

	Nutrition and Active Play Policy & Procedures
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Authorisation	General Manager
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Responsible Officer	Manager Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten
Policy Owner	Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten

Policy

Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten is committed to:

- Promoting nutritious food and eating habits that will contribute to healthy growth and development in children
- Providing a safe, supportive and social environment in which children can enjoy eating
- Consulting and working collaboratively with families in regard to their child’s Nutrition and dietary requirements, including responding appropriately to food allergies and recognising cultural and religious practices, and lifestyle choices
- Ensuring that food and drink items provided by the service are consistent with national guidelines and recommendations
- Providing children and families with opportunities to learn about food, Nutrition and healthy lifestyles
- Ensuring adequate health and hygiene procedures, including safe practices for handling, preparing, storing and serving food
- Encouraging physical activity by providing a range of Active Play experiences for all children at the service.

Purpose

Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten is committed to:

- Promoting a healthy lifestyle for children at the service, including eating nutritious food and participating in physical activity
- Providing opportunities for Active Play
- Encouraging children to make healthy lifestyle choices consistent with national guidelines and recommendations
- Ensuring that the dietary and cultural needs of children and families are taken into consideration when planning menus for service events and activities.
- This policy has been adapted from *PolicyWorks* Manual - National Quality Framework released by the Early Learning Association Australia.

Scope

This policy applies to Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten who is responsible for the direct education and care of children including offsite excursions and activities.

This policy applies to the Approved Provider, Nominated Supervisor, Educators, Staff, Students on placement, Volunteers, Parents/guardians, Children and others attending Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten

National Quality Standards (NQS)

Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety

2.1 Health – Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted

2.1.2 Health practices and procedures - Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented

2.1.3 Healthy lifestyles – Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.

Background

- There are many benefits to promoting a healthy lifestyle in early childhood education and care settings, including the positive impact this has on each child's learning and development.
- Being made aware of positive eating behaviour and the importance of physical activity from an early age can instil good habits that will remain throughout a person's life.
- Staff/educators are well placed to build this awareness among children and their families, while respecting lifestyle choices, and cultural and religious values.
- The foods we eat provide our body with the nutrients we need to stay healthy. Good Nutrition is the balanced eating of a variety of foods, and is especially important for children as they require a large amount of nutrients for growth and development. Research has shown that, when offered a variety of healthy foods, children can and do make good choices.
- It is also important to provide preschool children with a good foundation in Healthy Eating, as most children have formed lifelong eating habits before they reach school age. Education and care settings provide many opportunities for children to experience a range of healthy food, and to learn about food choices from educators and other children (Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – refer to *Sources*).

- Active Play (play that involves using the large muscles in the body) develops a strong and healthy body, builds motor and coordination skills, creates a sense of wellbeing and helps protect from disease. Active Play is about moving, being and doing.
- A strong sense of health and wellbeing, supported by good Nutrition and an active lifestyle, can provide children with confidence, energy and optimism that will contribute to their ability to concentrate, cooperate and learn (Belonging, Being & Becoming – The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia – refer to *Sources*).
- Learning about healthy lifestyles, including Nutrition and Active Play, links directly to Outcome 3 in both the Early Years Learning Framework and the Victorian Early Years Learning and Development Framework (refer to *Sources*).
- The Australian Government has produced guidelines, recommendations and resources for Healthy Eating and physical activity in early childhood settings, including the Department of Health’s “Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood” resources (refer to *Sources*).
- Practical, Healthy Eating advice is also available to early childhood services and schools via Healthy Eating Advisory Service website.
- Early childhood education and care services can also register for the Department of Education & Training’s Healthy Early Childhood Services Achievement Program (refer to *Sources*). This program is designed to create healthy and friendly environments for learning, by promoting physical, mental and social health and wellbeing.

Meal times

- We recognise all children as active participants in their own learning, children should be encouraged to make meaningful decisions about elements of their own education and care.
- Incorporating progressive meal times into the educational program, where appropriate, allows children to choose to eat when they are hungry.
- Children can gather in small groups to enjoy meals together, without interrupting the needs and play of others. This also encourages quieter, more social and meaningful interactions at meal times and allows for a smoother flow throughout the day.
- Children can make decisions based on their own needs, and can be supported to access food and water throughout the day by staff/educators, who actively participate in meal times.
- A decision with respect to incorporating progressive meal times into the educational program, where appropriate, must take into account the needs of all children at the service, particularly children with specific medical conditions such as diabetes.
- The National Regulations require services to ensure that children with medical conditions are able to participate fully in the educational program, and are not discriminated against in any way.

Education and Care National Regulations

- Health, hygiene and safe food practices (National Regulations 77)
- Food and beverages (National Regulations 78)
- Service providing food and beverages (National Regulations 79)

- Weekly menu (National Regulations 80)
- Medical conditions policy (National Regulations 90)
- Medical conditions policy to be provided to parents (National Regulations 91)
- Health information to be kept in enrolment record (National Regulations 162)
- Education and care service must have policies and procedures (National Regulations 168)

Responsibility/Accountability

The Approved Provider, according to Regulations is responsible for the implementation of this policy. This will be achieved through the Centre Manager and the staff:

- That the service environment and educational program supports children and families to make healthy choices for eating and Active Play
- Providing ongoing information, resources and support to families, to assist in the promotion of optimum health for young children
- The implementation of adequate health and hygiene procedures, and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service (National Regulation 77) (refer to *Hygiene Policy* and *Food Safety Policy*)
- That all staff/educators comply with the *Food Safety Act*
- That all staff/educators are aware of a child's food allergies and/or other medical conditions at enrolment or on initial diagnosis
- Measures are in place to prevent cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies and/or Diabetes (refer to *Anaphylaxis Policy*, *Asthma Policy*, *Diabetes Policy* and *Food Safety Policy*)
- That all staff/educators are aware of, and plan for, the dietary needs of children diagnosed with Diabetes (refer to *Diabetes Policy*)
- That fresh drinking water is readily available at all times, and reminding children to drink water throughout the day, including at snack/lunch times (National Regulation 78)
- That food and drinks are available to children at frequent and regular intervals throughout the day (National Regulation 78)
- That celebrations and other service events are consistent with the purposes and values of this policy and service procedures

Where food is provided at the service:

- Ensuring that food and drink provided by the service is nutritious, adequate in quantity and appropriate to children's growth and development, and meets any specific cultural, religious or health needs (National Regulation 79)
- Ensuring that a weekly menu is displayed in a location accessible to parents/guardians, and that it accurately describes the food and drinks to be provided by the service each day (National Regulation 80)
- Ensuring that the service is registered and working in line with the *Food Safety Act* and National Regulations
- Ensuring that any staff/educators involved in food preparation, serving and storage, comply with the *Food Safety Act*.

Evolve Early Learning and Kindergarten provides:

- Fresh, nutritious, homestyle meals for children within our service every day, through Kids Gourmet Foods – KGF.
- All KFG menus have been designed to meet criteria recommended by Australian Dietary Guidelines and the National Quality Standard. Menus provide a minimum of 50% of the recommended daily intake of all nutrients required for each day while in care.
- KFG works with nutritionists and dieticians and consult with national advisory groups to ensure the highest nutritional standards. In their six-week rotational menu, the children's meals contain food from the five food groups recommended by the Australian Dietary Guidelines

Their healthy and balanced meals include a variety of:

- Fresh vegetables and legumes
- Seasonal fruit
- Wholegrains and seeds
- Lean fresh meat and fish
- Dairy options
- KGF'S weekly menus are displayed in a location accessible to parents/guardians, and that it accurately describes the food and drinks provided by the service each day (National Regulation 80)
- These menu's offer a wide selection of fresh fruit and raw vegetables with morning and afternoon tea, as well as steamed, fresh vegetables at lunchtime.
- Children with food intolerances are appropriately and safely catered for with KGF's chefs who are professionally trained to produce creative and delicious meals have a separate preparation area which suits children with allergies or cultural preferences (National Regulation 79)
- All meals are carefully packaged and delivered to our centre daily within hours of being prepared by KGF's chefs.

The Nominated Supervisor is responsible for:

- Ensuring that the service environment and the educational program supports children and families to make healthy choices for eating and Active Play
- Ensuring the implementation of adequate health and hygiene procedures, and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service (National Regulation 77) (refer to *Hygiene Policy* and *Food Safety Policy*)
- Ensuring that all staff/educators comply with the *Food Safety Act*
- Ensuring that all staff/educators are aware of a child's food allergies and/or other medical conditions on enrolment or on initial diagnosis
- Ensuring measures are in place to prevent cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies and/or Diabetes (refer to *Anaphylaxis Policy*, *Asthma Policy*, *Diabetes Policy* and *Food Safety Policy*)
- Ensuring that all staff/educators are aware of, and plan for, the dietary needs of children diagnosed with Diabetes (refer to *Diabetes Policy*)
- Ensuring that fresh drinking water is readily available at all times, and reminding children to drink water throughout the day, including at snack/lunch times (National Regulation 78)
- Ensuring that food and drinks are available to children at frequent and regular intervals throughout the day (National Regulation 78)

- Ensuring that cultural and religious practices/requirements of families are accommodated to support children's learning and development
- Developing links with local and regional health services, community organisations and businesses that provide expertise, resources and support for Healthy Eating and Active Play

Educators and other staff are responsible for:

- Complying with the service's *Nutrition and Active Play Policy* and with the *Food Safety Act*
- Implementing adequate health and hygiene procedures, and safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food, to minimise risks to children (refer to *Hygiene Policy* and *Food Safety Policy*)
- Being aware of a child's food allergies and/or other medical conditions at enrolment or on initial diagnosis
- Implementing measures to prevent cross-contamination of any food given to children with diagnosed food allergies and/or Diabetes (refer to *Anaphylaxis Policy*, *Asthma Policy*, *Diabetes Policy* and *Food Safety Policy*)
- Being aware of, and planning for, the dietary needs of children diagnosed with Diabetes (refer to *Diabetes Policy*)
- Ensuring that the service environment and the educational program supports children and families to make healthy choices for eating and Active Play
- Discussing Healthy Eating choices with children, introducing the concept of 'Sometimes' Foods and Drinks, and role-modelling positive behaviours
- Exploring and discussing diverse cultural, religious, social and family lifestyles
- Considering this policy when organising excursions and service events
- Supporting students and volunteers to comply with this policy while at the service
- Keeping parents/guardians informed of current information relating to Healthy Eating and Active Play
- Ensuring that fresh drinking water is readily available at all times, and reminding children to drink regularly throughout the day, including at snack/meal times
- Ensuring that children can readily access their own clearly labelled drink containers (where this is a service practice)
- Providing food and drinks at regular intervals, and encouraging children to actively participate in, and enjoy, snack/meal times without feeling rushed
- Providing Adequate Supervision (refer to *Definitions*) for all children during meal/snack times
- Encouraging children to be independent at snack/meal times (e.g. pouring drinks, self-feeding, serving and using utensils in a culturally-sensitive way)
- Planning and providing outdoor Active Play that is stimulating, promotes skill development, considers safety issues and provides Adequate Supervision (refer to *Definitions*)
- Considering opportunities for children to be physically active indoors, particularly in adverse weather conditions
- Providing daily opportunities for all children to participate in age-appropriate Active Play
- Acting as positive role models by engaging in physical activity
- Minimising and closely supervising screen-based activities, in line with recommended guidelines
- Providing age-appropriate traffic safety education, including pedestrian and passenger safety to both children and parents/guardians at the service

- Promoting safe behaviour through daily practice as part of the program.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Complying with the requirements of this policy
- Providing details of specific Nutritional/dietary requirements, including the need to accommodate cultural or religious practices or food allergies, on their child's enrolment form, and discussing these with the Nominated Supervisor and educators prior to the child's commencement at the service, and if requirements change over time (refer to *Anaphylaxis Policy*, *Asthma Policy* and *Diabetes Policy*)
- Communicating regularly with staff/educators regarding children's specific nutritional requirements and dietary needs, including food preferences
- Encouraging their children to drink an adequate amount of water
- Providing healthy, nutritious food for snacks/meals, including fruits and vegetables where applicable
- Encouraging children to exercise by engaging in Active Play or walking to the service where appropriate
- Discussing appropriate road traffic safety and car safety practices, and role-modelling this behaviour.
- Volunteers and students, while at the service, are responsible for following this policy and its procedures.

Definitions

The terms defined in this section relate specifically to this policy and related procedures. For commonly used terms e.g. Approved Provider, Regulatory Authority etc. refer to the *Glossary of Terms*.

Word/Term	Definition
Active Play	Large muscle-based activities that are essential for a child's social, emotional, cognitive and physical growth and development.

<p>Adequate Supervision</p>	<p>(In relation to this policy) Supervision entails all children (individuals and groups) in all areas of the service, being in sight and/or hearing of an educator at all times including during toileting, sleep, rest and transition routines. Services are required to comply with the legislative requirements for educator-to-child ratios at all times. Supervision contributes to protecting children from hazards that may emerge in play, including hazards created by the equipment used.</p> <p>Adequate Supervision refers to constant, active and diligent supervision of every child at the service. Adequate Supervision requires that educators are always in a position to observe and/or hear each child, respond to individual needs, and immediately intervene if necessary.</p> <p>Variables affecting Supervision levels include: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - number, age and abilities of children - number and positioning of educators - current activity of each child - areas in which the children are engaged in an activity (visibility and accessibility) - developmental profile of each child and of the group of children - experience, knowledge and skills of each educator - need for educators to move between areas (effective communication strategies) - sole workers responding to care needs.
<p>Healthy Eating</p>	<p>Describes eating patterns that provide all the recommended nutrients for growth and development, and good health and wellbeing, now and in the future. It also refers to preparing, serving and eating food in a way that recognises its importance as a social and cultural activity.</p>
<p>Nutrition</p>	<p>The process of providing or receiving nourishing substances.</p>
<p>‘Sometimes’ Foods and Drinks</p>	<p>Food and drink items that are high in fat, sugar and/or salt, and that contain minimal vitamins, minerals or fibre.</p>

NUTRITION AND ACTIVE PLAY PROCEDURE

Purpose

Evolve Early Learning & Kindergarten acknowledges the importance of Healthy Eating and physical activity, and its contribution to good health and overall wellbeing.

Procedure

IN TERMS OF HEALTH, HYGIENE AND SAFE FOOD PRACTICES

The staff, educators and volunteers at the service implement:

- Adequate health and hygiene practices
- Safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service.

IN TERMS OF FOOD AND BEVERAGES

The staff, educators and volunteers must ensure that children being educated and cared for by the service:

- Have access to safe drinking water at all times
- Are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day.
- Any special dietary needs are to be discussed between the parent/guardian and educator prior to care commencing. Parents/guardians are to supply food for special diet or where required.
- All food and drinks should be appropriately stored, used according to instructions on labels and consumed by the expiry date.

IN TERMS OF SERVICE PROVIDING FOOD AND BEVERAGES

Parents/guardians, staff and educators that provides food or beverages to children being educated and cared for by the service must ensure that:

- The food or beverage provided is nutritious and adequate in quantity
- The food or beverage provided is chosen having regard to the dietary requirements of individual children taking into account:
 - Each child's growth and development needs
 - Taken to offer water more regularly in hot weather
- The child's individual needs determine the amount of food required. Educators must not force a child to eat under any circumstances.

IN TERMS OF THE WEEKLY MENU

Staff and educators that provide food and beverages (other than water) to children being educated and cared for by the service must ensure that a weekly menu:

- Is displayed at the education and care service premises in a place accessible to parents/guardians
- Accurately describes the food and beverages to be provided by the service each day
- To avoid doubt, this regulation does not apply to food and beverages provided by a parent/guardian or family member for consumption by the child.

IN TERMS OF NUTRITIONALLY APPROPRIATE FOOD

- Healthy food practices are promoted for Nutritional and dental hygiene reasons. Appropriate snacks for children including Fresh vegetables and legumes, Seasonal fruit, Wholegrains and seeds, Lean fresh meat and fish and Dairy options.
- An example of a suitable sized snack includes one piece of fruit, cheese and biscuits or a sandwich with a drink of water. Healthy lunches and snacks are important for active children and it is important to offer healthy lunchbox choices such as fresh fruit, crunchy vegetables (age appropriate – to prevent choking hazards in young children) and a combination of protein, dairy and carbohydrate foods.

IN TERMS OF BOTTLE-FED OR BREAST FED

- Milk for infants that are not yet on solid foods can be provided and should be stored in the baby's labelled drinking bottle, in an appropriately insulated bag or service

refrigerator. Individual needs of the baby regarding heating up processes should be discussed with the educators.

- Breast feeding mothers are able to provide expressed breast milk or visit during a session to feed their baby.

IN TERMS OF ACTIVE PLAY

- The educator, through appropriate planning, will contribute to each child's social, physical, emotional, intellectual, language and creative potential and will provide activities and opportunities for play that are appropriate to the developmental age and stage of the children.

The educator will provide a balance of:

- Indoor and outdoor activities
- Active and quiet activities
- Activities that can be freely chosen by the child.
- The parent/guardian will provide appropriate clothing and footwear to engage in Active Play.

IN TERMS OF OUTDOOR ACTIVE PLAY

- An approved outdoor play area will be available to each child throughout the year. Children will have access to this area each day unless due to adverse weather conditions.
- The outside areas to which children have access to must be kept tidy and free from rubbish, animal excrement or other potentially hazardous material.

References, Sources, Links to Legislation and Other Documents

Please refer to Reference and Sources page.

Related service policies:

Anaphylaxis Policy

Asthma Policy

Educational Program Development Policy

Dealing with Infectious Diseases Policy

Diabetes Policy

Excursions and Service Events Policy

Food Safety Policy

Hygiene Policy

Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy

Inclusion and Equity Policy

Sun Protection Policy.