

Konomi Kindergarten
Nutrition/Food/Beverages/Dietary Requirements

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY
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Rationale

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.

Statutory Legislations

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
Children (Education and Care Services National Law Application) Act 2010
National Quality Standards 2011
Work Health and Safety Act 2011
Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011
Food Standards Australia New Zealand Act 1991
Food Act 2003 (NSW)
Food Regulation 2010 (NSW)

Link to:

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 77, 78, 79, 80

National Quality Standard: 2.2.1, 2.2.2

Aims of this Policy

Children in Long Day Care must receive 50% - 70% of their food intake whilst in care. It is therefore essential that the Service provides information to parents/guardians so that adequate nutrition is provided to the children in proportion to the time spent in care. Konomi Kindergarten aim is to provide food and beverages, as well as food and nutritional education that is consistent with the national dietary guidelines for children and adolescents and national infant feeding guidelines. The service will follow state regulation, food safety principles, national dietary guidelines that are appropriate to the child's age, cultural background or medical needs.

Implementation

It is Konomi Kindergarten's responsibility to help children and parents/guardians develop good food attitudes and habits.

In order to achieve this, Konomi Kindergarten will:

- Provide a menu consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines.
- Provide Water and Milk as the only beverages served throughout the day.
- Provide Water at all times to the children throughout the day.
- Cater to the individual needs of children in relation to culture, vegetarianism, allergies and any medical conditions.
- Present food in an attractive manner.
- Develop an awareness of cross-cultural eating patterns and related food values.
- Provide safe food, i.e. hygienically sound and with reduced risk of choking.

- Ensure meal times are relaxed, pleasant and timed to meet the needs of the children.
- Discuss food and its nutritional value with the children.
- Prohibit the use of food as punishment, reward or bribe.
- Prohibit any form of force feeding.
- Encourage independence and social skills at meal times.
- Establish healthy eating habits in the children by the incorporation of nutritional education into the program.
- Communicate with parents/guardians about their child's food intake, i.e. to display the menu in the centre, report any concerns regarding children's eating habits.
- Inform parents/guardians of children's nutritional needs through posters and information.
- Provide safe drinking water to children and educators/staff at all times, and ensure children have adequate fluid intake during their care.
- Parents/guardians are encouraged to follow up the "healthy eating" message at home. This policy and information provided to parents/guardians throughout their child's enrolment will support the parents/guardians in doing this.
- Motivate educators/staff to present themselves as role models, maintaining good personal nutrition, and to eat with the children at meal times.
- Provide nutrition and food safety training opportunities for all educators/staff including awareness of culturally diverse foods and preparation.
- Provide training to educators/staff in regards to understanding and handling eating behaviors of children (including refusal of food by children).

Provision of food and drinks at Konomi Kindergarten

Konomi Kindergarten will:

- ❖ Ensure that all children have access to safe drinking water at all times;
- ❖ Ensure that all children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day;
- ❖ 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;
- ❖ Ensure that the service displays an accessible menu which accurately describes the food and beverages provided by the service each day; and
- ❖ Ensure that educators and staff are aware of the need to implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service.
- ❖ Develop separate policy and procedures to meet food safety requirements specially for children with food allergy, special dietary requirements and anaphylactic reaction.

The Nominated Supervisor 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 on a regular basis throughout the day;
- Food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity, in consideration of growth and development needs, any known food allergies and intolerances of specific children, and in line with recommended dietary guidelines, and will take into consideration each child's individual dietary requirements, growth and development needs and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements;
- The service displays an accessible menu which accurately describes the food and beverages provided by the service each day;
- The menu is diverse and will reflect the cultural backgrounds of families and the local community;
- Educators and staff implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children; and
- Ensure that as per the Medical Conditions Policy the centre shall remain a nut free centre and that all dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered to.

“Given that children are increasingly spending long periods of time in centre-based care, early childhood educators will role model healthy eating and encourage young children to make healthier food choices

Staff and educators will ensure that:

- ✓ 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 encouraged to try new foods, and their food likes and dislikes are respected;
- ✓ Children are positively involved in mealtimes;
- ✓ Implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children; and
- ✓ Ensure that as per the Medical Conditions Policy Konomi Kindergarten remain a nut free centre and that all dietary requirements relating to medical conditions are adhered to.

Supporting families

- Staff and educators will support families' choices regarding their children's feeding;
- Konomi kindergarten 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.
- Konomi kindergarten will provide families with daily information about their child's intake of food and drinks throughout the day.

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 & outcomes 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.

Evaluation

Konomi kindergarten offers appropriate and healthy food and beverages to all children and meal times will be relaxed and model healthy eating to children

Sources

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Guide to the National Quality Standards 2011

Work Health and Safety Act 2011

Work Health and Safety Regulations 2011

Healthy Kids www.healthykids.gov.au Retrieved 27/02/2015

Better Health Chanel www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au Retrieved 27/02/2015

NSW Health www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au Retrieved 27/02/2015

NSW Food Authority www.foodauthority.nsw.gov.au Retrieved 27/02/2015

National Health & Medical Research Council www.nhmrc.gov.au Retrieved on 27/02/2015

Review

Management and staff will monitor and review the effectiveness of the nutrition/food/beverages policy regularly. Updated information will be incorporated as needed. Families will be encouraged to provide feedback on the policy when reviewing

Policy Review Date: March 2015 (no changes)

Next Review Date: March 2016 /earlier when legislation changes