

Health and Safety

Nutrition, Oral Health and Active Play Policy

Policy Number:

Version: 6

Responsible Person: BoG Chair

Approved by BoG on: 21-10-2021

Review date: 09-2022

Mandatory Quality Area 2

Purpose

Hampton Park Care Group Inc. (Hampton Park Community House) acknowledges the importance of healthy eating, oral health and physical activity and its contribution to good health and overall wellbeing.

This policy will provide 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 and cultural needs of children and families are taken into consideration
- when planning menus and implementing nutrition, oral health and active play activities.

Values

Hampton Park Community House Children's Services 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 are 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

Your child



- 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.

Scope

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Persons with Management or Control, Nominated Supervisor, Persons in Day to Day Charge, educators, staff, students on placement, volunteers, parents/guardians, children and others attending the programs and activities of HPCH Childrens Services

Working in partnership with Cancer Council Victoria and Dental Health Services Victoria, ELAA has aligned this policy to the key policies and guidelines of the Healthy Early Childhood Services Achievement Program and Smiles 4 Miles Program and this was adapted to HPCH practices.

Background and Legislation

Background

There are many benefits to promoting a healthy lifestyle in early childhood education and care settings, including the positive impact this has on each child's learning and development. Being made aware of positive eating behaviour, oral hygiene practices and the importance of physical activity from an early age can instil good habits that will remain throughout a person's life. Staff are well placed to build this awareness among children and their families, while respecting lifestyle choices, and cultural and religious values.

As a health promoting service it is recognised that every member of the service impacts on children's health. Children, staff, educators and families can be supported to eat healthily, maintain good oral health and be physically active through teaching and learning opportunities, policies, creating a safe and healthy physical and social environment and developing community links and partnerships.

Nutrition

The foods we eat provide our body with the nutrients we need to stay healthy. Good nutrition is the





balanced eating of a variety of foods, and is especially important for children as they require a large amount of nutrients for growth and development. Research has shown that, when offered a variety of healthy foods, children can and do make good choices. It is also important to provide preschool children with a good foundation in healthy eating, as most children have formed lifelong eating habits before they reach school age.

Oral health

Tooth decay is Australia's most prevalent health problem despite being preventable. It is important to note that oral health promotion is complementary to promoting healthy eating. Oral health behaviours have a major influence on children's health and wellbeing and a direct impact on their growth and development. Oral diseases can negatively affect individuals through pain, discomfort, general health and quality of life. Poor oral health can limit a child's capacity in biting, chewing, smiling, speaking, and psychosocial wellbeing. The main oral health condition experienced by children is tooth decay affecting over half of all Australian children, making it five times more prevalent than asthma.

Active play

Active play (refer to Definitions) develops a strong and healthy body, builds motor and co-ordination skills, creates a sense of wellbeing and helps protect from disease. Active play is about moving, being and doing.

A strong sense of health and wellbeing, supported by good nutrition and an active lifestyle, can provide children with confidence, energy and optimism that will contribute to their ability to concentrate, co-operate and learn (Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, – refer to Sources). Learning about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition and active play, links directly to Outcome 3 in both the Early Years Learning Framework and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (refer to Sources).

The Australian Government has guidelines, recommendations and resources for healthy eating and physical activity in early childhood settings, including the National Health and Medical Research Council's Australian Dietary Guidelines and Infant Feeding Guidelines, the Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood resources and the National Physical Recommendations for Children 0-5 Years (refer to Sources). Practical, healthy eating advice is also available to early childhood services and schools via a telephone advice line: the Victorian Healthy Eating Advisory Service (Healthy Eating Advisory Service – refer to Sources), run by Nutrition Australia.





Progressive meal times

In recognising children as active participants in their own learning, children should be encouraged to make meaningful decisions about elements of their own education and care. Incorporating progressive meal times into the educational program allows children to choose to eat when they are hungry, rather than according to a timetable. Children can gather in small groups to enjoy meals together, without interrupting the needs and play of others. This also encourages quieter, more social and meaningful interactions at meal times and allows for a smoother flow throughout the day. Children can make decisions based on their own needs, and can be supported to access food and water throughout the day by educators/staff, who actively participate in meal times.

Legislation and standards

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: Regulations 77–78, 79–80 (if the service provides food), 168

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

Food Act 1984 (Vic)

National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004

Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy.





Hampton Park Care Group Inc. is the Approved Provider. The Approved Provider delegates its responsibility for the day to day operation of the service to the Nominated Supervisor.

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.

A decision with respect to incorporating progressive meal times into the educational program must take into account the needs of all children at the service, particularly children with specific medical conditions such as diabetes. The National Regulations require services to ensure that children with medical conditions are able to participate fully in the educational program, and are not discriminated against in any way.

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 educator-to-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).

'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

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.

Nutrition: The process of providing or receiving nourishing substances.

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.

Sources and Related Policies

Sources

Australian Dietary Guidelines 2019, National Health and Medical Research Council:

<https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines>

Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia:

<https://docs.education.gov.au/documents/belonging-being-becoming-early-years-learning-framework-australia>

Better Health Channel: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Dental Health Services Victoria: www.dhsv.org.au

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Food Safety Victoria, Department of Health and Human Services:
www2.health.vic.gov.au/public_health/food-safety

Food Standards Australia New Zealand: www.foodstandards.gov.au

Department of Health (2013) Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early
Childhood: <https://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-gug-staffcarers>

The Achievement Program is a health and wellbeing initiative for early childhood services, schools
and workplaces: www.achievementprogram.health.vic.gov.au

Healthy Eating Advisory Service: www.heas.health.vic.gov.au

National Health and Medical Research Council, Infant Feeding Guidelines: information for health
workers (2012): https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/infant-feeding-guidelines_information-health-workers

Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (Birth to 5 years):
<https://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/npra-0-5yrs-brochure>

Australia's Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines for Adults:
https://www1.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-pubhlth-strateg-phys_act-guidelines#npa1864

National Health and Medical Research Council, Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in
early childhood education and care services (5th edition, 2013):
<https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/about-us/publications/staying-healthy-preventing-infectious-diseases-early-childhood-education-and-care-services>

Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework: www.education.vic.gov.au

Related policies

Anaphylaxis Policy



Your child



Asthma Policy

Curriculum Development Policy

Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy

Dealing with Medical Conditions

Diabetes Policy

Enrolment and Orientation Policy

Excursions and Policy

Food Safety Policy

Hygiene Policy

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy

Inclusion and Equity Policy

Safe Transportation of Children Policy

Sun Protection Policy

Authorisation

Signature of BoG Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink on a white rectangular background. The signature appears to be "R. Kelly" with a flourish at the end.

Date of approval by BoG

21-10-2021

