



Food & Nutrition Policy

Policy

Cubby House on Campus – Early Learning Centre (“Cubby”) recognises the importance of healthy eating to the growth and development of young children and is committed to supporting the healthy food and drink choices of children in their care. This policy concerns the provision of healthy food and drink while children are in care and the promotion of normal growth and development.

We are committed to implementing the healthy eating key messages outlined in Munch & Move and to supporting the National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings as outlined in the Get Up & Grow resources.

Furthermore, Cubby recognises the importance of supporting families in providing healthy food and drink to their children. It is acknowledged that the early childhood setting has an important role in supporting families in healthy eating.

Background

Early childhood education services are required by legislation to ensure the provision of healthy foods and drinks that meet the requirements for children according to the Australian Dietary Guidelines. It is essential that Cubby partners with families to provide education about nutrition, and promote healthy eating habits for young children to positively influence their health and wellbeing. Dietary and healthy eating habits formed in the early years are shown to continue into adulthood and can reduce the risk factors associated with adult chronic conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Cubby recognises the importance of healthy eating for the growth, development and wellbeing of young children and is committed to promoting and supporting healthy food and drink choices for children in our care.

We believe in providing a positive eating environment that reflects dietary requirements, cultural and family values, and promotes lifelong learning for children, as we commit to implementing and embedding the healthy eating key messages outlined in the NSW Health’s Munch & Move program into our curriculum and to support the National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings outlined in the Get Up & Grow resources.

Implementation:

This policy applies to children, families, staff, and management of the service

Cubby has a responsibility to help children to develop good food practices and approaches, by working with families and educators.

As Cubby does not prepare, cook or make food at the premises, all food that is prepared by families for their children will endeavour to be consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines and provide children with 50% of the recommended dietary intake for all nutrients. Food brought in from home will be served at various times throughout the day to cater for all children's nutritional needs.

Meal times reflect a relaxed and pleasant environment where educators engage in meaningful conversations with children. When possible, educators will role model healthy eating behaviour. This assists in creating a positive and enjoyable eating environment. As Cubby prepares cut up fruit for morning tea for the children to share, the food preparation area shall comply with Food Standards Australia and New Zealand. (FSANZ)

At Cubby we will:

- Provide a suitable place where mothers can breastfeed their babies or express breast milk.
- Support mothers to continue breastfeeding until babies are at least 12 months of age while offering appropriate complementary foods from around 6 months of age.
- Ensure the safe handling of breast milk and infant formula including transporting, storing, thawing, warming, preparing and bottle feeding.
- Always bottle-feed babies by holding baby in a semi-upright position.
- Always supervise babies while drinking and eating - ensuring safe bottle-feeding and eating practices at all times.

In order to promote healthy food and drinks based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents Cubby will, (where food is brought from home):

- Provide information to families on the types of foods and drinks recommended for children and suitable for children's lunchboxes. See "Appendix A" which can be found at <http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/sites/default/files/Packing%20a%20school%20lunchbox%20-%20HLW%202018.pdf>
- Encourage children to eat the more nutritious foods provided in their lunchbox, such as sandwiches, fruit, cheese and yoghurt, before eating any less nutritious food provided. See "Appendix B" which can be found at <http://nutritionaustralia.org/sites/default/files/HealthyEatingPyramid.jpg>.
- Discourage the provision of highly processed snack foods high in fat, salt and sugar and low in essential nutrients in children's lunchboxes. Examples of these foods include lollies, chocolates, sweet biscuits, muesli bars, breakfast bars, fruit filled bars, chips, oven-baked crackers and corn chips.

At Cubby all staff/Educators will:

- Ensure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day in both the indoor and outdoor environment.
- Be aware of children with food allergies, food intolerances and special diets and consult with families to develop individual management plans.

- Ensure young children do not have access to foods that may cause choking.
- Ensure all children remain seated while eating and drinking.
- Ensure all children are always supervised children while eating and drinking.
- Display nutritional information for families and keep them regularly updated.
- Ensure infants are fed individually by educators
- Ensure age and developmentally appropriately utensils and furniture will be provided for each child.
- Not allow food to be used as a form of punishment or to be used as a reward or bribe.
- Not allow the children to be force fed without being required to eat food they do not like or more than they want to eat.
- Encourage toddlers to be independent and develop social skills at meal times.
- Establish healthy eating habits in the children by incorporating nutritional information into our program.
- Talk to families about their child's food intake and voice any concerns about their child's eating.
- Encourage parents to the best of our ability to continue our healthy eating message in their homes.
- Ensure fridge and freezer temperatures are taken daily, working in compliance with the National Food Authority.

Cubby will store, prepare and serve food in a hygienic manner promoting hygienic food practices. This will be done by:

- Ensuring gloves are (or food tongs) used by all staff handling 'ready to eat' foods
- Children and staff wash and dry their hands (using soap, warm running water and single use or disposable towels) before handling food or eating meals and snacks.
- Food is stored and served at safe temperatures i.e. below 50 C or above 60 C.
- Separate cutting boards are used for raw meat and chicken, fruit and vegetables and utensils and hands are washed before touching other foods.
- Children will be discouraged from handling other children's food and utensils.

At Cubby we want to create a positive learning environment during meal times and we will:

- Ensure that educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided.
- Endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying the social interactions with educators and other children.
- Encourage older toddlers and pre-schoolers to assist to set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink - providing opportunities for them to develop

independence and self-esteem.

- Respect each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he/she eats.
- Be patient with messy or slow eaters.
- Encourage children to try different foods but do not force them to eat.
- Do not use food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes.

Cubby will:

- Foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children's program a range of learning experiences encouraging children's healthy eating.
- Encourage children to participate in a variety of 'hands-on' food preparation experiences.
- Provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices.
- Embed the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in everyday activities and experiences

Communicating with families Cubby will:

- Provide a copy of the Food & Nutrition Safety Policy to all families upon orientation.
- Families will be provided with opportunities to contribute to the review and development of the policy.
- Request that details of any food allergies or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to the service and work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate response so that children's individual dietary needs are met.
- Communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within the service and provide up to date information to assist families to provide healthy food choices at home.
- Communicate regularly with families and provide information and advice on appropriate food and drink to be included in children's lunchboxes. This information may be provided to families in a variety of ways including factsheets, newsletters, during orientation, information sessions and informal discussion.
- Provide a copy of the Munch & Move factsheet upon enrolment, which can be found at https://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/downloads/file/campaignsprogram/142203_HealthyKidsFactSheet_5Ways_CON2.pdf (See "Appendix C")

<i>Policy Action</i>	<i>Process Development</i>
Sources/ Further Reading	Frith, J, Kambouris, N, & O'Grady, O (2003) <i>Health and Safety Policies in Family Day Care model policies & practices</i> (2 nd edn). Food Standards Australia New Zealand (2009) ACT Health 2009

	<p>Education and care Services National Law (ACT) 2011, regulation 77, 78, 79(1), 90,</p> <p>National Quality Standards. 2.1, 2.1.1, 2.2.1</p> <p>Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).</p> <p>Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations 2015</p> <p>Guide to the National Quality Standard</p> <p>Early Years Learning Framework</p> <p>Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood Infant Feeding Guidelines 2012 https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/the_guidelines/n56_infant_feeding_guidelines.pdf</p> <p>Australian Dietary Guidelines 2013 http://www.nutritionaustralia.org/national/resource/australian-dietary-guidelines-2013</p> <p>Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/code/Pages/default.aspx</p> <p>Food Act 2001</p> <p>Food Regulation 2004</p> <p>Work Health and Safety Act 2011</p> <p>Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011</p> <p>Dental Association Australia https://www.ada.org.au/Your-Dental-Health/Children-0-11</p> <p>Australian Breast Feeding Association</p> <p>Munch and Move https://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au/campaigns-programs/about-munch-move.aspx</p>
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