

## NUTRITION & FOOD SAFETY POLICY

<b>Related Quality Area</b>	QA2: Health and Safety
<b>Related Policies</b>	Breastfeeding Policy Hygiene Policy Hand Washing Policy

### PURPOSE

Nightcliff Family Centre (the Centre) recognises the importance of safe food handling and is committed to supporting the healthy food and drink choices of children in our care. The Centre will implement the healthy eating key messages outlined in the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and the Menu Planning Guidelines for long day care by Nutrition Australia. The Centre recognises the importance of healthy eating for the growth, development, and wellbeing of young children. The Centre believe in providing a positive eating environment that reflects dietary requirements, cultural and family values, and promotes lifelong learning for children.

### SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, visitors, and management of the Centre.

### IMPLEMENTATION

The Centre encourages and supports breastfeeding and appropriate introduction of solid foods.

Refer to the Breastfeeding, bottle feeding and bottle safety policy.

### The Centre will:

- Consult with families on enrolment to develop individual management plans, including completing Risk Minimisation Plans for children with medical conditions involving food allergies, food intolerances and special dietary requirements as per Medical Conditions Policy.
- Ensure children's individual dietary requirements as per enrolment information or medical condition plans are communicated to all staff and food handlers.
- Ensure appropriate foods (type and texture) are introduced around 6 months of age.
- Adjust the texture of foods offered between 6 and 12 months of age to match the baby's developmental stage.
- Offer a variety of foods to babies from all the food groups.
- Always supervise babies while drinking and eating, ensuring safe bottle-feeding and eating practices at all times.
- Promote healthy food and drinks based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating and Menu Planning Guidelines for long day care by Nutrition Australia.
- Serve food 3 times a day, morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea, to cater for children's nutritional needs.
- Prepare food in accordance with the Centre Food Safety Program. All kitchens and food preparation areas will comply with Food Standards Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ).
- Provide children with a wide variety of healthy and nutritious foods for meals and snacks including fruit and vegetables, cereal products, dairy products, lean meats, and alternatives.

- Plan and display the Centre menu (one week at a time) that is based on sound menu planning principles and meets 50% of the daily nutritional needs of children.
- Plan healthy snacks on the menu to complement what is served at mealtimes and ensure the snacks are substantial enough to meet the energy and nutrient needs of children.
- Vary the meals and snacks on the menu to keep children interested and to introduce children to a range of healthy food ideas.
- Request that details of any food allergies or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided on enrolment and work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate response so that children's individual dietary needs are met.
- Appoint a Food Safety Supervisor to oversee food handlers (mandatory for all services who prepare food, including food brought from home).
- Keep an up-to-date *Food Safety Certificate Register* to provide evidence of safe food handling training for all food handlers.
- Keep records relating to receiving, storage, processing, displaying, and transportation of food. These records must be kept for a period of 3 months.

#### Additionally, MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/EDUCATORS WILL:

- Give water as the preferred drink and offer regularly. Milk is also offered every day at morning or afternoon tea.
- Ensure young children do not access foods that may cause choking.
- Ensure children remain seated and supervised while eating and drinking.
- Encourage and provide opportunities for cooking staff and educators to undertake regular professional development to maintain and enhance their knowledge about early childhood nutrition.
- Ensure age and developmentally appropriate utensils and furniture are provided for each child.
- Encourage toddlers to be independent and develop social skills at mealtimes.
- Talk to families about their child's food intake and voice any concerns about their child's eating.
- Provide food that considers each child's likes, dislikes, culture and religion.

See below section titled Creating a Positive Learning Environment for further details on Page 5.

#### FOOD HYGIENE

Our Centre will strictly adhere to food hygiene standards to prevent the risk of food poisoning.

#### BUYING AND TRANSPORTING FOOD

##### Our Centre will:

- Have a Food Safety Program checked every year to remain within the guidelines and requirements of the Department of Health.
- Always check labels for the 'use by' and 'best before' dates, understanding that 'use by' dates apply to perishable foods that could potentially cause food poisoning if out of date, whilst 'best before' dates refer to food items with long shelf life but quality could be compromised.
- Avoid buying food items in damaged, swollen, leaking or dented packaging.
- Always check eggs: Never use dirty or cracked eggs.
- Never buy any food item if unsure about its quality.
- Ensure fresh meat, chicken, or fish products cannot leak on to other food items.
- Ensure chilled, frozen, and hot food items are kept out of the 'danger zone' (5 °C to 60 °C) on the trip back to the Centre by:
  - Not getting chilled frozen, or hot food items until the end of the shopping.
  - Placing these items in an insulated shopping bag or cooler.
  - Immediately unpacking and storing these items upon the return to the Centre.

- Utilising delivery services from supermarkets to safely transport ordered groceries to the Centre.

## STORING FOOD:

### Our Centre will:

- Ensure the refrigerator and freezer has a thermometer and that the refrigerator is maintained at 5 °C or below and the freezer is maintained at -17 °C or below.
- Ensure fridge and freezer temperatures are checked daily.
- Store raw foods below cooked foods in the refrigerator to avoid cross contamination by foods dripping onto other foods.
- Ensure that all foods stored in the refrigerator are stored in strong food-safe containers with either a tight-fitting lid or tightly applied plastic wrap or foil.
- Ensure that all foods not stored in their original packaging are labelled with:
  - The name of the food,
  - The 'use by' date,
  - The date the food was opened,
  - Details of any allergens present in the food.
- Transfer the contents of opened cans into appropriate containers.
- Ensure all bottles and jars are refrigerated after opening.
- Place 'left-over' hot food in an appropriate sealed container in the refrigerator as soon as the steam has stopped rising. Food can be cooled quickly to this point by placing in smaller quantities in shallow containers, reducing the amount of time sitting in the 'danger zone'.
- Not reuse disposable containers (e.g. plastic take-away food containers).
- Store dry foods in labelled and sealed, air-tight containers if not in original packaging.
- Store dry foods in cupboards
- Store bulk dry foods only in food-safe and airtight containers.
- Use the FIFO (first in, first out) rule for all foods (dry, chilled, and frozen) to ensure rotation of stock so that older stock is used first.
- Store cleaning supplies separate to food items.

## PREPARING AND SERVING FOOD:

### Our Centre will:

- Ensure that all cooked food is cooked through.
- Ensure that cooked food is served promptly.
- Use a thermometer to ensure that hot food is maintained at above 60 °C until ready to serve.
- Ensure that prepared cold food is stored in the refrigerator maintained at below 5 °C until ready to serve.
- Discard any cooked food that has been left in the 'danger zone' for two or more hours. Do not reheat.
- Reheat cooked food (if required, for example for a child who was sleeping at lunch time) to a temperature of 70 °C (but only ever reheat once. Discard if the food is not eaten after being reheated).
- Keep cooked and ready-to-eat foods separate from raw foods.
- Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly under clean running water before preparation.
- Ensure unused washed fruit or vegetables are thoroughly dry before returning to storage.
- Ensure food that has been dropped on the floor is immediately discarded.
- Thoroughly clean kitchen utensils and equipment between using with different foods and/or between different tasks.
- Avoid cross-contamination by ensuring that colour-coded cutting boards are used (note that it doesn't matter which colour you use for which food providing signs are displayed to alert all staff). Common colours are:

- Blue: raw fish/seafood
- Green: fruit and vegetables
- Red: raw meat
- Brown: cooked meat
- Yellow: raw poultry
- White: bakery and dairy.
- Ensure that gloves are changed between handling different foods or changing tasks.
- Ensure that staff preparing food for children with food allergies or intolerances are proficient at reading ingredient labels.
- Ensure that food allergies and intolerances are catered for by using separate easily identifiable cutting boards, utensils, and kitchen equipment (e.g. using a colour code, or food-safe permanent marker).
- Ensure that children with food allergies and/or intolerances are served their meals and snacks individually on an easily identifiable plate (e.g. different colour), and that food is securely covered with plastic wrap until received by the child to prevent possible cross-contamination.
- Ensure that unwell staff do not handle food.
- The Centre has a no-salt policy in meal preparation. Further, the Centre has the position that no sugar is added for any food prepared for 0–2-year-olds and less than 5gm sugar per 100gm of food from 3 to 5 years olds. This position is consistent with the Menu Planning Guidelines for Long Day Care from the National Nutrition Foundation.

#### CLEANING:

##### Our Centre will:

- Ensure that:
  - food preparation areas and surfaces are cleaned both before, after, and during any food preparation.
  - all cooking and serving utensils are cleaned and sanitised before use.
  - all dishwashing sponges, brushes, and scourers are cleaned after each use and allowed to air dry or placed in the dishwasher.
  - the food storage area is clean, ventilated, dry, pest free, and not in direct sunlight.
  - refrigerators and freezers are cleaned regularly and door seals checked and replaced if not in good repair.
  - Prevent pest infestations by cleaning spills as quickly as possible and ensuring rubbish and food scraps are disposed of frequently.
  - floor mops are thoroughly cleaned and air dried after each use.
  - Replace any cleaning equipment that shows signs of wear or permanent soiling.

#### PERSONAL HYGIENE FOR FOOD HANDLERS:

##### Our Centre will ensure:

- Clean clothing is worn by food handlers (such as an apron or appropriate jacket).
- Long hair is tied back or covered with a net (hairspray may be used for fringes to secure hair).
- Hand and wrist jewellery is not worn while preparing food (e.g. rings and bracelets).
- Nails are kept short and clean and no nail polish is worn (as it can chip into food and hide dirt under the nails).
- Strict hand-washing hygiene is adhered to, including washing hands each time they return to the kitchen before continuing with food preparation duties.
- Wounds or cuts are covered with a brightly coloured, waterproof dressing (that will easily be seen if it falls off), and gloves will be worn over any dressings.
- Staff who are not well will not prepare or handle food.

##### All staff handling food will:

- Ensure gloves (or food tongs) are used by all staff handling 'ready to eat' foods.

- Ensure children and staff wash and dry their hands (using soap, running water, and paper hand towels) before handling food or eating meals and snacks.
- Ensure food is stored and served at safe temperatures (below 5°C or above 60°C), with consideration to the safe eating temperature requirements of children.
- Ensure separate cutting boards are used for raw meat and chicken, fruit and vegetables, and utensils and hands are washed before touching other foods.
- Discourage children from handling other children's food and utensils.  
Ensure food-handling staff members attend relevant training courses and pass relevant information on to the rest of the staff.

From **Friday 8 December 2023**, Early Education and Care Services who prepare food, including ready-to-eat food or meals that have been brought into the service by families, must adhere to requirements relating to food safety outlined within the Food Standards Code and Food Act 2003 (Standard 3.2.2A). The revised requirements involve the appointment of a Food Safety Supervisor who must be available to supervise food handlers at the service. It is a requirement that both the Food Safety Supervisor and all food handlers attend food safety training. Additionally, records must be maintained relating to receiving, storage, processing, displaying, and transportation of food. These records must be retained for a period of 3 months.

## CREATING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

### Our Service will:

- Ensure educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role-model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided
- Encourage water as a preferred drink.
- Endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying the social interactions with educators and other children.
- Encourage older toddlers and pre-schoolers to assist to set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink, providing opportunities for them to develop independence and self-esteem while promoting children's agency and decision-making.
- Respect each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he/she eats.
- Be patient with messy or slow eaters.
- Encourage children to try different foods but do not force them to eat.
- Not use food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes.
- Role-model and discuss safe food handling with children.

## SERVICE PROGRAM

### Our Service will:

- foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children's program a range of learning experiences encouraging children's healthy eating
- encourage children to participate in a variety of 'hands-on' food preparation experiences
- provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning and discussion about healthy food and drink choices
- embed the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in everyday activities and experiences.

## COOKING WITH CHILDREN

Cooking can help develop children's knowledge and skills regarding healthy eating habits. Cooking is a great, fun activity and provides opportunities for children to be exposed to new foods, sharing of recipes and cooking skills. On these occasions participating educators will be vigilant to ensure that the experience remains safe, and relevant food hygiene practices are adhered to.

## COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES

### Our Service will:

- provide a copy of the *Nutrition and Food Safety Policy* to all families upon orientation at the Service.
- provide opportunities for families to contribute to the review and development of the policy.
- request that details of any food allergies or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to the Service and work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate response so that children's individual dietary needs are met.
- communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within the Service.

## REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Judy Rondon	Director	July 2022
POLICY REVIEWED	July 2022	NEXT REVIEW DATE	July 2023
MODIFICATIONS ADDED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy reviewed and included suggested guidelines from ACECQA Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements Policy Guidelines (August 2021)</li> </ul> <p>Additional sections added:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Menu Planning Guidelines for long day care by Nutrition Australia.</li> <li>Serve food 3 times a day, morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea, to cater for children’s nutritional needs.</li> <li>Milk is also offered everyday at Morning or afternoon tea.</li> <li>Have a Food Safety Program checked every year to remain within the guidelines and requirements of the Department of Health</li> <li>Consult with families on enrolment to develop individual management plans, including completing Risk Minimisation Plans for children with medical conditions involving food allergies, food intolerances and special dietary requirements as per Medical Conditions Policy</li> <li>Ensure children’s individual dietary requirements as per enrolment information or medical condition plans are communicated to all staff and food handlers</li> <li>Encourage children to participate in a variety of ‘hands-on’ food preparation experiences</li> </ul>		
MODIFICATION DISMISSED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In consultation with families, offer cooled pre-boiled water as an additional drink from around 6 months of age. (Milk preparation Policy)</li> <li>Where breastfeeding is discontinued before 12 months of age, substitute with commercial infant formula (Milk preparation Policy).</li> </ul>		

## REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Judy Rondon	Director	
POLICY REVIEWED	JULY 2023	NEXT REVIEW DATE	July 2024
MODIFICATIONS	<p>JULY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>updates to the Food Safety Standards (effective Dec 2023)</li> <li>From Friday 8 December 2023, Early Education and Care Services who prepare food, including ready-to-eat food or meals that have been brought into the service by families, must adhere to requirements relating to food safety outlined within the Food Standards Code and Food Act 2003 (Standard 3.2.2A). The revised requirements involve the appointment of a Food Safety Supervisor who must be available to supervise food handlers at the service. It is a requirement that both the Food Safety Supervisor and all food</li> </ul>		

	<p>handlers attend food safety training. Additionally, records must be maintained relating to receiving, storage, processing, displaying, and transportation of food. These records must be retained for a period of 3 months.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint a Food Safety Supervisor to oversee food handlers</li> <li>• keep an up-to-date <i>Food Safety Certificate Register</i> to provide evidence of safe food handling training for all food handlers</li> <li>• keep records relating to receiving, storage, processing, displaying and transportation of food. These records must be kept for a period of 3 months</li> </ul>
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POLICY REVIEWED BY	Judy Rondon	Director	August 2024
POLICY REVIEWED	August 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	July 2025
MODIFICATIONS	<p><b>CREATING A POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <p>Our Service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ensure that educators sit with the children at meal and snack times to role-model healthy food and drink choices and actively engage children in conversations about the food and drink provided</li> <li>• choose water as a preferred drink</li> <li>• endeavour to recognise, nurture and celebrate the dietary differences of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds</li> <li>• create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have enough time to eat and enjoy their food as well as enjoying the social interactions with educators and other children</li> <li>• encourage older toddlers and pre-schoolers to assist to set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink, providing opportunities for them to develop independence and self-esteem while promoting children’s agency and decision-making</li> <li>• respect each child’s appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he/she eats.</li> <li>• be patient with messy or slow eaters</li> <li>• encourage children to try different foods but do not force them to eat</li> <li>• not use food as a reward or withhold food from children for disciplinary purposes</li> <li>• role-model and discuss safe food handling with children</li> </ul> <p><b>SERVICE PROGRAM</b></p> <p>Our Service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• foster awareness and understanding of healthy food and drink choices through including in the children’s program a range of learning experiences encouraging children’s healthy eating</li> <li>• encourage children to participate in a variety of ‘hands-on’ food preparation experiences</li> <li>• provide opportunities for children to engage in discovery learning</li> </ul>		

	<p>and discussion about healthy food and drink choices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• embed the importance of healthy eating and physical activity in everyday activities and experiences.</li> </ul> <p><b>COOKING WITH CHILDREN</b></p> <p>Cooking can help develop children’s knowledge and skills regarding healthy eating habits. Cooking is a great, fun activity and provides opportunities for children to be exposed to new foods, sharing of recipes and cooking skills. On these occasions participating educators will be vigilant to ensure that the experience remains safe, and relevant food hygiene practices are adhered to.</p> <p><b>COMMUNICATING WITH FAMILIES</b></p> <p>Our Service will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide a copy of the <i>Nutrition and Food Safety Policy</i> to all families upon orientation at the Service</li> <li>• provide opportunities for families to contribute to the review and development of the policy</li> <li>• request that details of any food allergies or intolerances or specific dietary requirements be provided to the Service and work in partnership with families to develop an appropriate response so that children’s individual dietary needs are met</li> <li>• communicate regularly with families about food and nutrition related experiences within the Service</li> </ul>
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POLICY REVIEWED BY	Judy Rondon Hannah West	Director Parent Committee	
POLICY REVIEWED	July 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	July 2026
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Centre has adopted a no-salt policy in meal preparation, Zero teaspoons of added sugar for 0–2-year-olds and less than 5g sugar per 100g food from 3 to 5 years old, following the Menu Planning Guidelines for Long Day Care from the National Nutrition Foundation.</li> <li>• Minor text flow and formatting updates</li> </ul>		