



Healthy Eating Policy

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) has published dietary guidelines for Australian infants, children and adolescents, adults and older people. These guidelines provide recommendations for healthy eating not only to reduce the risk of diet-related disease, but also to improve the community's health and wellbeing (Eat Well SA, 2008). It is recognised that early childhood settings are a critical part of the social environment that shapes eating behaviour and can play a large role in ensuring that health-enhancing eating behaviour is learned, practised and supported.

The Seaton Children's Centre has a commitment to enabling children and families to develop their capacity for healthy growth and development and for healthier futures. As such, the Seaton Children's Centre will be responsible for promoting good nutrition and healthy lifestyles for children and families.

Seaton Children's Centre will promote and encourage healthy eating throughout all Children's Centre activities.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS: Quality Area 2: Children's Health & Safety

Standard 2.1.3: Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child

EARLY YEARS LEARNING FRAMEWORK: Outcome 3: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing

Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing

Managed by:	Director: Kathy Heath
Date Developed:	Term 2, 2017
Presented to Staff:	Staff Meeting: 18/10/20212
Presented to Gov. Council	Governing Council Meeting: 23/8/2022
Next Review Date:	Term 3 2023



REVISION RECORD

Date	Revision description
8/8/18	No changes
2/8/19	5.3 Safe food handling - removed requirement relating to adults wearing of gloves when handling food. Supporting Documents reviewed and updated



1. TITLE

Healthy Eating Policy

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Healthy Eating Policy is to promote and educate healthy lifestyles amongst families and children. The Healthy Eating Policy ensures that the health and wellbeing of children is safeguarded and promoted, in line with the National Quality Standards for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care.

3. SCOPE

The Healthy Eating Policy applies to all staff and programs within the Seaton Children's Centre, even if the program is facilitated or funded by an external organisation.

4. OBJECTIVES

Healthy eating is fundamental to good health throughout life for all people. It underpins healthy growth and development, contributes to positive mental health and wellbeing and quality of life, and plays a role in preventing disease and disability.

Children with appropriate nutrition have improved cognitive development, attention span, work capacity, classroom behaviour and attendance at preschool. Establishing healthy eating habits at a young age provides a critical foundation for good eating patterns in adult life with health, social and financial benefits to individuals, families and society.

Learning about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition, is integral to wellbeing and self-confidence. As children become more independent they can take greater responsibility for their own health. Good nutrition is essential to healthy living and enables children to be active participants in play. Early childhood settings provide many opportunities for children to experience a range of healthy foods and to learn about food choices from educators and other children (BBB, 2009).

5. POLICY DETAIL

- 5.1 Seaton Children's Centre is a breastfeeding friendly environment. All staff are to be aware of the importance of breastfeeding and talk about breastfeeding as 'normal'. Private, comfortable spaces are to be made available if required. The Seaton Children's Centre will adhere to breastfeeding friendly guidelines as per Australian Breastfeeding Association guidelines.



- 5.2 All food and drink supplied during Children's Centre activities, inclusive of adult-only settings, should comply with the NHMRC Dietary Guidelines and/or the Right Bite Food and Drink Spectrum. Foods that do not comply may be offered as part of a special event (i.e. no more than 2 times per term).
- 5.3 All adults and children are expected to use effective hand washing techniques when handling or consuming food. Hand soap and accessible facilities are to be made available throughout the Centre.

Children are required to wash their hands before consuming food, including shared food at mat-time, lunch times and unplanned snacks. Children should also wash their hands prior to a learning activity that involves the handling of food.

Adults are to use safe food handling techniques, including
 - washing and drying hands before handling food and frequently during work
 - avoiding being near food when unwell (including coughing and sneezing)
 - keeping benches clean
 - avoiding cross contamination of cooked and raw foods
- 5.4 Seaton Children's Centre will support the frequent drinking of fresh, clean tap water. Water to be available for adults and children at all times.
- 5.5 Seaton Children's Centre will foster positive communication and relationships with families to support healthy eating outcomes for children and their families. Families will be provided with opportunities to learn about the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in young children including education about the NHMRC Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents and the Right Bite Food and Drink Spectrum.
- 5.6 Children will be given learning opportunities throughout the Centre to develop practical food skills related to growing, selecting, storing, preparing, cooking and serving food,.
- 5.7 Children should be encouraged to eat snacks and lunch in a supervised social setting to enhance positive food experiences and reduce the risks of choking.
- 5.8 Seaton Children's Centre will work with health professionals and services to ensure that educators have up-to-date information about relevant food and nutrition issues and community programs.
- 5.9 Wherever possible, healthy eating learning programs should be inclusive of the socio-economic, cultural and spiritual perspectives within the Seaton community.
- 5.10 Children will be educated about healthy food choices. (Refer to Right Bite Food & Drink Spectrum).
- 5.11 Where a child has specific food-related health issues, such as diabetes, anaphylaxis or cystic fibrosis, a health care plan should be completed (as per Health Support Planning Guidelines). Specific accommodations may be made for these children. Adults, including staff with similar health care requirements, should discuss their needs with the program facilitator and/or the Director, where required.
- 5.12 To reduce the risk to children who have been diagnosed as at risk of anaphylaxis, no nuts, nut-based products or items in which nuts are an ingredient, are to be brought to the Children's Centre, including in lunch boxes or shared food (refer to Allergy & Anaphylaxis Management policy).
- 5.13 For children with additional needs, where food is a central part of a behaviour, sensory or



communication plan, this should be clearly documented as part of the child's learning plan and/or negotiated education plan. Staff will also work closely with the family and other services to, where possible, introduce healthier alternatives to the child.

6. STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- 6.1 Staff and visiting professionals should, at all times, adhere to this Policy, and be aware of their role as models for the broader community.
- 6.2 Staff are responsible for the implementation of the policy and for ensuring visiting professionals are aware of the policy details.
- 6.3 All staff are to encourage the consumption of foods compliant with the Right Bite Food and Drink Spectrum and the NHMRC Dietary Guidelines, including limiting 'red' foods not excluding.

7. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

The Director will monitor the implementation of the policy and be responsible for ensuring all staff are aware of their responsibilities.

The Director, and relevant program staff, will also be responsible for ensuring families are aware of and adhere to the policy at all times.

8. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Right Bite, Easy Guide to Healthy Food and Drink Supply for SA Schools & Preschools (Department of Education and Children's Services, 2008)

Guide to National Quality Standards (Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority February 2018): *QA2: Children's Health & Safety*

Belonging, Being & Becoming – Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations for the Council of Australian Governments, 2009)

Breastfeeding Welcome Here program (www.breastfeeding.asn.au/services/welcome)

Eat for Health: Australian Dietary Guidelines - Providing the scientific evidence for healthier Australian Diets (National Health and Medical Research Council, Department of Health and Ageing) February 2013

Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood – Director/Coordinator Book (Department of Health & Ageing, 2013)



APPENDIX