Policy number 4

Snowtown Kindergarten Healthy Food & Food Safety Policy.

Staff at this preschool aim to promote nutritional eating habits and food safety in a supportive environment for all children attending this preschool. We believe that early childhood is an important time for establishing lifelong, healthy eating habits and can benefit the children in four ways:

1. Short term: Maximises growth, development and activity whilst minimising illness
2. Long term: Minimises the risk of diet related diseases later in life e.g. heart disease, strokes, some cancers and diabetes
3. Advice from speech pathologists and dentists indicates that children should be eating crunchy foods.

Curriculum

Our preschool’s food and nutrition curriculum:

- Includes activities that provide children with knowledge, attitudes and skills to make positive healthy food choices and learn about the variety of foods available for good health.
- Includes opportunities for children to develop practical food skills like preparing and cooking healthy food.
- Integrates nutrition across the curriculum where possible.
- Is part of the Early Years Learning Framework and NQS.

The Learning environment

Children at our preschool:

- Have fresh, clean water available at all times and are encouraged to drink water regularly through the day.
- Are encouraged to bring their own named drink bottle.
- Eat in a positive, appropriate, social environment with staff who model healthy eating behaviours.

Our preschool:

- Understands and promotes the importance of breakfast for children.
- Teaches the importance of healthy meals and snacks as part of the curriculum.
- Is a breastfeeding friendly centre.
• Is an allergy aware centre (Anaphylaxis Policy No. 6.)

Food supply
Our preschool:

Has the following guidelines for families for food brought from home:

• Measures are taken to remove highly allergenic foods where transfer from one child to another is likely (such as whole eggs and nut products).
• Families of all children are asked not to send meals containing highly allergenic foods such as egg and nut products (including peanut butter, nutella) as there are children at risk of anaphylaxis to these foods.

FRUIT TIME (CHILDREN ATTENDING PRESCHOOL):

Parents and carers are asked to supply fruit and vegetables at fruit time to:

• Provide children with important minerals and vitamins
• Encourage a taste for healthy foods
• Encourage chewing which promotes oral muscle development

Fresh fruits, vegetables or a slice of cheese are recommended for fruit time

We understand that at times families may run out of fruit. A healthy sandwich (multigrain or wholemeal bread) with savoury filling or plain unsalted crackers (e.g. Vitawheat) are most acceptable.

FOODS UNSUITABLE FOR FRUIT TIME include packaged foods, cakes and sweets with reference to note on sugar. ALL NUT PRODUCTS AND WHOLE EGG due to the risk of allergic reaction. Cordials and sweetened fruit juices are not to be brought to Kindergarten.

Sugar
Try to choose products with less than 15g per 100g of sugar. If a product has fruit in it then up to 25g per 100g is suitable. (Start Right Eat Right 2012)

LUNCH TIME AT KINDERGARTEN:
The Healthy eating guidelines will still be in place.

Parents are encouraged to follow the above guidelines and ask staff if they have any issues.

A healthy lunch box might include a sandwich, fruit, yogurt and vegie sticks.

• Our Kindergarten will ensure a healthy food supply for preschool activities, celebrations and events, strictly limiting availability of high fat, high sugar, or processed foods like chips, pastries, cakes, lollies and crisps to no more than twice a term, in accordance with the Healthy Eating Guidelines. Soft drinks are not to be part of any kindergarten celebration.
• We will display nutrition information and promotional materials about healthy eating and provide information updates in newsletters.
Food safety
Our preschool:

- Promotes and teaches food safety to children during food learning/ cooking activities.
- As we might have children attending our Centre with severe allergies to nuts (peanuts and tree nuts) and eggs risk minimisation has been implemented.

  This involves the removal of items with the relevant allergy eg nuts as an ingredient, but does not apply to those foods labelled “may contain traces (or may contain) of nuts”, and eggs.

- Encourages staff to access training as appropriate to the Healthy Eating Guidelines.
- Provides adequate hand washing facilities for everyone.
- Promotes and encourages correct hand washing procedures.
- Cooks healthy options as part of our Kindergarten program.
- Whenever possible we provide recipes for families.
- Stores, reheats and prepares food in line with the sites Health & Safety Procedure & “Staying Healthy in Childcare”.

Food-related health support planning
Our preschool:

- Liaises with families to ensure a suitable food supply for children with health support plans that are related to food issues.

Working with families, health services & industry
Our preschool:

- Has invited parents and caregivers to be involved in the review of our centre’s Healthy Food and Food Safety Policy.

- Invites health professionals to be involved in food and nutrition activities with the children.

- Provides information from health professionals to families and caregivers on the Healthy Eating Guidelines through a variety of media such as:
  
  Newsletters

  Policy development/review

  Information on enrolment

  Pamphlet/Poster displays

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