

41 – NUTRITION, FOOD & BEVERAGES, DIETARY REQUIREMENTS POLICY

WHY WE HAVE THIS POLICY [PURPOSE]

Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) Services are required by legislation to ensure the provision of healthy foods and drinks that meet the requirements for children according to the Australian Dietary Guidelines

At Just Kids Early Education House, we partner with our families to provide education about nutrition and promote healthy eating habits for young children to positively influence their health and wellbeing. Dietary and healthy eating habits formed in the early years are shown to continue into adulthood and can reduce the risk factors associated with adult chronic conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

Just Kids recognises the importance of healthy eating for the growth, development and wellbeing of young children and is committed to promoting and supporting our parents/guardians to make healthy food and drink choices for their children whilst in our care.

We believe in providing a positive eating environment that reflects dietary requirements, cultural and family values, and promotes lifelong learning for children,

SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to all directors, teachers, educators, students and volunteers.

The Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements Policy should be read in the context of the following Just Kids Early Education House policies and procedures.

1. Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements Procedure

POLICY

Our service has a responsibility to help children develop good food practices and approaches by working together with families and educators. Just Kids Early Education House does not provide meals for the children. Parents are encouraged to provide food that is nutritious and has low sugar and sodium content. We believe in the importance of establishing and promoting a healthy lifestyle from a young age. Parents/Guardians are informed during the enrolment process of our nutrition policy.

Meal times reflect a self-paced, relaxed and pleasant environment where educators engage in meaningful conversations with children. When possible, educators will role model healthy eating behaviour. This modelling assists with creating a positive and enjoyable eating environment

In our Kindy and Pre-Prep learning rooms children are introduced to working with “Kiddie Cutter” knives. During morning tea and afternoon tea children are offered the choice of cutting up their own fruit under the supervision with staff.

Children will learn about healthy lifestyles, including nutrition and physical fitness, which is integral to wellbeing and self-confidence. We aim to achieve a strong sense of health and wellbeing supported by good nutrition and an active lifestyle which provides children with confidence, energy and optimism that contributes to their ability to concentrate, cooperate and learn.

Birthday Celebrations

Parents/Guardians are invited to celebrate their child’s birthday at Just Kids with his/her classmates this is done during afternoon tea time. Parents are encouraged to send something other than a cake as many children have food allergies and therefore would not be able to participate in the celebration. We also like to help minimize children’s intake of sugar.

Other ideas include: Bubbles, balloons (odd shaped ones are fun) birthday hats, a big picture of them as a baby, a special fruit platter (ask to see our fruit platter birthday photo book for some great ideas), popcorn, crackers with carrot and celery sticks etc.

Allergies and Anaphylaxis

Just Kids is an Allergy Aware Education and Care Service.

Anaphylaxis is a severe and sudden allergic reaction. It occurs when a person is exposed to an allergen to which they are sensitive. Allergens or trigger substances that may cause anaphylaxis in school-aged children are: peanuts; tree nuts; fish; shellfish; eggs; cow’s milk; insect stings; certain medications. Other potential allergens may include soy, sesame, wheat, seeds, coconut and latex.

While we suggest that parents are mindful of the foods they pack in lunch boxes and the dangers they may pose to children with anaphylactic reactions, it is important for all parents and community members to understand that Just Kids do NOT claim to be a ‘NutFree’ or ‘Egg-Free’ service. This is consistent with both the Education Queensland Anaphylaxis Guidelines for Queensland, and the Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy (ASCIA).

For children with a known severe allergy, the key to the prevention of potentially serious reactions is avoiding exposure to the relevant allergen. The greatest risk for such a child is from accidental exposure to the allergen.

The Australasian Society of Clinical Immunology and Allergy Inc (ASCIA) Guidelines note four steps in the prevention of food anaphylactic reactions for children’s services: 1) obtaining medical information about children who may be at risk 2) education of those responsible for the care of children concerning the risk of food anaphylaxis 3) implementation of practical strategies to avoid exposure to known triggers, and 4) age appropriate education of children with severe food allergies

GOVERNANCE - LINKS, REFERENCES OR ASSOCIATED POLICY

- ACECQA: <https://www.acecqa.gov.au/>
- National Quality Framework
- Early Years Learning Framework
- Staying Healthy in Childcare 5th Edition
- Nutrition Australia
- ASCIA - <https://www.allergy.org.au/schools-childcare>
- ASCIA - Examples of risk minimisation strategies for schools, preschools and childcare services https://www.allergy.org.au/images/scc/ASCIA_Risk_minimisation_strategies_table_030315.pdf

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Just Kids Early Education House				
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V1	6/6/14	Linda Green	First policy.	
v1.1	23/2/18	Hayley Williams	Updated in accordance with current Nutrition and Food Safe Requirements.	
Nominated Supervisor Approval:		2/6/18	Review Date:	2/6/20