EUDUNDA COMMUNITY PRE-SCHOOL CENTRE
Occupational Health Safety & Wellness
WELLBEING POLICY

Healthy Eating Policy

The Department of Education and Children's Services “Healthy Eating Guidelines - eat well sa schools and preschools” gives the following reasons for schools and preschools to promote healthy eating in their sites:

“Healthy eating is fundamental to good health throughout life for all people. It underpins healthy growth and development, contributes to health and wellbeing, positive mental health and quality of life, and plays a role in preventing disease and disability. The early years of life are critical in establishing food attitudes and habits. Childhood is a period of continuous education about healthy eating. The establishment of regular eating times can support this. (for example, breakfast, morning snack break, lunch, after school snack, evening meal.) Sound health and wellbeing habits are encouraged when children are encouraged to eat meals in a positive social setting, followed by recreational physical activity.”

“In SA 96% of 5 to 17 year olds attend school and 88% of young children attend preschool. These settings are therefore a critical part of the social environment that shapes eating behaviour and can play a large role in ensuring that health-enhancing eating behaviour is learned, practised and supported.” (eatwellsa)

At Eudunda Community Preschool Centre we encourage healthy eating habits while encouraging an understanding about safety while eating, good manners and personal hygiene. Our curriculum includes ongoing education about healthy eating and lifestyles, and wellbeing. Eudunda Community Preschool Centre’s current policy reflects the following recommendations made in the document framework:

“Schools and preschools are responsible for children’s and students learning regarding food and nutrition as part of the SA Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework.”

“Preschool children should eat lunch in a supervised social environment”

“Schools and preschools should actively promote daily fruit and vegetable consumption.”

“Schools and preschools should support frequent drinking of fresh, clean tap water.”

“All food and drink supplied in the course of... preschool activities should comply with the Dietary guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia and be inclusive of community socio economic, cultural and spiritual perspectives...”

Snack Time:

'Snacks' will be eaten at a designated 'Snack Time', usually around 10.00am. All children will, (generally), be required to sit with the group while eating. All children are to wash their hands before joining the group for snack. Snack boxes will be distributed to the children, staff will promote 'snack' time as a social experience by eating together with their friends.
The children will be asked to eat one serve of fruit/vegetable, provided by parent/caregiver, first before eating other snacks. It is a strong expectation that parents choose 1 or 2 of the following food choices in addition to their serve of fruit/vegetable for children’s snacks each session:

- Fresh fruit
- Vegetables
- *Sandwich with a savoury filling (nut free policy applies)
- Dried, unflavoured crackers - saladas, saos, cruskits, plain rice crackers (savoury spread optional)
- Dried fruit
- Cheese

There are many other healthy food choices that parents can make for snacks for children, but we believe that the above choices are: easiest to eat and store in bags and cannot be confused with less healthier choices.

(Quantities of portions are based of parent’s knowledge of how much food their child would normally eat for a snack.)

Milk will be provided by the centre for the children to drink at this time. Parents of children requiring a substitute (ie soy milk, goats milk etc) will be asked to supply their child’s milk.

The children will clean their teeth after eating.

Staff will promote healthy eating by:

- including knowledge and experiences about food and nutrition in the program regularly.
- by modelling eating of the food in the policy for their snacks when with the children.
- by having cooking experiences that support and follow the guidelines in the document and policy.

**Lunch Time:**

Parents are encouraged to pack lunches with the 4 food groups in mind and are asked to limit “treats” to 1 at lunch time.

Children will eat lunch in a social, supervised setting with a staff member.

Lunch will be eaten at a designated ‘Lunch Time’, usually at about 12-12.30pm.

Children will generally sit at tables with their placemats for lunch.

All children are to wash their hands prior to sitting for lunch.

Lunchboxes will be distributed to the children and they will be asked to eat their sandwich/or equivalent first.

Children are encouraged to eat their crusts as part of healthy eating practices. Parents who do not require the child to eat the crusts should remove them prior to sending the sandwich to Preschool.

The children will clean their teeth after eating.

Children are then encouraged to spend some quiet time ‘reading’ prior to returning to activities.

*Parents will be reminded about our healthy eating policy if children come with some foods in their snacks that are not recommended on the above list.*
WE DO NOT ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO HAVE SWEETS/LOLLIES, CAKES AND SWEET BISCUITS, OR FOODS HIGH IN SATURATED FATS.

Please **DO NOT** send any peanuts or peanut products to Preschool or Occasional Care. Children need a box for snack and a box for lunch. THESE NEED TO BE CLEARLY NAMED. Please send along any items your child may need to use to eat their lunch/snack ie spoon, forks etc.

**CHILDREN ARE PROVIDED WITH WATER AND CUPS.**
**PLEASE DO NOT SEND DRINK CONTAINERS**

There will be opportunities within our Program for children to enjoy 'sometimes' / 'extra' foods, such as at end of term parties and special occasions (like birthdays).

A copy of "The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating" accompanies this policy. Parents can view the "eat well sa schools and preschools healthy eating guidelines" at any time by asking staff.

We do encourage you to support this program. We also all need to be aware that eating healthy snacks at Preschool will promote better concentration, learning and engagement for a maximum amount of time. The policy will be supported with a curriculum focus on eating healthy and children will be involved in experiences and activities about food and nutrition. We will have "tasting new food" experiences, will be learning about how food keeps us healthy, will be singing songs, reading books and playing games about healthy food.

*Children with medically warranted individual health care needs related to food and nutrition are supported in line with DECS' health support and planning policy.*