

# Nutrition and Active Play Policy

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## Mandatory – Quality Area 2

### PURPOSE

Yarra Warra Pre-School acknowledges the importance of healthy eating and physical activity, and its contribution to good health and overall wellbeing.

This policy will provide guidelines to:

- ) promote a healthy lifestyle to children at the centre, including eating nutritious food and participating in physical activity
- ) provide opportunities for active play
- ) encourage children to make healthy lifestyle choices consistent with national and state guidelines and recommendations
- ) ensure that the dietary and cultural needs of children and families are taken into consideration when planning events and activities.

### POLICY STATEMENT

#### 1. VALUES

Yarra Warra Pre-School is committed to:

- ) promoting nutritious food and eating habits that will contribute to healthy growth and development in children
- ) providing a safe, supportive and social environment in which children can enjoy eating
- ) consulting and working collaboratively with families in regard to their child's nutrition and dietary requirements, including responding appropriately to food allergies and recognising cultural and religious practices, and lifestyle choices
- ) ensuring that food and drink items provided by the service are consistent with national and state guidelines and recommendations
- ) providing children and families with opportunities to learn about food, nutrition and healthy lifestyles
- ) ensuring adequate health and hygiene procedures, including safe practices for handling, preparing, storing and serving food
- ) encouraging physical activity by providing a range of active play experiences for all children at the service.

#### 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Certified Supervisors, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of Yarra Warra Pre-School.

#### 3. BACKGROUND AND LEGISLATION

##### Background

There are many benefits to promoting a healthy lifestyle in early childhood education and care settings, including the positive impact this has on each child's learning and development. Being made aware of positive eating behaviour and the importance of physical activity from an early age can instil good habits that will remain throughout a person's life. Educators/staff are well placed to build this awareness among children and their families, while respecting lifestyle choices, and cultural and religious values.

The foods we eat provide our body with the nutrients we need to stay healthy. Good nutrition is the balanced eating of a variety of foods, and is especially important for children as they require a large amount of nutrients for growth and development. Research has shown that, when offered a variety of healthy foods, children can and do make good choices. It is also important to provide preschool children with a good foundation in healthy eating, as most children have formed lifelong eating habits before they reach school age. Education and care settings provide many opportunities for children to experience a range of healthy food, and to learn about food choices from educators and other children (*Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, p30 – refer to Sources).

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Active play (play that involves using the large muscles in the body) develops a strong and healthy body, builds motor and co-ordination skills, creates a sense of wellbeing and helps protect from disease. Active play is about moving, being and doing.

A strong sense of health and wellbeing, supported by good nutrition and an active lifestyle, can provide children with confidence, energy and optimism that will contribute to their ability to concentrate, co-operate and learn (*Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*, p30 – refer to *Sources*). Learning about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition and active play, links directly to Outcome 3 in both the *Early Years Learning Framework* and the *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework* (refer to *Sources*).

The Australian Government has produced guidelines, recommendations and resources for healthy eating and physical activity in early childhood settings, including the National Health and Medical Research Council's *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* (refer to *Sources*) and the *Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood* resources (refer to *Sources*). Practical, healthy eating advice is also available to early childhood services and schools via a telephone advice line: the Victorian Healthy Eating Advisory Service (VHEAS – refer to *Sources*), run by Nutrition Australia. Early childhood education and care services can also register for the *Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program* (refer to *Sources*). This program is designed to create safe, healthy and friendly environments for learning, by promoting physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.

## Legislation and standards

Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- ) *Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code*
- ) *Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005*
- ) *Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)*
- ) *Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010*
- ) *Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: Regulations 77–78, 79–80* (if the service provides food), 168
- ) *Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)*
- ) *Food Act 1984 (Vic), as amended 2012*
- ) *National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety*
- ) Standard 2.2: Healthy eating and physical activity are embedded in the program for children
- ) Element 2.2.1: Healthy eating is promoted and food and drinks provided by the service are nutritious and appropriate for each child
- ) Element 2.2.2: Physical activity is promoted through planned and spontaneous experiences and is appropriate for each child
- ) *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*

## 4. DEFINITIONS

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *General Definitions* section of this manual.

**Active play:** Large muscle-based activities that are essential for a child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical growth and development.

**Adequate supervision:** (In relation to this policy) **supervision** entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:

- ) number, age and abilities of children
- ) number and positioning of educators
- ) current activity of each child
- ) areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)

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- ) developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- ) experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- ) need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

**Healthy eating:** Describes eating patterns that provide all the recommended nutrients for growth and development, and good health and wellbeing, now and in the future. It also refers to preparing, serving and eating food in a way that recognises its importance as a social and cultural activity.

**Nutrition:** The process of providing or receiving nourishing substances.

**'Sometimes' foods and drinks:** Food and drink items that are high in fat, sugar and salt, and that contain minimal vitamins, minerals or fibre.

## 5. SOURCES AND RELATED POLICIES

- ) *Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia*: [Soft Break] [www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Policy\\_Agenda/Quality/Pages/EarlyYearsLearningFramework.aspx#key\\_documents](http://www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Policy_Agenda/Quality/Pages/EarlyYearsLearningFramework.aspx#key_documents)
- ) *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia* (currently being reviewed): [Soft Break] [www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/n29-n30-n31-n32-n33-n34](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines/publications/n29-n30-n31-n32-n33-n34)
- ) Food Safety Victoria, Department of Health – Food Safety and Regulation: 1300 364 352
- ) Better Health Channel: [www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au)
- ) Cancer Council Australia – for information on sun safety: [www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart](http://www.cancer.org.au/sunsmart)
- ) Cavallini, I and Tedeschi, M (eds) (2008), *The Languages of Food: recipes, experiences, thoughts*. Reggio Children Publications
- ) Food Standards Australia New Zealand – for information on food safety and food handling: [www.foodstandards.gov.au](http://www.foodstandards.gov.au)
- ) *Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood*: [Soft Break] [www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources)
- ) Kids and Traffic – Early Childhood Road Safety Education Program: [www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au](http://www.kidsandtraffic.mq.edu.au)
- ) Kidsafe: the Child Accident Prevention Foundation of Australia – for information on preventing childhood accidents in children under the age of 15 years: [www.kidsafe.org.au](http://www.kidsafe.org.au)
- ) Murdoch Childrens Research Institute, Royal Children's Hospital Melbourne, *Limit 'Sometimes' Foods* Background Paper
- ) Nitzke, S, Riley, D, Ramminger, A and Jacobs, G (2010), *Rethinking Nutrition: Connecting Science and Practice in Early Childhood Settings*. Redleaf Press, St Paul, USA
- ) Oberklaid, F (2004), *Health in Early Childhood Settings: From Emergencies to the Common Cold*. Pademelon Press, NSW
- ) National Health and Medical Research Council (2005), *Staying Healthy in Child Care: Preventing infectious diseases in child care*: [www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines) (Note: this publication is currently being revised and will have significant changes. It is important that services refer to the most up-to-date version of this resource.)
- ) *Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework*: [www.education.vic.gov.au/earlylearning/eyldf/default.htm](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/earlylearning/eyldf/default.htm) [Soft Break]
- ) *Victorian Healthy Eating Advisory Service* (VHEAS) provides advice for Victorian primary and secondary schools and all licensed children's services on healthy eating, including:
  - ) over-the-phone advice from nutrition experts on providing healthy food and drink to children
  - ) menu assessments
  - ) direct contact through an easy-to-access email address (Nutrition Australia). Contact VHEAS: phone 1300 225 288 or email [vheas@nutritionaustralia.org](mailto:vheas@nutritionaustralia.org)
- ) *Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program*: [www.health.vic.gov.au/prevention/achieve\\_early\\_childhood.htm](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/prevention/achieve_early_childhood.htm) [Soft Break]

## Service policies

- ) *Anaphylaxis Policy*
- ) *Asthma Policy*

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- ) *Curriculum Development Policy*
- ) *Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy*
- ) *Diabetes Policy*
- ) *Excursions and Service Events Policy*
- ) *Food Safety Policy*
- ) *Hygiene Policy*
- ) *Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy*
- ) *Inclusion and Equity Policy*
- ) *Sun Protection Policy*

## PROCEDURES

### **The Approved Provider is responsible for:**

- ) ensuring that the service environment and educational program supports children and families to make healthy choices for eating and active play
- ) providing ongoing information, resources and support to families, to assist in the promotion of optimum health for young children (refer to Sources)
- ) ensuring the implementation of adequate health and hygiene procedures, and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 77) (refer to Hygiene Policy and Food Safety Policy)
- ) ensuring that all educators/staff comply with the Food Safety Act
- ) ensuring that all educators/staff are aware of a child's food allergies and/or other medical conditions on enrolment or on initial diagnosis
- ) ensuring measures are in place to prevent cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies and/or diabetes (refer to Anaphylaxis Policy, Asthma Policy, Diabetes Policy and Food Safety Policy)
- ) educate children to only eat from their own lunchbox.
- ) educate children about allergies and food requirements that other children may have.
- ) ensuring that all educators/staff are aware of, and plan for, the dietary needs of children diagnosed with diabetes (refer to Diabetes Policy)
- ) providing healthy suggestions for morning/afternoon tea and/or lunchboxes for children
- ) discouraging parents/guardians from providing children with 'sometimes' foods and drinks (refer to Definitions)
- ) ensuring that fresh drinking water is readily available at all times, and reminding children to drink water throughout the day, including at snack/lunch times (Regulation 78(1)(a))
- ) ensuring that food and drinks are available to children at frequent and regular intervals throughout the day (Regulation 78(1)(b))
- ) ensuring that celebrations, fundraising activities and other service events are consistent with the purposes and values of this policy and service procedures.

### **The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:**

- ) ensuring that the service environment and the educational program supports children and families to make healthy choices for eating and active play
- ) ensuring the implementation of adequate health and hygiene procedures, and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service (Regulation 77) (refer to Hygiene Policy and Food Safety Policy)
- ) ensuring that all educators/staff comply with the Food Safety Act
- ) ensuring that all educators/staff are aware of a child's food allergies and/or other medical conditions on enrolment or on initial diagnosis
- ) ensure children only eat food from their own lunchbox.
- ) ensuring measures are in place to prevent cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies and/or diabetes (refer to Anaphylaxis Policy, Asthma Policy, Diabetes Policy and Food Safety Policy)

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- ) ensuring that all educators/staff are aware of, and plan for, the dietary needs of children diagnosed with diabetes (refer to Diabetes Policy)
- ) ensuring that fresh drinking water is readily available at all times, and reminding children to drink water throughout the day, including at snack/lunch times (Regulation 78(1)(a))
- ) ensuring that food and drinks are available to children at frequent and regular intervals throughout the day (Regulation 78(1)(b))
- ) registering the service with the Victorian Prevention and Health Promotion Achievement Program (refer to Sources)
- ) ensuring that cultural and religious practices/requirements of families are accommodated to support children's learning and development
- ) developing and reviewing guidelines for celebrations, fundraising activities and other service events in consultation with educators, staff, parents/guardians and families
- ) developing links with local and regional health services, community organisations and businesses that provide expertise, resources and support for healthy eating and active play.

### **Certified Supervisors and other educators/staff are responsible for:**

- ) complying with the service's *Nutrition and Active Play Policy* and with the *Food Safety Act*
- ) implementing adequate health and hygiene procedures, and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, to minimise risks to children (refer to *Hygiene Policy* and *Food Safety Policy*)
- ) being aware of a child's food allergies and/or other medical conditions on enrolment at the service or on initial diagnosis
- ) implementing measures to prevent cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies and/or diabetes (refer to *Anaphylaxis Policy*, *Asthma Policy*, *Diabetes Policy* and *Food Safety Policy*)
- ) being aware of, and planning for, the dietary needs of children diagnosed with diabetes (refer to *Diabetes Policy*)
- ) ensuring that the service environment and the educational program supports children and families to make healthy choices for eating and active play
- ) discussing healthy eating choices with children, introducing the concept of 'sometimes' foods and drinks, and role-modelling positive behaviours
- ) exploring and discussing diverse cultural, religious, social and family lifestyles
- ) considering this policy when organising excursions and service events
- ) supporting students and volunteers to comply with this policy while at the service
- ) keeping parents/guardians informed of current information relating to healthy eating and active play
- ) ensuring that fresh drinking water is readily available at all times, and reminding children to drink regularly throughout the day, including at snack/meal times
- ) ensuring that children can readily access their own clearly labelled drink containers (where this is a service practice)
- ) providing food and drinks at regular intervals, and encouraging children to actively participate in, and enjoy, snack/meal times without feeling rushed
- ) providing adequate supervision (refer to Definitions) for all children during meal/snack times
- ) encouraging children to be independent at snack/meal times e.g. opening lunchboxes, pouring drinks, self-feeding, serving and using utensils in a culturally-sensitive way
- ) planning and providing outdoor, active play that is stimulating, promotes skill development, considers safety issues and provides adequate supervision (refer to Definitions)
- ) considering opportunities for children to be physically active indoors, particularly in adverse weather conditions
- ) providing daily opportunities for all children to participate in age-appropriate active play
- ) acting as positive role models by engaging in physical activity
- ) minimising and closely supervising screen-based activities, in line with recommended guidelines
- ) providing age-appropriate traffic safety education, including pedestrian and passenger safety to both children and parents/guardians at the service

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) promoting safe behaviour through daily practice as part of the program.

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### **Parents/guardians are responsible for:**

) complying with the requirements of this policy

) providing details of specific nutritional/dietary requirements, including the need to accommodate cultural or religious practices or food allergies, on their child's enrolment form, and discussing these with the Nominated Supervisor prior to the child's commencement at the service, and if requirements change over time (refer to *Anaphylaxis Policy*, *Asthma Policy* and *Diabetes Policy*)

) not packing nuts or nut products in lunchboxes. Yarra Warra Pre-School is not a 'nut-free' center, however every effort is made to ensure there are no nuts or nut products brought to the centre.

) Being aware of any other foods that may not be permitted in the centre depending on the requirements of the enrolled children (parents will be notified of these restrictions at the start of the kinder year).

) communicating regularly with educators/staff regarding children's specific nutritional requirements and dietary needs, including food preferences

) encouraging their child/ren to drink an adequate amount of water

) providing healthy, nutritious food for snacks/meals, including fruits and vegetables where applicable. The following resources may assist parents, the Better Health Channel Eating Tips for Preschoolers Facts (Sheet Attached) or the Go For Your Life interactive lunchbox web site [www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au/hav/articles.nsf/html/index.html](http://www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au/hav/articles.nsf/html/index.html)

) providing healthy, nutritious food, including fruits or vegetables for sharing at morning or afternoon tea, where applicable

) providing nutritious food and drinks for celebrations, fundraising activities and service events, consistent with service policy

) encouraging children to exercise by engaging in active play, and walking or riding a bike to the service where appropriate

) discussing appropriate road traffic safety and car safety practices, and role-modelling this behaviour.

) **Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.**

## **EVALUATION**

In order to assess whether the values and purposes of the policy have been achieved, the Approved Provider will:

) regularly seek feedback from educators, staff, parents/guardians, children, management and all affected by the policy regarding its effectiveness

) monitor the implementation, compliance, complaints and incidents in relation to this policy

) keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy and best practice

) revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required

) notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any change to this policy or its procedures.

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## ATTACHMENT 1 – BETTER HEALTH CHANNEL: EATING TIPS FOR CHILDREN - PRESCHOOLERS

Connect with us via Twitter and share Australia's best health and medical info with those close to you



Fact sheet

### Eating tips for children (4) - preschoolers

Once children start kindergarten or school, life takes on a new routine. A regular intake of food is needed throughout the day to keep children active and help their concentration while learning. Some children in this age group are still fussy, so offer a wide variety of foods and regular meals and snacks, and allow the child to eat according to their appetite without force or arguments.

#### Allow your child to eat according to their appetite

Children are able to decide how much food they need for activity and growth if allowed to eat according to their appetite. Forcing children to 'clean the plate' or giving sweets as rewards may lead to problems of overeating later in life.

Allow your child to decide how much food is enough. This shouldn't cause problems for most children if a variety of healthy foods are consistently offered. Offer a small serve first and give your child more if they are hungry. Meal sizes will vary, as the amount of food a child needs depends on what else has been eaten during the day.

#### Meals for kindergarten

Children continue to learn new skills and ideas about food when eating outside the home. They can be involved in preparing their lunch box and helping their carers make healthy lunches. Preparing meals together is a great opportunity to give children positive messages about nutrition, such as 'milk makes your bones strong' or 'bread gives you energy to play'. Suggestions for lunches include:

- Mixed sandwich, fresh fruit and a tub of yoghurt
- Lean meat and salad in pita bread, with dried fruit and a carton of plain milk
- Dairy foods and drinks can be frozen in hot weather and taken to kindergarten.

#### Healthy snack suggestions

Snacks are an important part of a child's food intake for energy and nutrients. What children eat is more important than when they eat. Children who snack on lollies and chips may not get all the nutrients needed for good health. Healthy snack suggestions include:

- Fresh and dried fruits, or fruit packed in natural juice
- Yoghurt or cheese
- Fruit bread, bun or muffins
- Bread, rice cakes or crackers with spread
- Vegetable pieces and dip.

#### Treats are best kept for special occasions

By this age, children can eat independently and enjoy the social aspects of eating. Having friends means eating out of home more. There may be an occasional meal at a fast food restaurant. They may go to a party with lots of sugary and fatty snacks. These things will do no harm as long as good nutrition is continued on most days. Food is an important part of special occasions for everyone and should be enjoyed. However, high energy treats are best kept for special occasions and are not recommended for lunch boxes.

#### Strict diets aren't recommended

Children grow at a steady rate during the kindergarten and early school years. Strict or low-fat diets are not recommended because children's energy and nutrient needs are high. If you're concerned about excessive weight gain, a good approach is to:

- Consult with your doctor.
- Develop healthy eating habits for the whole family.
- Encourage regular physical activities for everyone.
- Limit the time spent watching television.

#### Encourage physical activity

Children should be encouraged to be physically active from a young age. Physical activity helps children feel good and promotes a healthy appetite. For this age group, three hours per day of active play spread out over the day is recommended and only one hour or less of television or DVD watching. While formal sports aren't necessary for fitness, children can benefit from your encouragement and guidance. Suggestions include:

- Watch less television.
- Play games in the back garden or a local park.
- Go for a walk to the park or playground.
- Teach your child to swim.
- Participate in kindergarten and school activities.
- Be involved in regular, fun activities with your children.

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## Healthy drinks

Active children need plenty of fluids. Around three glasses of milk a day provides enough calcium for bone development; water should be encouraged at other times. Sweet drinks such as juice, soft drink or cordial are unnecessary in a child's diet. Low-fat milk can be combined with fresh fruits for a smoothie as a great afternoon snack.

## Food tips for growing children

General suggestions include:

- Offer a variety of foods every day.
- Encourage healthy eating for everyone in the family.
- Let your child decide if they are full or hungry.
- Offer healthy snacks between meals.
- Involve children in meal preparation.
- Encourage water rather than sweet drinks.
- Enjoy family mealtimes and activities together.

## Where to get help

- Your doctor
- Dietitians Association of Australia Tel. 1800 812 942
- Maternal and child health nurse
- Maternal and Child Health Line (24 hours) Tel. 132 229
- Parentline (24 hours) Tel. 132 289

## Things to remember

- Children are able to decide how much food they need for activity and growth if allowed to eat according to their appetite.
- Strict or low-fat diets are not recommended because children's energy and nutrient needs are high.
- High energy treats are best kept for special occasions and are not recommended for lunch boxes.
- Reduce screen time and encourage active play.

This page has been produced in consultation with and approved by:

Royal Children's Hospital - Nutrition Department

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## **AUTHORISATION**

This policy was adopted by the Approved Provider of Yarra Warra Preschool on 22 August 2012.

**REVIEW DATE:** TO BE REVIEWED AS NECESSARY

### **REVISION RECORD**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Version</b>	<b>Revision description</b>
25/06/15	Ver 1	Revise information about being nuts to the centre and lunchbox suggestions