

Applies to:	Intereach Family Day Care (FDC) and Intereach Out of School Hours (OOSH)				
Policy	NQS Two: Children's Health and Safety Policy				
Version:	2.0	Date approved:	05/07/2022	Next review date:	05/07/2024

1. Objective

Intereach Children's Services promotes healthy eating to support active growth, development and to provide the energy children need to power through their day while encouraging good dental and oral hygiene.

Where food is provided during care, educators and staff aim to provide food and drinks that are nutritious, adequate in quantity, take into account dietary requirements appropriate to each child's growth and development needs, and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements. Eating is also a source of enjoyment and eating habits and attitudes to food developed in childhood continue throughout life.

Intereach Children's Services is committed to ensure that:

- the staff and educators recognise the importance of healthy eating to the growth and development of young children and support the healthy food and drink choices of children in their care;
- the staff and educators maintain high standards of hygiene when providing food during care;
- the children are encouraged to develop good eating habit through role modelling and education;
- the parents are encouraged to share family and multicultural values of ideas to enrich the variety of enjoyment of food by the children; and,
- where food is provided during care, educators and staff aim to provide food and drinks that are nutritious, adequate in quantity, enjoyable taking into account of:
 - dietary requirements appropriate for each child's growth and development needs;
 - any specific cultural religious; and/or,
 - any health requirements.

2. Definitions

Healthy Eating

Eating a wide variety of foods from the five food groups. These are:

- fruit;
- vegetables and legumes/beans;
- grain (cereals) foods, mostly wholegrain;
- milk, cheese, yoghurt, and alternatives; and
- lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts, seeds, legumes/ beans.

Healthy eating also means eating in a way that is socially and culturally appropriate, having regular meals and snacks and eating food to satisfy hunger, appetite, and energy needs.

Nutrition

- The process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health, growth and development.

Food Allergy

- Food allergy occurs when a person's immune system reacts to allergens in food.

3. Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of the children's services coordination unit to:

- establish partnerships with relevant organisations and health professionals to support healthy eating;
- participate in ongoing professional development;
- support educators to access professional development and resources to enable them to deliver healthy eating education;
- support educators with information and resources to support the development of appropriate menus; and,
- report any serious incident to the relevant authorities.

It is the responsibility of staff and educators to:

- promote healthy eating and physical activity as appropriate for each child;
- provide quality education and care in an environment that provides for their physical and psychological wellbeing;
- establish partnerships with relevant organisations and health professionals to support healthy eating practice, where appropriate;
- attend professional development and access resources to enable them to deliver healthy eating education;
- educate children about healthy eating, including how to make healthy choices about food and drinks;
- understand the process to support and promote healthy eating of each child.
- provide a supportive physical environment for mothers who want to breastfeed;
- ask families about breastfeeding at the time of orientation and develop a feeding plan for breastfeed infants;
- ensure there is a suitable space for breastfeeding and storing breastmilk; and,
- follow best practices in relation to bottle feeding.

4. Procedure

4.1. Healthy eating and menu planning

- Diagnosed allergies of the child written on the enrolment form are, noted and taken into account when menu planning.
- Healthy food options are provided where food is provided for meetings, celebrations and events.
- *The Nutrition Procedure* is shared with the whole service community (staff, educators and families) with opportunities to provide feedback, suggestions and input every two years at the time of review or during implementation of any legislative requirement.
- Parents and Children are encouraged to contribute to the menu by sharing family and multicultural values, ideas and recipes.

- The menu is displayed for viewing by parents and carers and families are notified of any menu changes during the care day.

4.2. Food Allergies

- Food allergy information and a Medical Management Plan are requested from the parents of any child with a known food allergy.
- Intereach OOSH is a 'Nut Free' service and does not have any restrictions on other foods.
- Intereach FDC is a 'Nut aware' service. Families are encouraged to notify educators if their child has items in their lunch box that contains peanuts/nuts or traces. In some cases, educators will have a 'Nut Free' service. If educators have children in care with a severe allergy families may be requested not to bring certain foods into care.

4.3. Communication with Families

Parents and carers are:

- regularly consulted regarding current dietary requirements of their children, particularly those related to allergies, cultural or religious needs and reflect these individual needs in the menu;
- requested to complete a Medical Management Plan, a Risk Minimisation Plan and a Communication Plan, where children have a food related medical condition either diagnosed or undiagnosed;
- provided with healthy eating information, such as how to create healthy and nutritious meals;
- informed that the service and educators support breastfeeding when families make contact and/or during orientation;
- provided with strategies such as information pamphlets from recognised nutrition authorities where children bring their own food and beverages to the service in promoting healthy choices; and,
- provided with educational material about healthy eating habits such as specific activities, notices, posters and information sheets when available. Where possible information is provided to families in their own language.

4.4. Food Safety Compliance

- Safe food handling practices are followed, including safe procedure for food storage, handling, preparation and disposal.
- It is ensured that staff and children wash their hands before preparing, serving or consuming food.
- Children are instructed to avoid handling other children's food or drinks and not to cough or sneeze over the food of other children.
- All perishable food items and infant formula/expressed breast milk are refrigerated at below 5°C immediately on the child's arrival.
- Food is prepared and served in accordance with safe food practices, including:
 - storing and serving food at safe temperatures (below 5°C or above 65°C).
 - ensuring raw foods (e.g., meat) will not come in contact with ready to eat foods (e.g., vegetables and fruits); and,
 - using separate chopping boards and utensils to prepare raw foods and ready to eat foods and wash hands between exposure to raw and ready to eat foods.

4.5. Preparation of meals

4.5.1. Where food is brought from home

- Families are provided with information on the types of foods from the five food groups and drinks recommended for children and suitable for children's lunchboxes.
- Children are encouraged to eat the more nutritious foods provided in their lunchbox, before eating any less nutritious food provided.
- Families and children are discouraged in the provision of discretionary / sometimes foods in children's lunchboxes.

4.5.2. Where providing meals for children in care

- Local council is consulted to determine if registration and a license is needed as a food business.
- Food preparation is handled by educators who have completed a recognised and accredited food safe course in compliance with the Food Safety standards.
- Appropriate foods and beverages are provided as determined by the age and development of the child. These foods should meet nutritional requirements that are consistent with the recommendations of the Australian Government Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings and/or the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.
- A Menu that meets the Australia Dietary Guidelines, the Infant Feeding Guidelines (FDC only) is provided, it is recommended that this has been assessed using the Healthy Eating Advisory Services Food Checker Tool.
- Recipes are made available to the parents for food served in the service when requested, which includes any recipes used during cooking experiences.
- Each child's growth and development needs and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements are taken into account for food and beverages provided.
- The eating habits and nutritional needs of each child are considered by staff and educators prior to planning a menu.
- Food and beverages are provided on a regular basis throughout the day.

4.5.3. During mealtimes

- Children, staff, and educators have access to safe drinking water (preferable tap) at all times.
- Safe eating practices are implemented to minimise risk of choking e.g. (for FDC) babies will be nursed by the Educator when feeding from bottles until they are comfortable, children will be seated at all times during mealtimes and actively supervised at all times.
- Staff and educators interact with children at mealtimes and role model healthy eating.
- Children are encouraged to try new food and not forced to eat something they do not want to.
- Children are not forced fed and food, or drink is not used as a punishment or as an incentive or reward.
- Sufficient time is allowed for children to eat at their own pace.
- Healthy food options are included during celebrations and special events

5. National Quality Framework

Standard	Description
2.1	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.1	Each child's wellbeing and comfort is provided for, including appropriate opportunities to meet each child's need for sleep, rest, and relaxation.
2.1.2	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.1.3	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
2.2	Each child is protected.
2.2.1	At all times, reasonable precautions and adequate supervision ensure children are protected from harm and hazard.
2.2.2	Plans to effectively manage incidents and emergencies are developed in consultation with relevant authorities, practised and implemented.
2.2.3	Management, educators, and staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to identify and respond to every child at risk of abuse or neglect.

6. Context

6.1. Standards or other external requirements	Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority (ACECQA). National Quality Standards 2018. Food Safety Standards – November 2016 Get up and Grow. Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood Belonging, Being and Becoming. The Early Years Learning Framework Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework For all Children from Birth to Eight Years. Australian Dietary Guidelines Infant Feeding Guidelines Menu Planning Checklist for Family Day Care Munch and Move. www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au Staying Healthy - Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services Early Childhood Services - Developing Healthy Eating Policy Checklist Food Standards Australia and New Zealand - Guide to Feeding your Baby Formula/Breastmilk Substitutes Eat Smart, Play Smart My Time, Our Place
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6.2. Legislation or other requirements	Education and Care Services National Regulations Consolidated 2017 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010 NSW Public Health Act 2010 Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991
6.3. Internal documents	Children's Health and Safety Policy Medical Management Plan

4.1 Document control

Version	Date approved	Approved by	Next review date
1.0	12/10/2019	Leadership Group	12/10/2022
1.1	15/04/2021	T Mercer, Program Manager, Quality (minor changes)	12/10/2022
2.0	05/07/2022	M.Tai, General Manager Operations	05/07/2024