



Nutrition, Healthy Eating and Active Play Policy

Purpose

The staff and committee acknowledge the importance of healthy-eating behaviours and active play that contribute to good oral health and overall wellbeing. This policy will provide guidelines to:

- Encourage children to make healthy choices
- Promote the importance of a healthy lifestyle, which includes eating nutritious food and participating in active play
- Provide opportunities for active play
- Meet the requirements for the award criteria of the Kids – 'Go for your life' award program.
- Refer to Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS), Quality Practices Guide 2005, Principle 6.1.

Policy statement

1. Values

St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care (OHSC) Centre is committed to:

- Promoting healthy foods and eating habits that ensure healthy growth and development in children
- Supporting the state government-funded Kids – 'Go for your life' initiative, which supports children's services to promote healthy eating and active play
- Providing a pleasant and attractive place for meal and snack times that are inclusive, culturally appropriate and sensitive occasions
- Ensuring that meal and snack times are an opportunity for social learning and positive interaction, with staff sitting with children to act as role models
- Consulting and working collaboratively with families, recognising cultural practices and lifestyle choices
- The education of parents/guardians and the community about healthy eating and active play through the provision of information, role-modelling and discussion/consultation while acknowledging the diversity of all families
- Providing guidelines for a flexible approach to serving and consuming food for children attending the centre
- Providing food and drink that is safe, varied, nutritious and culturally diverse
- Providing opportunities for children to try new foods, including different colours, flavours, aromas and textures through menu planning and cooking experiences
- Communicating effectively with families about their child's food and nutrition requirements
- Providing children with opportunities to learn about food, nutrition and healthy lifestyles
- Providing a safe, supportive and social environment in which children can enjoy eating
- Encouraging physical activity by providing a range of active play experiences for all children in the centre.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all staff, parents/guardians, committee members, volunteers and students on placement participating in activities related to St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care (OHSC) Centre

3. Background and legislation

The foods we eat provide our body with the nutrients needed to stay healthy. Good nutrition is the balanced eating of a variety of foods and is especially important for children because they need extra 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 give preschool children a good start to healthy eating because most children have formed lifelong eating habits by school age.

Active play using the large muscles develops a strong and healthy body, builds skills, creates a feeling of wellbeing and helps protect from disease. Active play is about moving, being and doing. (Refer to the Kids – ‘Go for your life’ Starter Pack.)

Healthy eating and active play are essential if children are to grow, learn and develop their physical, social and emotional health and wellbeing.

Relevant legislation may include but is not limited to:

- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 (ECSNR)
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Child Wellbeing and Safety Act 2005
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth)
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cwlth)
- Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004.

4. Definitions

Active play: Large muscle experiences that are essential for a child’s social, emotional, cognitive and physical growth and development.

Healthy eating: A term to describe the eating patterns that provide all the recommended nutrients for good health, growth and wellbeing now and in the future. It also refers to preparing, serving and eating in a way that considers the importance of food as a social and cultural activity.

Kids – ‘Go for your life’: A state-wide program funded by the Victorian State Government and managed by Diabetes Australia Victoria and Cancer Council Victoria.

Nutrition: The process of providing or receiving nourishing substances.

‘Sometimes’ foods and drink: Foods and drinks high in fat, sugar and salt, such as chips, lollies, chocolate, biscuits, cakes, muesli and snack bars, pies, pasties, hot dogs, fried foods, takeaway fast food, soft drinks, juices and cordial.

5. Sources and related centre policies

Sources

Kids – ‘Go for your life’: www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au/kids
Smiles 4 Miles: www.dhsv.org.au/smiles4miles
Nutrition Australia
Better Health Channel

Centre policies

- Anaphylaxis
- Behaviour guidance
- Communication
- Food safety
- Hygiene
- Illness
- Inclusion and equity
- Program participation
- Sun protection

Procedures

The committee is responsible for:

- Reviewing annually, in consultation with the staff, committee and parents/guardians, the guidelines for celebrations considering the needs of families and children in relation to nutrition, allergies, cultural diversity, religion and age appropriateness
- Ensuring that play spaces, play equipment, meal times and relaxation, social play and eating environments support children and families to make healthy choices for eating and play

- Providing ongoing information to families in the form of brochures, newsletters, tip sheets and support focused on promoting optimum health for young children
- Providing healthy ideas for children's snacks or lunchboxes
- On lunch days discouraging the sending of 'sometimes' foods and drinks, such as sweet drinks or pre-packaged foods, in children's snack/lunchboxes
- Ensuring that staff responsible for menu planning in centres that provide food for the children participate in regular nutrition training and are regularly updated with research and knowledge
- Ensuring that food provided by the service is 'nutritious, varied and adequate in quantity and appropriate to the children's growth, cultural and developmental needs' (ECSN regulations)
- Ensuring that fundraising activities are consistent with the purposes and values of this policy and the centre.

Staff are responsible for:

- Role-modelling and discussing with the children healthy-eating choices
- Exploring and discussing cultural, social and family lifestyles
- Supporting this policy when organising excursions and centre events
- Ensuring students on placement and volunteers are aware of and comply with this policy
- Ensuring staff and parents are kept informed of current information relating to healthy eating and active play
- Encouraging children to eat and drink and to participate in snack times
- Encouraging children to be independent at snack and meal times with pouring drinks, preparing snacks and using utensils
- Ensuring children have time to eat without feeling rushed
- Ensuring food and drinks are available at frequent and regular intervals (ECSN regulations)
- Ensuring fresh drinking water is readily available during the session and reminding children to drink water during the day, including at snack/lunch times (ECSN regulations)
- Providing a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables each day, which are easily accessible to children
- Where children use drink containers, ensuring they have access to their drink containers during outdoor activities
- Displaying menus (ECSN regulations), sharing recipes and encouraging feedback about the food provided by the centre
- Ensuring menus do not include foods and drinks that are high in fat, salt and sugar
- Planning menus in accordance with the guidelines from recognised authorities, such as the Australian Nutrition Foundation
- Supervision of children during snack or meal times, which may involve sitting with the children and actively engaging with them where possible
- Discussing healthy choices with children and introducing the concept of 'everyday' foods and 'sometimes' foods
- Choosing alternatives to food for rewards, comfort and incentives; for example, positive encouragement and feedback, stickers or stamps
- Ensuring that play equipment, meal times and relaxation, social play and eating environments support children and families to make healthy choices for eating and play
- Undertaking program planning to ensure children are provided with a wide range of experiences to support social, emotional, physical and cognitive growth
- If required, developing links with the local and regional health services, community organisations and many businesses that provide expertise, resources and support for healthy eating and active play experiences
- Planning for regular outdoor active play, which includes safety, supervision, stimulation and skills
- Ensuring that all children participate in age-appropriate active play each day; the amount of time spent on these activities will depend on the length of time the children are in the centre

- Ensuring gender, cultural, age and individual differences are considered when planning activities
- Acting as good role models of physically active behaviour
- Varying active-play sessions to incorporate aspects of endurance, flexibility and strength
- Planning physical activity to encourage all children and to cater for a range of abilities
- Ensuring that, in adverse weather conditions, outdoor playing time is substituted with equivalent indoor activities
- Monitoring screen-based activities to minimise the amount of time children are engaged in these activities
- Offering age-appropriate educative programs for use on computers or televisions
- Closely supervising all screen-based activities by sitting with children and actively engaging with them and insuring school content only is provided
- Promoting appropriate safe behaviour through daily practice as part of the program.

Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Providing details of specific nutritional requirements, including allergies, on their child's enrolment form and discussing these with the qualified staff member prior to the child commencing at the centre and whenever these requirements change
- Encouraging their children to drink plenty of tap water
- Providing nutritional food and drinks for snacks, lunch as required, and celebrations consistent with the centre's policy
- Complying with the requirements of this policy
- Encouraging children to exercise by walking or riding bikes to the centre where appropriate
- Role-modelling and discussing appropriate road and car safety practices.

Evaluation

In order to assess whether the policy has achieved the values and purposes, the **St. Kevin's Out of Hours School Care** committee will:

- If appropriate, conduct a survey in relation to this policy or incorporate relevant questions within the general parents'/guardians' survey
- Take into consideration feedback from all users of the centre
- Monitor complaints related to this policy
- Complete and maintain the Kids – 'Go for your life' award program
- Keep updated on current research and legislation to ensure compliance.

Attachments

[Attachment 1](#): Dietary guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia (2003)

[Attachment 2](#): Guidelines for celebrations, special events and fundraising

Authorisation

This policy was adopted by the St Kevin's Out of Hours School Care (OHSC) Centre committee of management at a committee meeting on **18th October 2016**.

Review date: August 2018

Attachment 1 - Dietary guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia (2003)

The nutritional needs of children and adolescents are different from those of adults because children are growing and developing. The Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents were developed by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) in 1995 and subsequently reviewed in 2003. These guidelines apply to the general population of healthy children from birth to 18 years.

- Children and adolescents need sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally:
 - o Growth should be checked regularly for young children.
 - o Physical activity is important for all children and adolescents.
- Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods.
- Children and adolescents should be encouraged to:
 - o Eat plenty of vegetables, legumes and fruits
 - o Eat plenty of cereals (including breads, rice, pasta and noodles), preferably wholegrain
 - o Include lean meat, fish, poultry and/or alternatives
 - o Include milks, yoghurts, cheese and/or alternatives
 - o Select reduced-fat milks, however these are not suitable for young children under two years because of their high-energy needs
 - o Choose water as a drink (alcohol is not recommended for children or adolescents)
- Care should be taken to:
 - o Limit saturated fat and moderate total fat intake
 - o Low-fat diets are not suitable for infants
 - o Choose foods low in salt
 - o Consume only moderate amounts of sugars and foods containing added sugars.
- Care for your child's food: prepare and store it safely.

Please note these guidelines are not listed in order of importance. For more information or to download the document visit: www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/dietsyn.htm. Email: nhmrc.publications@nhmrc.gov.au

Reference

www.nutritionaustralia.org/Nutrition_for_All_Ages/Children/dietary_guidelines.asp, accessed May 18, 2006

Attachment 2 - Guidelines for celebrations, special events and fundraising

Celebrations and special events are part of the early childhood education calendar. These events will often include the use of 'sometimes foods' and it is important that the values, philosophy and policies of the centre are taken into consideration when planning these activities. Clear guidelines about the use of food in these activities will provide guidance for decision-making and information for staff when addressing parent's questions, and will assist the education of parents in the use of healthy foods in all areas of their lives.

Food safety and consideration for children with special dietary needs, cultural beliefs and allergies should also be addressed when developing these guidelines.

Celebrations

Celebrations may include birthdays, mother's/father's day morning teas and cultural activities.

Healthy foods can be presented in interesting ways to make celebrations special. Source some healthy recipes that could be provided to parents.

Consider other ways of celebrating or recognising a child's special day, for example:

- o They are the special helper for the day.
- o Other children may collect special objects or make something for that child.
- o Encourage families to bring something other than lolly bags or cake to share; instead, they may bring stickers, bubble wands or special pens.
- o A special cake or cakes is still recognised as an important element of such celebrations, but should be served with fruit and water to create a balance.
- o Wearing a special hat or badge for the day.
- o Choosing their favourite story, songs or activity.
- o Child brings some special mementos or photos of when they were born, or their parent may write a short story or come and share some of their special memories

Special events

Special events may include family days and working bees. It is important that consideration is given to the food that may be provided at these events and that an emphasis is placed on providing healthy food, such as fresh fruit platters.

Fundraising

Fundraising activities often involve the provision of food or use of food to raise money. Alternative activities may include:

- Drives such as toothbrushes, bulbs, fruit, tea towels, healthy snacks, educational toys and sunscreen
- Social activities – 'athons', family picnics/sports days and movie nights.