QUALITY AREA 2 CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 77 78 79 80 Links to National Quality Standard 221222

Nutrition/Food/Beverages/Dietary Requirements

Introduction

Research has shown that one in five pre-schoolers are either overweight or obese.

By the time children in NSW reach kindergarten, almost 18% are either overweight or obese. The

2007 National Children's Nutrition and Physical Activity Survey found that the dietary patterns of

many Australian children are less than optimal with high consumption of salt and saturated fat, and

low consumption of fruit and vegetables. Given that children are increasingly spending long periods of

time in centre-based care, early childhood educators can role model healthy eating and encourage

young children to make healthier food choices. This will contribute to the prevention of weight

problems in children, allowing children to thrive physically, socially and intellectually, and in turn

contribute to prevention of nutrition-related chronic diseases.

Goals

Forest Hill Community Preschool will:

* role model healthy eating and activity throughout the day to all children and families
* promote the six key Munch and Move messages to promote healthy, active habits in children from a young age.
* support families in educating their children about healthy food choices.
* Provide a list of healthy suggestions for lunch boxes and discourage the parents from sending unhealthy food for their children's lunch

Strategies

Professional development of staff and educators

When available educators will attend Munch and Move professional development

training or receive similar training and information;

**The Approved Provider will:**

* Ensure that all children have access to safe drinking water at all times;
* Ensure that food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, and take each child's individual dietary requirements, growth and development needs and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements;
* Communicate with parents about the above point
* Ensure that educators and staff are aware of the need to implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, and storing food to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service.

**The Nominated Supervisor and Educators will ensure that:**

* All children will have access to safe drinking water at all times:
* All children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child throughout the day.
* Food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, in consideration of growth and developmental needs, any known food allergies and intolerances of specific children and in line with recommended dietary requirements, and will take into consideration each child’s individual dietary requirements, growth and development needs and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements.
* Children are supervised at meal times and encouraged to stay seated while eating.
* Educators and staff implement adequate health and hygiene practises storing food to minimise the risks to children:
* Ensure that as per the Medical Conditions Policy the preschool shall remain a nut free centre and that all dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered
* Children are discouraged from sharing food
* lunch boxes are stored in the fridge
* Healthy eating is promoted through role modelling and eating with the children;
* Children are encouraged to make healthy food choices;
* All mealtimes are positive, relaxed and social;
* Children are positively involved in mealtimes;
* Staff will adhere to best practices around safe storage
* No food is to be heated for the children
* Staff are encouraged to eat their lunch with the children
* Allowing for flexibility for individual children’s needs as part of school readiness recess and lunch are in line with school times of 11am and 1pm

Supporting families

Forest Hill Preschool will provide families with up to date information on

dietary requirements of young children to ensure optimal growth and development, and provide families with opportunities to discuss ways to maximise the health and well-being of their child/ren.

The Preschool will provide families with verbal information about their child's intake of food and drinks throughout the day when requested.

Education and information

* Educators will engage children in learning experiences that are fun and enjoyable and incorporate key messages around healthy eating;
* Implemented learning experiences will be guided by the EYLF principles and incorporate the child's identity;
* Families will be provided with current information about recommended guidelines around dietary requirements, screen time and physical activity.

Policy Availability

This nutrition/food/beverages policy will be readily accessible to all staff, families and visitors, and ongoing feedback on this

policy will be invited.

Review Management and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of the nutrition/food/beverages policy regularly.

Updated information will be incorporated as needed.

Evaluation

Children at Forest Hill Preschool have appropriate and healthy food and beverages in their lunch boxes and meal times will be

relaxed and model healthy eating to children.