



Healthy Food Policy

1998, 2013

Rationale

Ardtornish Children's Centre provides a unique opportunity to promote and enhance the health and wellbeing of children in our local community. All staff strive to work with parents to optimise each child's health and wellbeing.

Children need healthy food to allow them to develop their full physical and mental potential. Children's food preferences and eating patterns are learned through, and powerfully influenced by early food and eating experiences. Appropriate food choices in childhood reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, heart disease and kidney disease later in life.

At Ardtornish Children's Centre, children are regularly exposed to planned food and nutrition based learning experiences. These aim to influence positively the children's food preferences into adulthood and reflect multicultural understanding and family values.

What You Can Expect

- Meals and snacks are positive, relaxed, social times
- Independence is encouraged by supporting children to eat their own food without assistance
- Food is safely and hygienically prepared and stored for children to eat
- Ardtornish Children's Centre follows the Australian Government Healthy Eating Guidelines and Physical Activity Recommendations
- We share information about the importance of children's nutrition with families and carers.
- We support breastfeeding as a natural part of having a baby, and breast milk as a baby's natural first food
- Water is available at all times and children do not need to bring drinks (please do not give cordial, sugary drinks contribute to tooth decay, and they attracts ants!)

What We Expect

- We request that you provide healthy snacks for your child
- Unless especially notified the sharing of personal snacks and food with others is avoided because of possible diet and allergy issues
- Allergies – it is essential that staff are made aware of children's allergies and that a Health Action Plan is provided to deal appropriately with any health issue that may arise
- Discrimination and harassment of breastfeeding mothers in any form is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Next Review	Last revision description
January 2015	Rationale, expectations, breast feeding and references included.

What is a healthy snack?

Staff have been concerned at times about the food provided at preschool. We provide the following for your information.

Generally, a piece of fruit is best for Fruit Time. Below is a table of ideas of nutritious snacks and lunch options that are acceptable. There is also a list with some examples of foods that are unacceptable at preschool during fruit/snack time.

Healthy Snacks/Lunches	Examples of Unacceptable Snacks
Fresh fruit and vegetables	Cakes, lollies, chocolate
Dried fruit	Sweet biscuits eg Tim Tams, Nice, Tic Tocs
Dry biscuits eg Saladas, Jatz, rice crackers	Twisties, Chips, Burger Rings, etc (high in fat)
Cheese	Museli bars, fruit bars, roll-ups (high in sugar)
Cold meat – fritz, ham, sausage	Mousse, custard, jelly
Savoury filled sandwiches	*Many of these items contain high levels of sugars, fats, preservatives and/or salts. Check the labels – you may be surprised!
Yoghurt	

Routine Meals and Snacks

The preschool program includes routine morning and afternoon snack for children to recharge for the remainder of the session.

What happens when an unacceptable snack is supplied?

If your child has an inappropriate food item for Fruit Time, a three stage response will occur. The food item will be placed back in the child's bag. And the parent/carer will be contacted on the day (either in person, by phone or a note in the bag). Your child will be supplied with an alternative healthy snack by staff. A staff member will follow-up with the parent/caregiver if unacceptable snacks continue to be supplied.

Please note that Ardtornish Children's Centre is **Nut Aware**. **Please do not supply your child with peanut paste/butter, nutella, muesli bars, or any product that is marked "may contain nut traces" on the packaging.** Nut allergies in children can be severe, and sometimes even traces of nuts in products that seem fairly safe can start an anaphylactic (allergic) reaction. We ask for your awareness and support in keeping our preschool as nut-free as possible.

If you have any queries or concerns with the above, don't hesitate to speak to staff. We thank you for your support.

References

Further information about diet and nutrition including:

The Right Bite Strategy - The *Right Bite* strategy assists South Australian schools and preschools to select food and drink to promote healthy eating; **Healthy Eating and Physical Activity Guidelines** for Early Childhood Settings; **Start Right Eat Right** – promoting healthy eating and good nutrition for young children in South Australian and oral eating and drinking care plans in education and children's services & Eat Well SA - Schools and Preschools: Healthy Eating Guidelines, is available from the DECD website. <http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/childrensservices/pages/earlychildhoodreform/nutrition/> accessed July 2012.