POLICY STATEMENT:

The Nuriootpa Community Children’s Centre is committed to utilising food preparation and food hygiene activities as part of the education and multi-cultural experiences of children. Staff will model healthy eating, good hygiene practices and present food in a safe manner to support the goals of the Food and Food Safety Policy. Parents will be provided with the Food and Nutrition Policy with their Centre handbook and are able to access the policy at any time in the policy folder displayed in the entrance to the Centre.

The Nuriootpa Community Children’s Centre is a “Nut Free” Centre. It is crucial that any foods that contain OR may contain traces of nuts are to be avoided.

PHILOSOPHY:
- To ensure children have food and drink that is safe, varied, nutritious and culturally diverse.

LEGISLATION:
- DECS Healthy Food Choices Policy
- Food Safety Standards (Food Standards Australia and New Zealand and Department of Human Services).
- Start Right Eat Right Food and Nutrition Policy Guidelines

CHILDREN:
- Access to safe nutritional food
- Programmed experiences reinforcing positive nutrition habits

PARENTS:
- Assurance that a safe food environment is provided for children
- Support in providing safe nutritional food for children while at the Centre

STAFF:
- Ensure safe food practices are followed
- Program appropriate learning experiences regarding food safety and nutrition

MANAGEMENT:
- Support learning environment at Centre
- Provide policy support to ensure workplace safety for staff and children
HOW POLICY WILL BE IMPLEMENTED (Specific Policies & Procedures)

The Policy Sub-Committee will review the Food and Nutrition Policy annually. If new legal requirements or research findings are available then the policy will be reviewed sooner than every 12 months. The Sub-Committee’s recommendation will be presented to the Governing Council and made available for parent consultation for final determination. The Food and Nutrition Policy will be available from the “Centre’s Policy” Folder, located in the front foyer and in the Child Care Room.

THE FOOD AND FOOD SAFETY POLICY CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS

Healthy Food Policy – Food Brought from home…………………………………… Pages 3 & 4
Mealtimes and the eating environment……………………………………………… Page 5
Families and Nutrition………………………………………………………………… Page 6
Curriculum……………………………………………………………………………… Page 7
Other Dietary Considerations……………………………………………………….. Page 8
  • Special Diets
Safe Food Policy……………………………………………………………………… Page 9
Food Handling Policy………………………………………………………………….. Page 10
Centre Guidelines for Food Provision…………………………………………… Attachment 1
Lunch Box Checklist………………………………………………………………… Attachment 2
Guidelines for Procedures on Infant Feeding……………………………………… Attachment upon request
Recommended schedule for introducing solids to infants……………………… Attachment upon request
HEALTHY FOOD POLICY – Food Brought From Home

Philosophy

We believe that the Centre should model healthy eating practices and eating habits, with an emphasis on introducing children to a wide variety of food. The use of added sugar, salt, preservatives and colourings will and should be avoided where possible. Families will be encouraged to provide food, for their children, that is nutritious, safe, varied and culturally diverse. Food will be used as a learning experience, and at times children will take part in activities including its preparation.

Centre Responsibilities

- To ensure parents provide foods that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents and provide at least 50% of the recommended dietary intake for key nutrients, the Centre will provide written guidelines, to families, on the amount and type of foods and drinks to sent to child care. (see attached Food Guidelines information).
- Families will be given a copy of the Centre’s Food and Nutrition Policy.
- All dairy milk provided by the Centre will be full-cream for children aged 1 – 2 years old, and reduced fat for children older than 2 years old. Skim milk will not be available.
- Parents will be advised when their child is not eating well, or of any concerns.
- An eating environment which promotes family and multicultural values will be provided.
- Staff members will sit with and supervise children during mealtimes.
- Children will have the opportunity to learn about food and nutrition through food awareness activities, practical food preparation experiences and discussions about food.
- Tap water will be the main drink and will be available, supplied by the centre, at all times.
- Food will always be available in case of an emergency.
- All staff will have knowledge of food safety and food handling, (Using the “Food Handler Training Program”).
- The Centre will implement and encourage practices that assist children to receive safe food.
- Food will be stored and handled hygienically by staff and children to minimise food contamination.
- The Centre has procedures about the disposal of unused food, food storage and cleaning.
- The Centre will implement practices that ensure children receive food hygienically e.g. washing hands.

Parent Responsibilities

The Centre asks that parents support the nutrition policy in the following ways:
Food and Nutrition Policy

1. Providing foods that are consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents, and this food will provide at least 50% of the Recommended Dietary intake for key nutrients. (See attached Food Guidelines information).
2. Supplying at least one piece of fruit per day in your child's lunch box.
3. All products containing and that may contain nuts are not to be brought to the Centre.
4. Not sending lollies, crisps, sugar drinks, chocolate covered muesli bars or chewing gum to the Centre with your child(ren).
5. Diluted Juice with lunch is acceptable (diluted 1:2).

Centre Management of the Policy

If inappropriate foods/ drinks are brought to the Centre, Staff will:

1. Remove the inappropriate foods from the child’s lunch box and return them at home time
2. Continued supply of foods that do not come under the nutrition policy will result in the issue being discussed with the parents by the Director.
3. Staff will develop operating guidelines to ensure Centre implementation of policy

If additional food is necessary, the Centre will:
- offer a piece of fruit or wholemeal sandwich
- let the parents/carer know on arrival to collect their child that they may need to provide more food.
Food and Nutrition Policy

Mealtimes and the Eating Environment

Goal
To provide a safe, supportive and social environment in which children can enjoy eating.

Philosophy
Mealtimes and the eating environment play a large role in the nutrition outcomes of children. It helps children:
- to learn and form good food habits which become eating habits for life
- to learn a positive attitude about food
- to try a variety of foods, and
- to learn family and community values and culturally inclusive perspectives.

When planning the Centre’s mealtimes, consideration is also given to food safety as well as staff role modelling and family and cultural values and practices.

Centre Responsibilities
- Staff will encourage an environment where positive food habits and transmission of family and multicultural values.
- The Centre provides fruit and cheese for morning tea and afternoon tea in the Child Care Rooms.
- Children at the Centre will have the opportunity to eat at morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea and if needed late afternoon tea.
- Late afternoon tea – children can eat food from their lunch box or the Centre will provide fruit.
- Children will be supervised whilst eating.
- Staff will sit with children and, where possible, eat and enjoy the same food.
- Staff will promote a positive, relaxed, social eating environment with children.
- Staff promote positive discussion about the foods being served to children.
- Food will not be used as a punishment or reward, whether by its provision or denial.
- Staff will provide positive encouragement and role modelling.
Food and Nutrition Policy

- The food preferences of children will be respected.
- Cultural food events and practices are celebrated.
- Staff discuss food from a variety of cultures.
- Staff talk about health and nutrition.
- Staff encourage self-help and, where necessary, assist children at mealtimes.
- Precautions to prevent and treat choking are known by all staff and implemented.

Families and Nutrition

Goal:
To communicate effectively with parents, carers and families about their child’s food and nutrition.

Centre Responsibilities
- Nutrition information is accessible to families, in appropriate languages where possible.
- Families receive information about the centre’s food and nutrition policy prior to enrolment.
- A positive relationship is encouraged with centre staff.
- Providing additional information on Guidelines for procedures on Infant feeding and recommended schedule for introducing solids to infants. (attachment upon request).
- Staff will communicate with parents regarding feeding achievements/concerns and solids progressions in the following ways:
  - Under 2’s
    - Food children have eaten throughout the day is recorded on the attendance board.
    - Staff also communicate verbally with parents/carers.
  - Over 2’s
    - Staff communicate verbally with parents/carers and/or in written form.

Parent/Family Responsibilities
- Reading and being familiar with the Centre’s food and nutrition policy.
- Reading and being familiar with guidelines on infant feeding and recommended schedule for introducing solids to infants (attachment upon request).
- Providing staff with information regarding their child’s nutritional needs and habits.
- At the Centre we celebrate birthdays by singing happy birthday and blow out candles on a ‘pretend cake’. Parents are asked not to provide any food or drinks.
CURRICULUM

Goal:
To encourage children’s learning about food and nutrition.

Philosophy:
Studies have shown that Centre care contributes to children’s learning, behavioural development and school achievement. Teaching children about food and nutrition makes an important contribution to lifetime food habits, to learning and to a healthy society.

Food and talking about food and good nutrition is a tool to develop:
- literacy and numeracy skills (e.g. through food stories, ‘reading’ recipes and packets, cooking, food songs).
- Fine and gross motor skills (through food preparation e.g. cutting, kneading, cooking, gardening)
- Social skills (e.g. eating together, dramatic play, feeding toys, sharing food and cooking).
- Awareness of our own and other cultures (e.g. theme days, stories, recipes, food implements)
- Thinking skills (e.g. food related excursions, food in science, food cycles; food and the environment and gardening).

Centre Responsibilities
- Include nutrition experiences in planned curriculum and spontaneous programming.
- Source food experiences from a variety of cultures.
- Treat mealtimes as an opportunity for social learning.
- Provide children with practical food preparation experiences.
- Discuss food safety with children.
- Teach children mealtime behaviour such as serving and clearing.
OTHER DIETARY CONSIDERATIONS

Special Diets

Goal:
The special need of children with food allergies, food sensitivities or medical diets will be catered for in consultation with parents and the appropriate medical professionals.

Centre Responsibilities

- Families will be informed about what dietary support can be provided upon enrolment.
- If the child has individual dietary needs, parents/carers will be asked to provide a health care plan, written by a relevant health professional e.g. doctor, paediatrician, specialist, dietitian. The care plan should include information (provided by a Doctor/ paediatrician/specialist) about medical conditions and any recommended emergency procedures, as well as information about nutrition intervention required (provided by a Dietitian).
- Special diets for cultural or religious reasons will be discussed and negotiated with parents/carers to the best of the Centre’s ability.
- The health and safety of the child is foremost and any concerns about the child’s dietary intake will be discussed with parents/carers.

Steps to be taken if an allergy or food sensitivity is suspected:

- A food allergy should be confirmed by a specialist (e.g. Paediatrician or Immunologist) or a General Practitioner. A food intolerance should be confirmed by a Paediatrician, Immunologist or Dietitian. The specialist should provide detailed information about the allergy or sensitivity and details of any emergency procedure required.
- A dietitian’s input is strongly recommended. A Dietitian can provide information about foods that may be eaten and foods to avoid for the period of time that the special diet is needed. Detailed written information needs to be obtained from a Dietitian.
- Staff will regularly check with parents/carers to see if their child still requires a special diet.
- All staff will be informed of any emergency procedure necessary for the child, and this procedure will be stored where appropriate.
EFFECTIVE DATE: August 2007                             Policy No: 13

Food and Nutrition Policy

For further information about the management of food allergies or food sensitivities, Parents or staff can contact the following:
- Nutrition Department (Children, Youth and Women’s Health Service)
  Phone (08) 81617233
- Community Dietitian/Nutritionist
  Barossa Area Health
  Phone 85 638544
- Local Doctor
- Allergy specialists e.g. Immunologist or Paediatrician
- Private Dietitian
- Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Allergy Unit. Phone: (02) 95158244
  Email: allergy@email.cs.nsw.gov.au

SAFE FOOD POLICY

Philosophy

Food forms an integral part of the Centre’s education program. A critical aspect of this is ensuring that food is presented to children in a safe manner while providing them with the opportunity to experience new tastes and textures. Food is provided in a safe hygienic manner at the Centre.

Centre Responsibilities

The Centre aims to ensure safe food practices during programmed cooking experiences and normal mealtimes by:

1. All children following good hygiene practices
2. Staff modelling good hygiene practices
3. Committing to ongoing training for staff in food safety – with on site “Food Handler Training Program”.
4. All food handlers completing the food safety and hygiene standards training course and first aid training
5. Offering developmentally appropriate food to children (see below for guidelines on inappropriate food)
6. Ensuring children remain seated while eating
7. Allergy lists are kept up to date and allergies discussed with children as part of the learning program.

Parent Responsibilities

The Centre asks that parents support the safe food policy by:
1. Providing a range of developmentally appropriate foods for children according to Centre policies (see below for guidelines on inappropriate foods)
2. Not sending out of date food to the Centre for children
3. Keeping informed through our communication processes of Centre's food safety policies and guidelines
4. Supporting the Centre’s safe food practices by reinforcing and modelling safe food messages at home
5. Keeping the Centre updated with information about children’s food needs and allergies.

Inappropriate Foods

- Avoid foods that can break off into hard pieces
- Avoid foods like raw carrot, celery sticks
- Avoid popcorn, nuts, corn chips or other similar foods

FOOD HANDLING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Philosophy

The Centre is responsible for ensuring that all food provided and consumed at the Centre is handled according to Food Safety Standards. The Centre has a commitment to ensure that all staff attend the food safety and hygiene standards training course and this will be recorded on the Centre’s training register.

Centre Responsibilities

1. To provide enough storage space for keeping food at the appropriate temperature, including food provided by parents
2. Follow temperature guidelines when preparing, storing and serving food (food safety standards fact sheet 4 – website details below)
3. Supervise children when eating and helping with food preparation
4. Keep all food preparation, serving and storing areas clean and hygienic
5. Make sure thorough hand washing by both adults and children always occurs before eating or preparing food
6. Ensure they use current health and hygiene practices when preparing and serving food.
7. Ensuring staff with food borne illnesses do not prepare food.

Parent Responsibilities

When preparing and packing food for the day, please ensure safe food handling procedures are followed.
Providing food that is within appropriate best before dates.
Food and Nutrition Policy

Resources

Fact sheet on temperature guidelines for managing food accessed from Food Standards Australia New Zealand website: