated.

AIM:

That educators ensure a healthy balance of food and beverages is provided to children in care in sufficient quantities, on a daily basis.

That parent /guardians are provided with sufficient nutritional advice and guidance as to the Service’s *Nutrition, Food and Beverages and Dietary Requirements Policy* to provide healthy, well balanced meals and snacks for their children whilst in care.

Educators who provide food to children in care will:

- Have completed an appropriate Food Handling Certificate
- Prepare food in accordance with the service’s *Food Safety and Food Handling Policy*, and
- Consult with parents/guardians as to children’s nutritional requirements, tastes and preferences when preparing weekly menus.
- Consult with families in relation to any allergies or specific dietary requirements and ensure that these are catered for within the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- All Educators must have completed an appropriate Food Handling Certificate and ensure that it is update every three (3) years. (as per the Food Handling and Food Safety Policy.)
- Holistic Approach Family Day Care provided training in food handling “Food safety facts in FDC Webinar”.



The link is:

https://hafdc.adobeconnect.com/p20phsb2t0b/?OWASP_CSRFTOKEN=1c654d65adf34a8fc3bd97c00e9ac63817e1328ecbf8d47057ea0febf43a9040

- Educators who provide food as part of their service will be required to have completed the appropriate Food Handling Training webinar (as above) and ensure it is updated at least every 3 years. Holistic Approach Family Day Care also requires training in providing healthy food in Family Day Care setting
- Educators will work in partnership with parents/guardians to ensure that they supply food that meet the child's nutritional needs for the time that the child is in care, including discussing with family's appropriate ideas in relation to healthy options for their child's lunchbox.
- The educator / service will publish menu and lunch box ideas regularly for parents/guardians.
- Educators will encourage children to participate in mealtime preparation with the development of self-help skills in setting the table, collecting food from the fridge and opening up packages, as appropriate for their individual age.
- Educators will demonstrate good hand washing and food handling practices, and will ensure that children wash their hands before and after meal times and before handling food.
- Educators will encourage children to be seated for a meal, and will provide age appropriate seating and tables. Being seated also provides opportunities for social interaction and this also helps the digestion process. Small children should not be left alone whilst eating or unattended in highchairs.
- Educators will provide a clean and hygienic environment, and provide age appropriate cups, plates and utensils for each child. Children will be encouraged to use individual serving utensils to foster independence and self-help skills.
- Educators will sit with children at meal times and encourage healthy and hygienic eating habits, including:
 - where meals are provided, eating the same foods as the children
 - letting children choose what and how much they eat from what is available.
 - allowing children to serve themselves with appropriate utensils.
 - maintaining a relaxed, enjoyable and positive social environment.
- Food must never be used as a form of punishment, either by its provision or denial and children will not be force fed food.
- Educators will ensure children's allergies and intolerances are taken into consideration when food is supplied, or cooking experiences are implemented.
- Cooking experiences are to be used as an opportunity for children to learn skills including hygiene and food handling procedures.



- It is not a safe practice for children to eat in the car.
- Milk and water should be offered regularly throughout the day and very frequently during hot weather and water should be available for children at all times.
- Cordials and other sugary drinks are not recommended and should not be offered to children in care.
- Parents of babies will supply to educator's formula or expressed breast milk with required preparation and storage instructions.
- Educators are encouraged to have face-to-face interaction when bottle feeding babies. Under no circumstances should an educator prop a bottle for an infant. If a child can bottle-feed themselves, this must be strictly supervised, and the bottle removed immediately after the child stops drinking.
- Educators must not give bottles to children to go to bed or in their bed as this speed up the tooth decay process. This also applies to regular sucking (except for meal times) on bottles throughout the day that contain milk. Should an infant require something additional to drink, water is recommended.
- Parents will be informed of how their child has eaten during the day in written form.
- Children are also encouraged to follow basic dental hygiene and have a drink of water after food consumption, medication, and after milk.

WHEN EDUCATOR PROVIDES THE FOOD:

- A menu will be displayed at the educator's service where it is accessible to parents / guardians of children being cared for by that services which accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided by the service each day.
- A copy of the menu is to be provided to the Service. Any changes to the menu a new copy is required to be submitted to the Service.
- Any changes to the daily menu by educators must be documented for reference of any allergies, reactions that may occur.
- Care should be taken to avoid allergy-inducing food and drink and consideration given to dietary, cultural and religious preferences.
- Parents will give initial advice to educators with respect to a child's routine and food requirements and continue to consult and exchange information with the educator as the child grows.
- Plenty of fresh food, in the form of fruit and vegetables will be offered.
- Children who are beginning solid foods will be encouraged to gradually introduce one food at a time to ensure any allergies are detected. New foods should be introduced to children at home prior to care and discussed with the educator. Foods that may be unsuitable or



unsafe for a child will not be given. Educators will discuss individual requirements with parents and together plan the introduction of new foods.

- Educators will be aware of potential choking hazards, e.g. foods to avoid for younger children include corn chips, popcorn, whole nuts, hard fruit or uncooked vegetables like carrot. Careful supervision and monitoring of young children whilst eating is required.

SOURCES / LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS:

Education and Care Services National Law
Education and Care Services National Regulations
National Quality Standard 2.1.3
Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991
Food Standard Australia New Zealand Regulations 1994
Nutrition Australia
Get Up and Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood, Australian Government Department of Health
Australian Dietary Guidelines, Australian National Health and Medical Research Council & Australian Government Department of Health, www.eatforhealth.gov.au
Staying Healthy in Childcare 5th Edition, 2012

REVIEW PROCESS:

Version	Date Reviewed	Responsible Person
1	December, 2013	Tracey Yeomans
2	August 2014	Tracey Yeomans
3	May 2016	Vicki Carmichael / Victoria Everist
4	March 2018	Michelle Florimo
5	April 2020	Sarah Westworth

This policy is the intellectual property of Holistic Approach Family Day Care Scheme and is created with consultation of staff and families attending the service.

This policy will be reviewed as required.

This policy is available in other languages upon request.