

Healthy Food and Drink Policy

NQS 1.1, 1.2, 2.1.3, 6.1.2, 6.1.3 February 2018; Regulation 168 (2) (a) (i)

Roxby Downs Children's Centre promotes safe, healthy eating habits in line with the **Right Bite Healthy Food and Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools and Preschools**, the National Quality Standard, and relates to the Department for Education wellbeing strategy.

We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in three ways:

1. Short term: maximises growth, development, activity levels and good health.
2. Long term: minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life.
3. Good nutrition contributes to good health and wellbeing and this is vital for positive engagement in learning activities.

Therefore:

- staff at this centre model and encourage healthy eating behaviours
- food and drink are consumed in a safe, supportive environment for all children
- parents and caregivers are encouraged to supply healthy foods that fit within the **Right Bite** strategy for their children at the centre.

The Learning environment

Children at our centre:

- have fresh, clean tap water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day
- will eat routinely at scheduled break times and/or when they feel hungry
- eat in a positive, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours
- use the centre garden to learn about and experience growing, harvesting and preparing nutritious foods

Our centre:

- understands and promotes the importance of breakfast and regular meals for children
- teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum
- is a breastfeeding friendly site.

Food supply

Our centre:

- encourages healthy food and drink choices for children
- encourages food choices which are representative of the foods of the centre community
- ensures healthy food choices are promoted and are culturally sensitive and inclusive
- ensures a healthy food supply for centre activities and events
- displays nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating
- has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home or provided by staff within centre time:
 - **Morning and Afternoon Fruit Time:**
 - o Parents and carers are encouraged to supply healthy snacks – this includes fruit, vegetables, yoghurt, cheese, crackers, etc.
 - **Drinks:**
 - o Parents and carers are encouraged to supply a drink bottle of **water only (no juice, cordial, milk, or fizzy drinks)**. Drink bottles are stored inside in designated areas.

The following foods **do not meet** our nutritional guidelines:

- Sweets or pre-packaged foods (sweet biscuits, lollies, donuts, roll ups, fruit bars, cakes, jelly, chips)

Certain foods **may not** be acceptable at Roxby Downs Children's Centre (due to food allergies and for health reasons). **Parents will be notified IF they need to exclude any of the following food types:**

- Nuts, nut products, or any food containing nuts (including peanut butter, nutella, muesli bars)
- Eggs or seafood

If a child has an identified food allergy, and if they are identified at risk if certain types of food are brought onto the Centre premises – parents will be notified and asked to not send those foods to the Centre as part of their child's snack. This may vary between the rooms and sessions depending on the children with identified allergies

that attend those. Parents of children with identified allergies will be consulted upon enrolment of their child to find out the severity of their child's allergy. A visual chart will be displayed alerting the different groups/rooms to the disallowed foods due to allergies.

NUT ALLERGIES

It is promoted by all medical and health authorities that children under the age of six months should not come into contact with nuts of any description. Many people suffer from allergic reactions to nuts that vary from mild, itchy rashes to severe, life threatening reactions. The nut product does not have to be digested to cause an extreme reaction; it may be that traces of nuts come into contact with the skin that can cause the need for emergency medical support and hospitalisation. For example, a child may touch the food product with his / her finger or they may touch someone or an object that has traces of nuts. It is for these reasons that the Children's Centre endeavours to be 'Allergy Aware' and our **Nursery (0-2 age group) is a nut free zone.**

CHOKING PRECAUTIONS

Precautions to prevent and treat choking are taken. It is known by all educators and implemented as necessary that children are seated whilst eating and educators do not give food to children who are laughing or crying. Particular food items pose greater choking risks to young children, and extra care should be taken with these foods.

Foods to be careful with include:

- hard food that can break into smaller lumps or pieces
- raw carrot, celery and apple pieces, which should be grated, finely sliced, cooked or mashed to prevent choking
- nuts, seeds and popcorn
- tough or chewy pieces of meat
- sausages and hot dogs, which should have the skin removed and be cut into small pieces to prevent choking.

It is our policy that these foods should not be sent with children who attend Nursery (0-2 year olds)

MEALTIME AND EATING ENVIRONMENT

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

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 and to learn family and community values and culturally inclusive perspectives.

Other considerations:

- Children will be supervised whilst eating at all times and remain seated
- To reduce potential choking hazards, children are not permitted to leave the Centre with food in their mouth or hands
- Educators will sit with children while they are eating
- Educators will promote a positive, relaxed, social eating environment with children
- Educators promote positive discussion about the foods being served to children
- Educators will provide positive encouragement and role modelling
- Educators will discuss food from a variety of cultures and celebrate food events and practices from a variety of cultures
- Educators will talk about health and nutrition
- Educators will encourage self-help and where necessary, assist children at meal / snack times

FAMILIES AND NUTRITION

Goal: *To communicate effectively with parents and carers about their child's food and nutrition.*

- Healthy recipes will be included in the Centre's monthly newsletter

- Parents will be given a copy of the Healthy Food & Drink Policy upon enrolment.
- Handouts promoting healthy eating will be available for parents in the community space

CURRICULUM

Goal: *To teach children about food and nutrition.*

- Nutrition activities are included within the planned curriculum and in spontaneous experiences.
- Food activities are sourced from a variety of cultures.
- Mealtimes are treated as an opportunity for social learning.
- Children are provided with practical food preparation experiences, eg growing and harvesting vegetables, buttering bread and chopping vegetables from time to time.
- Food safety and handling is discussed with children.
- Children are taught mealtime behaviour such as serving food, clearing their bowls, pouring drinks and table manners.
- The menu may be linked to programmed activities.
- Gardening activities and positive food related experiences including books, songs and stories will be included in the curriculum regularly.
- From time to time, dramatic play experiences will be offered that relate to positive food use.

BREAST and BOTTLE FEEDING

Breast milk provides all the nutrition a baby needs for their first 6 months. Roxby Downs Children's Centre is committed to supporting mothers who breast feed. At all times during the child's day at the Children's Centre, educators will make every effort to accommodate the mother and child's needs. We can provide a comfortable and pleasant place for breast feeding in the Children's Centre. Parents will need to communicate with educators about how they will accommodate their child's feeding pattern / routine. A back up plan should be discussed with educators for situations where the mother is unable to provide breast milk for her child on site (e.g. the child will be encouraged to drink expressed milk or formula from a cup or bottle).

Recommended procedures for storing, thawing and warming of breast milk and infant formula

Expressed milk

Breast milk should be expressed into a clean sterile container. It should be named and refrigerated at 4°C or lower at the back of the fridge where it is coldest. Breast milk that will not be used within two days should be frozen.

Warming breast milk or formula

- Breast milk will NEVER be warmed in the microwave. This process destroys the immunological properties in the breast milk.
- A bottle warmer will be used at all times.
- Bottles should only be warmed in this way for less than 10 minutes.
- Before giving the child a bottle, the temperature will be checked by inverting the bottle and making sure the breast milk / formula is tepid when placed on the back of the hand or wrist.

Storing breast milk or infant formula

- Breast milk or formula will only be used on the day it is brought into the Children's Centre
- Formula or breast milk should be icy cold when leaving home and be carried in an insulated pack to keep it cold.
- Infant bottles should be named, covered and stored immediately in the back of the fridge where it is coldest.
- Breast milk that has been thawed outside the fridge in warm water can be used immediately, or stored in the fridge for up to 4 hours.
- The contents of partially used bottles will be discarded after 1 hour. Reusing half empty bottles is risky once they have been heated and partly drunk. All children with bottles will be supervised.

Recommended schedule for introducing solids

Menu development guide	
Age and Texture	Suitable Foods
Birth – 6 months	Breast milk / infant formula provides all the nutrition a baby needs for the first 6 months of life.
'First tastes' 6 months to 7 months (If needed earlier, can offer solids after 4 months, but NOT BEFORE 4 months). Smooth and pureed foods	Breast milk/infant formula <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction of first solids:<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. First introduce baby rice cereal (iron enriched)2. Then fruits and vegetables3. Then pureed, well-cooked meat, 'Baby' Yoghurts* and custard*4. Cow's milk* in small amounts in the preparation of foods
'Learning to chew and self-feeder' 7-12 months Mashed or chopped food processing to finger foods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breast milk/infant formula as the main drink• Fruits, vegetables and legumes• Well-cooked lean meat, poultry and *fish• Yoghurt* with soft lumps, custard*, cheeses*• Other cereals (e.g. wheat, oats), bread, pasta• Eggs* – (well cooked)
Children's Centre menu with some changes' 1-2 years	Offer a wide variety of foods from the Children's Centre menu, some changes in texture or flavour may be needed. Breast milk and/or full cream cow's milk or water as a drink

* There is no evidence that delaying the introduction of highly allergenic solids (e.g. cow's milk, soy, wheat, egg and fish) reduces the risk of developing a food allergy. Introduce these foods in the child's diet at the normal time for introduction of solids as specified above (ASCIA Infant Feeding Advice 2008, available online:

www.allergy.org.au/images/pcc/ASCIA_Guidelines_infant_feeding_and_allergy_prevention.pdf

Although this advice also applies to infants with siblings who already have food allergies, families with a high risk of allergy should consult with their doctor if they have any concerns. Information adapted from World Health Organization 2000, 'Feeding and nutrition of infants and young children' and the Child and Youth Health website, www.cyh.com.au

FLUIDS FOR BABIES AND CHILDREN

Cow's milk is not recommended for babies less than 12 months old as it is a poor source of iron and predisposes infants to iron deficiency. Cow's milk also has high levels of protein, sodium, potassium and calcium, which have a high renal solute load.

Recommended fluids for babies (up to 12 months)

- Breast milk and infant formula
- Cooled boiled water
- Soy formula only under medical advice

Recommended fluids for 1 year olds

- Breast milk
- Cows' milk (full cream)
- Water
- Other vegetarian beverages (e.g. soy / rice milk) only under medical advice

Suitable fluids for 2-5 year olds

- Reduced fat milk (1.0-2.5% fat)
- Calcium fortified soy milk (full cream or reduced fat)
- Water
- Other vegetarian beverages (e.g. rice milk) only under medical advice

Food safety

Our Centre:

- promotes and teaches food safety to children as part of the curriculum
- provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone
- promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures with children and staff.

The staff at Roxby Downs Children's Centre thank you in advance for your support of this policy.

Date of change	Reason for changes
December 2016	Policy review received numerous parent suggestions/comments. 'Healthy snacks' replaced fruit snack; allergies to be followed up and only food deemed unsafe for a particular group will be disallowed. Visual chart showing each group the foods disallowed for their group. Leftover food that needs refrigeration; water kept inside during hotter weather.
August 2017	Removed information about note being sent home, keeping in mind each individual family's circumstances re provision of food
April 2019	Inclusion of paragraphs on nut allergies, breast and bottle feeding, choking, recommended fluids, recommended schedule for introducing solids to babies

Sources:

Ascia guidelines for prevention of anaphylaxis in schools, pre-schools and child care: 2015 update
Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5th edition)
Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2003)
Infant Feeding Guidelines for Health Workers (National Health and Medical Research Council, 2003)
Feeding and nutrition of Infants and Young Children (World Health Organisation, 2000)
Child and Youth Health, South Australia www.cyh.com.au
Australian Breast Feeding Association Guidelines
Start Right Eat Right – Policy Guidelines/Planning nutritious meals and support materials
Dental Health Guidelines
Get Up And Grow - Healthy Eating & Physical Activity for Early Childhood – Australian Government Department of Health & Ageing, 2009
Right Bite Policy – Right Bite Easy Guide to – Healthy Food & Drink Supply for South Australian Schools & Preschools
Right Bite Manual – Healthy Food & Drink Supply Strategy for South Australian Schools & Preschools
Eat Well SA – Schools and Preschools: Healthy Eating Guidelines
National Health and Medical Research Council Eat for Health Guidelines 2015
The Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Network www.foodallergy.org
Nutrition Australia 2015
Department Of Health and Ageing guidelines
www.eatforhealth.gov.au
ASCIA Infant feeding Advice 2008
Infant feeding and allergy prevention 2016
www.allergy.org