

River Street Early Learning Centre

Nutrition, Food and Beverages Policy

Policy

Children's health is promoted through the provision of food and beverages that meet recommended Australian standards and dietary guidelines.

Procedure

Minimising risk

1. The educator will maintain health and hygiene practices in line with *Staying Healthy in Childcare* (5th Ed.)* – food safety.
2. Safe eating practices will be implemented to minimise risk of choking e.g. babies will be nursed when feeding from bottles until they are comfortable holding their own bottles.

**Note: Staying Healthy in Childcare* (5th Ed.) is currently under review by the NHMRC.

Communication with families

1. Educators will consult and collaborate with families to best ensure children's nutritional needs are met.
2. Food and dietary preferences as indicated by families [such as vegetarianism, religious needs] will be accounted for.
3. Educators will communicate with parent/s/families about the child's daily intake and output of food and fluids.
4. Any diagnosed allergies of the child will be clearly written on the enrolment form.
5. In consultation with parent/s/families, educators will develop an action plan for children with food allergies. Parents of a child with a known food allergy are to provide the service with medical action plan.
6. Food and beverages will be provided on a regular basis throughout the day.
7. Access to safe drinking water will be provided at all times.

Food provided by the family.

1. Educators will encourage families to provide the child in care with suitable age appropriate foods that meet the child's nutritional needs.
3. If food that does not meet the nutritional needs of the child is provided by the family, educators will inform parents that the food they provide must adhere to the *Nutrition, food and beverages and dietary requirements policy*.
4. ***Chips, lollies, chocolate and jelly are not accepted at River Street Early Learning Centre***
5. Educators can support the celebration of special occasions and cultural festivals but will ensure that food brought from the child's home adheres to the family day care service's *Nutrition, food and beverages, and dietary requirements policy*.
6. River Street Early Learning Centre Supplies vanilla ice-cream for birthday celebrations.

Children and food safety

- Individual serving plates and bowls will be used.
- Encourage children to eat and drink at the table to promote hygiene and safe eating practices.
- All children will be supervised when they are drinking from bottles.
- Educators are encouraged to sit and eat with children to role model healthy eating practices and also enable educators to guide acceptable eating behaviours.
- Be aware of and accommodate the special needs of culturally and linguistically diverse families in relation to special rules for storing, preparing and serving foods.
- Ensure microwave food safety by:
 - (i) Being aware that microwaves are useful for defrosting, cooking and re-heating foods, however food borne disease can also result if the usual rules of food safety are not followed. Defrosting in a microwave also partially cooks the food and makes an ideal medium for growth of bacteria.
 - (ii) Clean the microwave daily as food is often spattered inside.
 - (iii) After food is reheated in the microwave it must be tested with a food thermometer to a temperature of 70 degrees then let cooled for no more than 2 mins to approx. 60 degrees

Use the following principles in preparing infants bottle feeds:

- Store bottles of milk on a shelf in the refrigerator, do not store in the door of the refrigerator.
- Use only clean bottles and teats for all infant feeds.
- Wash hands before preparing or handling expressed milk or formula.
- Prepare formula strictly according to instructions on the container.
- Warm infant bottles by standing in warm/hot water or by using the “Closer to Nature” bottle warmer, never in the microwave
- Before feeding the infant, check the temperature of the milk by letting a little drop onto the inside of your wrist—it should feel comfortably warm or even a little bit cool.
- Only warm the milk once, and discard any warmed milk that has not been used.

When using Breast Milk:

- Ensure bottled breast milk is always labelled with the child’s name, mother’s name and the date it was expressed.
- It may be refrigerated for 3–5 days at 4°C or lower (4°C is the typical temperature of a standard fridge); always store
- Store breast milk at the back of the refrigerator, not in the door
- Breast milk may be stored without refrigeration (if needed) for 6–8 hours if the room temperature is less than 26°C
- Frozen breast milk can be thawed in the refrigerator and used within 24 hours or by standing the bottle in a container of lukewarm water and used straight away.
- Discard any unused infant milk left over after each feed or that has not been consumed by the infant after 30 minutes.

After use of bottles, rinse teats and bottles with water, wash in hot soapy water, rinse with water, and then air dry.

Reference

Staying Healthy in Childcare (5th Ed.)

Australian Breastfeeding Association at <http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au>

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Due to be reviewed January 2016