

## NUTRITION AND PHYSICAL HEALTH

### BACKGROUND

Children's early years are arguably their most important and establishing healthy behaviors from birth will lay the foundation for lifelong health and wellbeing.

Nutritious food and regular physical activity supports the normal growth and development of children and reduces the risk of developing chronic lifestyle related diseases later in life.

As more children spend time in care, early childhood settings can play an important part in supporting healthy choices around nutrition and physical activity (Get up & Grow – Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood – 2009). Therefore, it is important for our food to be nutritious as well as meeting the social, cultural and educational needs of all our children.

The menu we offer to our families in the All Day Care and the Autism Specific Early Learning and Care Centre provides children with 50% of their recommended daily nutritional requirements, as endorsed by Nutrition Australia.

Our Centre is a strong advocate for children's health, safety and well-being. We continue to seek advice from our peak bodies to ensure when changes occur we continue to meet the guidelines set by both State and Federal Governments.

Further to this we have created detailed statements around such subjects that provide guidance for our day to day interactions with children and families:

- Water
- Children's Celebrations
- Food Safety
- Menu
- Curriculum
- Medical Conditions
- Enrolment Package – Milk Handling Practices and Appropriate Food Handling Procedures.

In our Sessional Care Service families provide for all of their children's nutritional needs whilst they are in attendance. We provide families in this section with Nutrition information. This supports families on the healthy foods they can offer their children during the day.

Special Occasions are important and we as a community value the celebration experience as it extends our knowledge of differing customs, beliefs and festivities. For our community it's about social participation and **not just about the food**. Applying this and other relevant Centre information will ensure that food and drink items provided are consistent with national and state guidelines recommendations.

### NUTRITION

The foods we eat provide our body with the nutrients we need to stay healthy. Good nutrition is the balanced eating of a variety of foods from the Five Core Food Groups, and is especially important for children as they require a large amount of nutrients for growth and development.

The Five Core Food Groups are:

- Vegetables and Legumes/Beans
- Fruits and Grains
- Milk/Yogurt/Cheese and Non Dairy alternatives
- Lean Meat, Poultry, Fish, Eggs, Nuts, Seeds and Legumes/Beans
- Healthy Fats

When young children are provided with a variety of foods from these five core groups, drink plenty of water and **limited foods that are high in saturated fat, added sugars and added salt** they will obtain the required nutrients essential for good health, growth and development.

## PHYSICAL HEALTH

There are many aspects of our modern life that makes it easy to be physically inactive; the use of cars for transport; labour saving devices and the increased popularity of screen based entertainment as a preferred leisure activity. Therefore it is important for us all to ensure children are physically active.

Active play which involves using the large muscles in our body develops a strong and healthy body, builds motor and co-ordination skills, creates a sense of wellbeing and helps protect us from disease. Active play is about moving, being and doing. Being active is an integral component in having good physical health and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Our Playroom educators are provided with the latest guidelines, recommendations and resources for promoting physical activity in early childhood settings (*Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood*). These are used to guide the development of an educational program that facilitates both 'free' and 'planned' physical activity for children throughout the day.

<p><b>Links to other documents:</b>          La Trobe University Community Children’s Centre Menu          La Trobe University Community Children’s Centre – Mission          Medical Conditions          Curriculum          Children’s Celebrations          Water          Oral Hygiene          Food safety          Sun Protection          Milk Handling Procedure          Daily Feedback Sheets          Background Information Form</p>	<p><b>Reference:</b>          Get up &amp; Grow – Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood – Director/Coordinator Book- Australian Government Department of Health and Aging – 2009          Education and Care Service National Law Act 2010          Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011          Australian Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents (<a href="http://www.health.gov.au">www.health.gov.au</a>)          Nutrition Australia –Children’s Nutrition, Fact Sheet 2          Belonging, Being &amp; Becoming- Early Years Learning Framework for Australia, 2009</p>
<p>Revised: March 2003 / Approved: 27 May 2003 Minute 330.3 iii a. ii./ Revised May 2006 /Approved 3 May 2006 Minute 359.7 iii. /Revised May 2007/ Approved: 3 October 2007 Minute 372.11 i./ Revised March 2008 /Revised November 2008 / Approved: 3 December 2008 Minute 383.3 ii.b.          Revised July 2009 / Approved: 27 August 2009 Minute 388.7 i. c./ Approved: 5 November 2009 Minute 389.10.m / Approved: 25 Nov 2010- Minute 399.8 ii/ Revised: 05 Dec 2011 / Approved: 07 Dec 2011 – Minute 406.10. Reviewed 29 November 2012: Approved 5 December 2012 – Minute 415.6: Revised 25 Oct 2013 Approved 30 October 2013, Minute 423.5.2c Revised 20 Oct 2014 – Approved 26 November 2014, Minute 433.5.1.i.a; Reviewed 17 June, 2015: Reviewed November 2015: Approved 18 June 2015, Minute 439.5.1.i.o. Reviewed December 2015.          Reviewed November 2016          © La Trobe University Community Children’s Centre</p>	