

Healthy Children

- Nutrition, food, beverages and dietary requirements
- Physical activity
- Small screen recreation

Policy introduction

Healthy eating by children and young people is important in order to obtain adequate amounts of nutrients essential for good health, growth and development. Physical activity is also important to help achieve a healthy weight and associated health benefits. Childhood is a period where education about healthy eating and physical activity is key to establishing healthy practices in later years. Children who are overweight or obese have a much greater chance of going on to become overweight or obese adults. The prevalence of overweight or obesity among young people aged 5 to 17 years has stabilised in recent years, but is still at concerning levels, with more than one in five (22.8%) children (24% of boys and 21.5% of girls) being overweight or obese.

Weldon Children's Services recognises the importance of healthy eating and the benefits of physical activity in the growth and development of children. We are committed to supporting the healthy food and drink choices of the children attending our programs and providing a balanced curriculum that encourages physical activity.

Our policy in action

We will:

- Role model healthy eating and activity throughout the day to children and families
- Promote the six key Munch and Move messages to promote healthy, active habits in children from a young age
- Develop menus in accordance with the Australian Government *Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood Settings*, and *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*
- Support families in educating their children about healthy food choices

Statutory legislation and considerations

- Education and Care Services national Law 2010
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011

Strategies for policy implementation

Professional development for educators and staff

- All educators will attend Munch and Move professional development training or receive similar training and information
- All educators/staff will have access to *Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood Settings*, and *Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*
- Staff employed to prepare meals will be qualified in an approved training course on food handling, nutrition and hygiene, and be provided with ongoing professional development

- opportunities to refresh their knowledge of children's dietary needs, food handling and hygiene procedures

As the approved provider we will:

- Ensure that all children have access to safe drinking water at all times
- Ensure that all children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day
- Ensure that food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity and take into account each child's individual dietary requirements, growth and development needs and any specific cultural, religious or health requirements
- Ensure that our programs display an accessible menu which accurately describes the food and beverages provided by the program each day
- Ensure that educators/staff are aware of the need to implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children attending the program

Our nominated supervisors will ensure that:

- All children have access to safe drinking water at all times
- All children are offered food and beverages appropriate to the needs of each child on a regular basis throughout the day
- Food and beverages provided are nutritious and adequate in quantity in consideration of growth and development needs, any known allergies and intolerances specific to children, individual dietary requirements and cultural and religious needs
- The program displays an accessible menu which accurately describes the food and beverages provided by the program each day
- The menu is diverse and will reflect the cultural backgrounds of families and the local community
- Educators/staff implement adequate health and hygiene practices and use safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food to minimise risks to children
- Ensure that as per the Medical Conditions Policy the program will promote the program as a 'nut free zone' and that all dietary conditions relating to medical conditions are adhered to

Our educators and staff will ensure that:

- Healthy eating is promoted through role modeling and eating with the children
- Children are encouraged to make healthy food choices
- All meal times are positive, relaxed and social
- Children are encouraged to try new foods and their food dislikes respected
- Children are positively involved in meal and snack times
- Best practices around the safe storage and heating of both expressed breast milk and formula are adhered to
- Adequate health and hygiene practices and safe use practices for handling, preparing and storing food are implemented to minimise risks for children
- Ensure that as per the Medical Conditions Policy the program will remain a "nut free zone" and that all dietary conditions relating to medical conditions are adhered to

- The introduction of solids to babies and toddlers will be done in consultation with families and in line with recognised guidelines

Supporting families

- Educators and staff will support families' choices regarding infant feeding, including breastfeeding and bottle feeding
- Our programs will provide families with up to date information on dietary requirements of young children to ensure optimal growth and development and provide families with opportunities to discuss ways to maximize the health and well-being of their child/children
- Our program will provide daily information about their child's intake of food and drinks during attendance at the program

Education and information

- Educators will engage children in learning experiences that are fun enjoyable and incorporate key messages about healthy eating
- Implemented learning experiences will be guided by the Early Years Learning Framework/My Time Our Place principles and incorporate the child's identity
- Families will be provided with current information about recommended guidelines around dietary requirements, screen time and physical activity

Physical activity

Being physically active is good for a health and wellbeing and creates opportunities for making new friends and developing physical and social skills. Children of all ages irrespective of cultural background, gender or ability should engage in physical activity on a daily basis.

Our policy in action

We will:

- Promote children's participation in a range of safe physically active learning experiences
- Provide a positive environment for physical activity which reflects cultural and family values
- Promote lifelong enjoyment of physical activity
- Limit time spent engaging in small screen recreation (television, DVDs, computer and other electronic games) and sedentary behaviour whilst attending the program
- Encourage communication with families about physical activity, gross motor skills development, fundamental skills development and limiting small screen recreation and sedentary behaviour

Our educators will:

- Ensure that children have opportunities to be physically active in a manner that:
 - reflects current physical activity recommendations for children
 - supports both educator guided and spontaneous active play
 - supports development of fundamental movements skills for young children
 - is appropriate to the child's stage of development
 - it occurs in a physical environment that is challenging yet safe
- Limit small screen and sedentary behaviours

- Provide learning experiences for children about physical activity through both the emerging program and intentional teaching
- Advise families of our programs' approach to physical activity and our policies and practices
- Educate families about physical activity, both opportunistically and through the program
- Promote 'Move and Play Every Day' and 'Make your Move' and the daily physical guidelines for early childhood and school age children

Guidelines for babies and children to 5 years of age:

- Toddlers and preschoolers (1 to 5 years of age) should be physically active every day for at least 3 hours spread throughout the day

Guidelines for children 5 years to 12 years of age:

- For health benefits, children aged 5 to 12 years should accumulate at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous intensity physical activity every day
- Children's physical activity should include a variety of aerobic activities, including some vigorous intensity activity
- On at least three days per week, children should engage in activities that strengthen muscle and bone

Sedentary behaviour

- Infants, toddlers and pre-schoolers should not be sedentary, restrained or inactive for more than one hour at a time, with the exception of sleeping
- Children aged five (5) to twelve (12) should minimise the time they spend being sedentary every day. This can be achieved by: limiting use of electronic media for entertainment and breaking up long periods of sitting as often as possible

Small screen recreation

We acknowledge that small screen recreation (watching television/DVDs, using a computer, playing electronic games) can play a role in children's development, however, it involves time spent sitting still and can displace time available for children to be physically active. Most children will have more than enough exposure to small screen recreation at home, so we limit small screen recreation in our education and care programs.

Our Educators will:

- Observe the national guidelines with respect to small screen recreation for children younger than two (2) years of age
- Limit the amount of time children 2 to 5 years of age spend sitting and watching television and using electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games) to less than 30 minutes per day at the program if at all
- Limit experiences involving small screen use to those which have an educational component, including movement
- Monitor and limit small screen time in OOSH to less than one (1) hour per day
- Discuss with preschool and school aged children the role of small screen time in their lives and support them in making healthy choices about their use of small screen recreation for both education and recreation
- Model appropriate small screen behaviours to the children

National guidelines small screen recreation

- Children younger than two (2) years of age should not spend any time watching television or using electronic media (DVDs, computer or other electronic games)
- For children two (2) to five (5) years of age, limit access to watching television and other electronic media (DVDs, computer and other electronic games) to less than one hour per day
- For children five (5) to twelve (12) years of age limit access to electronic media to (television, seated electronic games and computer use) to no more than two (2) hours a day

Computers

- When computers are available for children's use whilst attending a Weldon programme the following strategies will apply:
 - Each child's computer use will be limited to a specified time period following national guidelines and under the supervision of educators
 - Access will be carefully monitored to ensure developmentally appropriate open ended games and software programs that reflect Weldon's philosophy are being viewed
 - Where computers being used by children have access to the internet, content will be strictly monitored ensuring appropriate online material is being accessed
 - Inappropriate material for children may include, but is not limited to; Social media platforms, online communications or messaging services and content which age appropriateness exceeds that of the child

Personal Devices

Personal devices may include, but are not limited too; iPad, iPod, Tablet or Gaming devices

- Weldon does not encourage the heavy use of personal electronics devices within its programmes.
- Weldon suggest that these devices do not accompany children to the programme
- Where children have access to personal electronic devices whilst attending a Weldon programme the following strategies will apply:
 - Each child's use will be limited to a specified time period following national guidelines and under the supervision of educators
 - Access will be carefully monitored to ensure developmentally appropriate open ended games and software programs that reflect Weldon's philosophy are being viewed
 - Children who have access to personal electronic devices will be instructed and monitored to ensure; Children do not access any social media platforms, communication or messaging services, or any form of inappropriate material
 - Where personal electronic devices have the ability to photograph, film, or record further monitoring and instruction is required. To protect the safety of all children and staff, these devices must not be used to photograph, film or record and child or member of staff for any reason
 - Where Wifi or internet connectivity is available for personal devices, access will not be

- provided to children who have access to such devices
- Where children do not adhere to the safety guidelines, the device may be withheld by staff and returned to the parent/caregiver upon collection of the child.
- The Nominated Supervisor or Responsible person may, at their discretion chose to apply the same guidelines set out in this policy for mobile phones to the use of personal electronic devices
- Weldon assume no responsibility for the loss or damage of any personal electronic devices brought to the programme by children or families

Mobile Phones

- Weldon does not permit the use of mobile phones by children whilst enrolled in our programmes. We encourage these devices not to be brought by children when attending.
- Where children have brought mobile phones to the Weldon programme procedures will be developed to clarify:
 - Mobile phones will be given to or collected by the Responsible Person for safe keeping
 - Mobile phones will be returned to children upon their departure from the programme
- Weldon assume no responsibility for the loss or damage of any personal electronic devices brought to the programme by children or families

Our Nominated Supervisor, Responsible Person, Educators and Staff will:

- In addition to this policy, also follow the educational guidelines for electronic media within our Educational Program policy; before the use of electronic media in programs.

Evaluation

- Our programs offer appropriate and healthy food and beverages to all children
- Meal and snack times are relaxed and model healthy eating to children
- Educator led and spontaneous physical activities are included in the program
- Small screen recreation is monitored and limited as appropriate to the age of the children

Procedures

The following list of procedures supports the implementation of this policy:

- Educational program planning and implementation
- Food handling
- Menu planning

Links to other policies

The following policies may be linked to this policy:

- Educational Program
- Complaints and Feedback
- Partnerships and Communication with Families
- Fees Policy
- Supervision

The National Quality Framework

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010

Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011: 77, 78, 79, 80, 168

National Quality Standard for Early Childhood Education and Care and School Age Care

QA 2 Standard 2.1: Elements 2.1.2, 2.1.3 Standard 2.2 Elements 2.2.1, 2.2.2, 2.2.3

Sources

- Healthy Kids - NSW Health
- Community Early Learning Australia
- Nutrition Australia
- Munch and Move - NSW Health
- Eat Well Grow Well
- Hunter Health - Good for Kids, Good for Life