



CHILDREN'S SERVICES

Nutrition Food and Beverage Policy

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1. Introduction

Coast Services Group Limited - Children's Services aim to provide food and drinks that are nutritious, adequate in quantity, consider dietary requirements appropriate to each child's growth and development needs, and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements. Water will also be made available to children at all times.

The early years of a child's life is a critical period for their healthy development, and growth during this time, both physical and intellectual, is largely dependent upon adequate nutritional intake. Eating is also a source of enjoyment and it is important that Educators do not become so concerned about nutrition and manners that they lose sight of children's enjoyment of food. Many of the eating habits and attitudes to food developed in childhood continue throughout life. It is important that appropriate food handling and storage practices are followed.

2. Definitions

Anaphylaxis- Anaphylaxis is the most severe form of allergic reaction and is potentially life threatening. It must be treated as a medical emergency, requiring immediate treatment and urgent medical attention. Anaphylaxis is a generalised allergic reaction, which often involves more than one body system (e.g. skin, respiratory, gastro-intestinal and cardiovascular). A severe allergic reaction or anaphylaxis usually occurs within 20 minutes to 2 hours of exposure to the trigger and can rapidly become life threatening. Common antigens are peanuts, tree nuts, milk, shellfish, eggs, sesame, wheat and soy. Children who are anaphylactic will require an Anaphylaxis Action Plan developed by a medical professional, special dietary requirements and an EpiPen.

Allergy- Food allergy is an immune response. Symptoms of food allergy include wheezing, stomach upsets and skin rashes. Food allergies are not life threatening.

3. Scope

This Policy applies to all Children's Services operated by Coast Services Group Limited (a wholly owned subsidiary of Coast Community Connections LTD) and our Employees. This applies to Early Childhood Programs, Occasional Care, Out Of School Hours Care and Vacation Care programs and services.

4. Policy

Children will be encouraged to develop good eating habits through role modeling and education. Families will be encouraged to share family and multicultural values and ideas to enrich the variety and enjoyment of food by the children. High standards of hygiene will be maintained.

5. Procedures and Implementation

To ensure children receive nutritious and varied food, all Children's Services will:

1. Provide food (for children in all service types) where the majority of food is consistent with recommendations of the Australian Government Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings and/or the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.
2. Provide food that is nutritious and varied and where possible local fresh produce will be used.
3. Children, staff and Educators will always have access to safe drinking water
4. Display a weekly menu that accurately describes all food and beverages offered to all children in care
5. Notify families of any menu changes through the use of our notice board, whiteboard, Assessment or communication book
6. Address all children's individual needs such as allergies, lifestyle, cultural and /or religious needs in the menus. Staff will keep a list of all children's allergies or food restrictions near the food preparation area to ensure all staff are aware and follow these dietary needs.
7. Consult families regarding current dietary requirements of their children, particularly those related to medical, cultural or religious needs.
8. Ensure families notify staff and Educators of any special dietary requirements and where medically necessary they provide a written Action Plan to the service (eg. where child has diabetes or has suffered anaphylactic reactions, etc).
9. Where children bring their own food and beverages services will promote healthy choices through strategies such as information pamphlets from recognised nutrition authorities.
10. Families will be informed of prohibited foods including nuts and nut products on enrolment.
11. Ensure staff and Educators understand the eating habits and nutritional needs of each child.
12. Encourage children and parents to contribute to the menu sharing family and multicultural values, ideas and recipes.
13. When requested make available recipes for food served in the service to families.
14. Provide education material about healthy eating habits such as specific activities, notices, posters and information sheets to families.
15. Encourage Educators and staff who work closely in relation to meal preparation attend training in Food & Nutrition, and Safe Food Handling.
16. A light breakfast and afternoon snack will be provided for children attending before and after school care sessions only.
17. During Vacation Care periods there will be no breakfast or afternoon snack provided, however if families wish to provide a breakfast, staff must be asked to prepare by 8am. This is due to supervision and excursions that take place at this time during vacation care periods.
18. During vacation care families must provide a re-usable drink bottle and sufficient nutritional food to cover their child's day in care.

Other related policies and procedures

Health Hygiene and safe food practices

Forms and Records

Enrolment forms

Menu suggestions and feedback