Cheltenham Community Centre Early Learning Childcare

E20. Nutrition, Oral Health, and Active Play

1. Policy

1.1 Cheltenham Community Centre (CCC) Children's Services acknowledges the importance of healthy eating, oral health and physical activity and its contribution to good health and overall wellbeing.

1.2 This policy provides guidelines to:

- promote a healthy lifestyle and support children, staff, educators and families at the service to eat nutritious food, maintain oral health and participate in physical activity and active play
- ensure national and state guidelines and recommendations about nutrition, oral health and physical activity are met
- ensure that the dietary, developmental and cultural needs of children and families are taken into consideration, oral health and active play activities

1.3 Cheltenham Community Centre (CCC) Early Learning Childcare Centre is committed to:

- creating policies and practices that promote a healthy lifestyle and ensure national and state guidelines and recommendations about safe food preparation, nutrition, oral health and physical activity is met
- ensuring the buildings, grounds and facilities enable healthy eating, oral health and active play
- creating a culture in which all community members are respectfully supported to eat healthily, maintain good oral health and be active
- providing children with formal and informal opportunities to learn about food, nutrition, oral health and health messages about physical activity
- ensuring staff and educators have access to resources and support for their own healthy eating, oral health and physical activity
- engaging families, the service community and expert organisations in the promotion and implementation of healthy eating, oral health and active play initiatives.

1.4 This policy applies to the approved provider, persons with management or control, nominated supervisor, persons in day-to-day charge, early childhood teachers, educators, staff, students, volunteers, parents/guardians, children, and others attending the programs and activities of Cheltenham Community Centre (CCC) Early Learning Childcare Centre.

1.5 In order to assess whether the values and purposes of this policy have been achieved, we will:

- Welcome feedback from everyone affected by this policy regarding its effectiveness
- Monitor the implementations, compliance, complaints, and incidents in relation to this policy
- Keep the policy up to date with current legislation, research, policy, and best practice
- Revise the policy and procedures as part of the service's policy review cycle, or as required, and

- Notify parents/guardians at least 14 days before making any changes to this policy or its procedures.

2. Procedure

2.1 Promoting Healthy Eating Habits

- Provide children with access to fresh drinking water throughout the day.
- Encourage families to pack nutritious meals and snacks aligned with dietary guidelines.
- Share information with families about healthy eating practices and provide resources on nutrition.

2.2 Meal and Snack Times

- Establish consistent meal and snack times to support children's routines.
- Create a relaxed and social environment during mealtimes to encourage positive eating behaviours.
- Monitor children during mealtimes to ensure safety, particularly with younger children.

2.3 Oral Health Awareness

- Educate children on the importance of oral hygiene through age-appropriate activities.
- Encourage families to promote oral health practices, such as brushing teeth twice daily.
- Avoid sugary foods and drinks in line with oral health recommendations.

2.4 Active Play and Physical Activity

- Provide daily opportunities for children to engage in active play indoors and outdoors.
- Encourage a mix of structured and unstructured physical activities to support gross and fine motor skill development.
- Incorporate movement into everyday routines, such as music and dance sessions or simple exercises.

2.5 Cultural and Individual Considerations

- Respect and accommodate children's dietary restrictions, allergies, and cultural food preferences.
- Consult with families to understand and implement individual requirements for nutrition and active play.

2.6 Educator Practices and Role Modelling

- Educators will model healthy eating habits and an active lifestyle to inspire children.
- Use positive reinforcement to encourage children to try a variety of healthy foods.

2.7 Risk Minimisation

- Ensure all food brought to the service is nut-free and meets allergy-safe requirements.
- Maintain a clean and hygienic environment for food preparation and consumption.
- Conduct regular inspections of play equipment to ensure it is safe and age-appropriate for active play.

3. LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS

3.1 Relevant legislation and standards include but are not limited to:

- Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005 (Vic)
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 including Regulations 77–78, 79–80 (if the service provides food), 168
- Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)
- Food Act 1984 (Vic)
- National Quality Standard including Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

The most current amendments to listed legislation can be found at:

- Victorian Legislation – Victorian Law Today
- Commonwealth Legislation – Federal Register of Legislation

4. DEFINITIONS

4.1 **Active play:** Play that involves large muscle-based activities that are essential for a child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical growth and development incorporating:
- child-initiated active play, which is developed by the child through exploration of the outdoor environment, equipment and games
- adult-guided active play which encourages children's physical development through promoting movement skills in a non-competitive environment
- physical activity, which includes sport, incidental exercise and many forms of recreation.
- active travel, which includes walking, cycling, scootering or any similar transport where physical activity is used to travel.

4.2 **Adequate supervision:** (In relation to this policy) supervision entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educatorto-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.

Adequate supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service.

Adequate supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary. Variables affecting supervision levels include:
- number, age and abilities of children
- number and positioning of educators
- current activity of each child
- areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility)
- developmental profile of each child and of the group of children
- experience, knowledge and skill of each educator
- need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies).

4.3 **'Discretionary' foods and drinks:** Food and drink items that are high in fat, sugar and salt, and that contain minimal vitamins, minerals or fibre. These can also be referred to as 'sometimes' foods and drinks. Examples of discretionary food and drinks include:
- chocolate, confectionery, jelly
- sweet biscuits, high fat/salt savoury biscuits, chips
- high sugar/high fat cakes and slices
- cream, ice cream
- deep fried foods (e.g. hot chips) and pastry-based foods (pies, sausage rolls and pasties)
- most fast food and takeaway foods

- some processed meats (e.g. sausages, frankfurts/hot dogs, salami, strasbourg, devon, some commercial chicken nuggets and fish fingers)
- soft drinks, fruit juice and fruit drinks, cordial, sports drinks, energy drinks, flavoured milk and flavoured mineral water

4.4 **Healthy eating:** Describes eating patterns that provide all the recommended nutrients for growth and development, and good health and wellbeing, now and in the future. It also refers to preparing, serving and eating food in a way that recognises its importance as a social and cultural activity.

4.5 **Nutrition:** The process of providing or receiving nourishing substances.

4.6 **Oral health:** The absence of active disease in the mouth. Oral health is fundamental to overall health, wellbeing and quality of life. A healthy mouth enables people to eat, speak and socialise without pain, discomfort or embarrassment.

5. SOURCES

- Australian Dietary Guidelines 2019, National Health and Medical Research Council
- Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia
- Better Health Channel
- Dental Health Services Victoria
- Food Safety Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services
- Food Standards Australia New Zealand
- Department of Health (2013) Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood
- The Achievement Program is a health and wellbeing initiative for early childhood services, schools and workplaces
- Healthy Eating Advisory Service
- Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (Birth to 5 years)
- Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for Adults
- National Health and Medical Research Council ,Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services (5th edition, 2013)
- Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework

5.1 **RELATED POLICIES**

- Dealing with Infectious Diseases including minimum exclusion periods
- Responding to Medical Conditions - including anaphylaxis, allergies, asthma & diabetes
- Enrolment and Orientation
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness
- Inclusion and Equity
- Sun Smart
- Child safe and Wellbeing
- Child Safe Environment

Revision History

Date	Revision	Revised by
12/04/2024	Created	Huan-Ming Cholinski
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15/12/2024	Reviewed and updated	Leanne Lee-Ack
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