

## Policy Statement

Little Adventures Early Learning plays an important role in supporting families to provide healthy food and drink for their children. This Policy details the Service's approach to mealtimes and the strategies and practices that educators use to support the growth and development of young children through the promotion of healthy eating and nutrition.

The Service is committed to implementing and promoting the key healthy eating messages outlined in the NSW Health Departments *Munch and Move* program as well as the National Healthy Eating Guidelines for Early Childhood Settings.

## Strategies and Practices

- The *Nutrition, Food, Beverages & Dietary Requirements Policy* is available to families upon enrolment and staff upon induction.
- Families are responsible for supplying their children's food requirements while they attend the Service. Children must be provided with enough food for lunch and afternoon tea as well as other spontaneous times throughout the day when/if children become hungry. Families are also required to provide a piece of fruit or a vegetable each day that their child attends to contribute to the shared morning tea platter.
- At enrolment, families provide the Service with details of their child's food and drink allergies or intolerances, additional needs that may affect diet, and of any cultural preferences in food. Families are asked to update this information when any changes occur.
- The Service maintains a list with photographs of children with special food requirements for health and medical reasons (e.g. allergies, intolerances). This information is displayed in the kitchen and strategically throughout the Service. All staff are informed of these dietary requirements during induction and orientation processes. When information changes staff are informed verbally, through the staff communication diary, and at staff meetings.
- The Service is 'Allergy Aware' and is currently a nut free zone, and educators take all reasonable steps to ensure this mandate is upheld. Educators remove from lunch boxes any products suspected of containing nuts and these are returned to parents when they collect their child. Children are actively discouraged from sharing food.
- Parents are informed of their child's food and beverage intake daily. All unopened and uneaten food will be sent home in lunch boxes unless it has been reheated. This food will then be disposed of for hygiene and food safety reasons. Educators discuss face-to-face with parents any concerns about a child who has not eaten well.
- Educators monitor the safety and suitability of foods. They will send home foods likely to cause choking and those with a high sugar/fat content. Educators will discuss these foods with families upon collection. A table of foods that should/should not be included in your child's lunch box can be referred to in Attachment 5.
- The Service aims to promote 'Nude Food' which encourages children to eat more whole foods and less packaged foods which are better for the child's health and better for the environment. If packaged foods are brought into the service, the table outlined in Attachment 4 will be used to determine if the food is suitable to eat. The table was sourced from the Nutrition Guidelines developed by Good for Kids and Hunter New England Local Health District. [www.goodforkids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.goodforkids.nsw.gov.au)
- The service works in collaboration with external stakeholders to ensure that healthy eating and nutrition is promoted. Educators practice is guided by the Munch and Move program and the Healthy Eating Guidelines.
- The healthy eating message is promoted and positively reinforced amongst families through notice boards, newsletters, information nights and up-to-date materials from recognised authorities.

- Educators promote healthy eating in children by including the topic in daily routines, discussions, songs, stories, games, and cooking experiences.
- Food is never used to reward or punish children and children are not required to eat food they do not like or to eat more than they want.
- Meal times are relaxed, pleasant and unhurried. Educators in the Explorers Room serve food to the children and where appropriate support the children to feed themselves. This is done in collaboration with families. Educators in the Discoverers Room serve lunch to the children on a plate as a transition process from the Explorers Room. Later in the year the children serve themselves from their own lunch boxes. Children from the Investigators and Inventors Rooms choose what to eat from their lunch boxes. Educators sit with the children when they are eating. They help them open any sealed containers, and talk with them on topics of interest, including, but not limited to, healthy food and nutrition.

## Morning Tea

- Families are required to provide a piece of fruit or vegetable for morning tea for each day that their child attends. These items are placed on a tray in each room of the Service and a shared fruit and vegetable platter is prepared daily by an educator for each room. A back up supply of fruit and vegetables is available at the centre to ensure that sufficient food is available.
- In addition to the fruit and vegetables provided by families, the Service will provide and offer the children in the Discoverers, Investigators and Inventors Rooms the following additional food at morning tea to support the daily food intake of the children as well as to promote self-help skills:
  - Wholemeal bread, butter and Vegemite
  - Cheddar cheese and plain rice crackers
  - Reduced fat milk; and
  - Water
- A sign detailing that the service provides these foods is displayed at all times for families.
- The service keeps a record of the fruit and vegetables that are prepared each day. This is completed by the educator who prepares morning tea.
- A progressive morning tea is held in the Investigators Room each day for children from the Investigators and Inventors rooms. Educators keep a record of the children who have eaten morning tea.

## Lunch and Afternoon Tea

- Families are encouraged to provide a balanced lunchbox to ensure that their children's daily nutritional needs are met. Lunchboxes should include mostly breads and cereals, fruit, vegetables, meat or a meat alternative and some dairy. Attachments 1, 2 and 3 are resources that should be referred to when packing your child's lunchbox.
  - Attachment 1 – *The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating*
  - Attachment 2 – *The Australian Dietary Guidelines and Sample Daily Food Patterns*
  - Attachment 3 – *Everyday food for the lunchbox – getting the balance right*
- Children's lunch boxes are stored in the refrigerator until meal times (Refer to the service's *Food Preparation, Storage and Handling Policy*). Any food requiring warming is also heated according to that Policy as well as the *Reheating Food Procedure*.
- Non-insulated lunch boxes are preferred in order to regulate the temperature of the food stored in them.

## Beverages

- Bubblers are available in the outdoor environment of the Big Yard (2-5 year old children) where safe drinking water is readily accessible at all times.
- Each child is provided with a drink bottle upon enrolment that is filled with filtered water. Children are offered their bottles at meal times as well as regularly throughout the day. At the end of each day the drink bottles are washed, sterilised, refilled and stored in the fridges in each room.
- Educators in the Explorers Room regularly offer the children their drink bottles during outdoor play as they do not have access to a bubbler in their outdoor environment.
- The Service provides and offers milk to the children in the Discoverers, Investigators and Inventors Rooms, at morning tea. Reduced fat milk is served to children over 2 years of age as it is lower in saturated fat and energy content. In consultation with families, children between 12 months and 2 years of age are offered full cream milk as they still require the additional energy provided from full cream milk.
- The Service encourages and supports breastfeeding. Families are welcome to breastfeed their child at the Service and comfortable spaces are available to do so. Educators and families work in collaboration to organise a feeding routine that suits the child, the parent and the service. Families are welcome to bring bottles of expressed breast milk to the service as well as frozen breast milk. Bottles must be clearly labelled with the child's name, the date that they were prepared, and should be stored in the labelled bottle container located in the fridge, immediately upon arrival. Sufficient expressed milk bottles for the child's day must be provided.
- Families are required to provide any formula that they wish to be fed to their child. Families must provide sterilised bottles and teats as well as premeasured powdered formula each day or a tin of formula that can stay at the service. Bottles, containers of measured amounts of formula and tins of formula must be labelled with the child's name and the instructions given by the parent/ set out on the tin to ensure the correct amounts of formula and water are added. Frozen breast milk must be labelled with the child's name and the date it was expressed. Filtered boiling water is used in bottles if the water is not provided by the parent.
- Educators will work in collaboration with families to ascertain when children are ready to progress to cow's milk. Children under 12 months will not be provided with cow's milk unless written instruction from a registered medical practitioner is provided. The service will provide the milk but families must provide the sterilised bottles.
- All bottles must return home with the child at the end of the day for sterilisation.
- Educators will follow the Service's *Storing, Preparing, Heating and Providing Bottles to Children Procedure* at all times.

## Celebrations

- During the year, there will be times where the children will have the opportunity to participate in celebrations such as Birthdays, Christmas and Easter. These celebrations are an important part of a child's life, and educators and children are encouraged to celebrate them at the Service. Families are welcome to bring a plain cake or cupcakes (limited icing and colouring), or another favourite food that complies with this policy such as sushi or watermelon platters, to share for children's birthdays. Families of children with allergies are encouraged to bring a suitable option for their child, which can be stored in the freezer and used as required.
- It is acknowledged that these celebrations may involve foods that would not normally be considered appropriate for children's lunchboxes; however, as a Service, we acknowledge the importance of a balanced diet and aim to support children's understanding of moderation.

- Regular discussions and learning opportunities are had with the children throughout the year regarding everyday foods and foods that are 'sometimes foods' e.g. cakes and chocolates.

## References

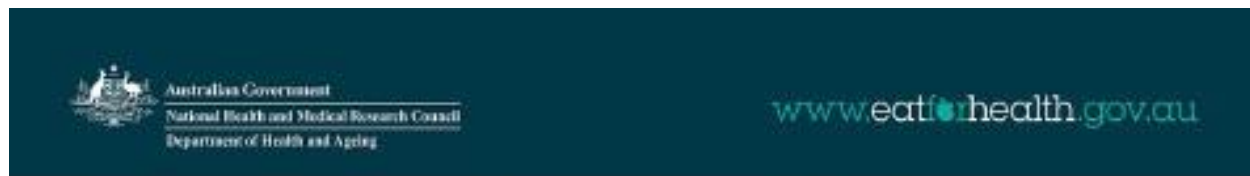
- *Education and Care Services National Law*
- *Education and Care Services National Regulations*
- *Guide to the National Quality Framework*
- Australian Breast Feeding Association - *Guide to feeding your baby*, August 2017
- NSW Ministry of Health 2014 *Munch and Move Resource Manual Birth to Five Years*
- NSW Ministry of Health 2014 *Caring for Children Birth to five years (Food Nutrition and Learning Experiences)*
- *Eat for Health – Australian Dietary Guidelines, 2015*, Commonwealth of Australia  
[www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au) accessed 15 January 2020.
- Good for Kids, Good for Life & Hunter New England Local Health District *Balancing the Lunchbox*  
[www.goodforkids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.goodforkids.nsw.gov.au) accessed 15 January 2020
- *Eat for Health - Infant Feeding Guidelines 2013*
- Dr Brenda Abbey (Childcare by Design)

## Policy Review

The Service encourages staff and families to be actively involved in the annual review of each of its policies and procedures. In addition, the Service will accommodate any new legislative changes as they occur and any issues identified as part the Service's commitment to quality improvement. The Service consults with relevant recognised authorities, where necessary, as part of the review to ensure the policy contents are consistent with current research and contemporary views on best practice.

# NUTRITION, FOOD, BEVERAGES & DIETARY REQUIREMENTS POLICY

## Attachment 1 – The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating



# Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five food groups every day.  
Drink plenty of water.



**Use small amounts**



**Only sometimes and in small amounts**



## Attachment 2 – Australian Dietary Guidelines and sample daily food patterns

### Australian Dietary Guidelines

**Guideline 1**  
To achieve and maintain a healthy weight, be physically active and choose amounts of nutritious food and drinks to meet your energy needs.

- Children and adolescents should eat sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally. They should be physically active every day and their growth should be checked regularly.


**Guideline 2**  
Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods from these five food groups every day:

- Plenty of vegetables, including different types and colours, and legumes/beans
- Fruit
- Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties, such as breads, cereals, rice, pasta, noodles, polenta, couscous, oats, quinoa and barley
- Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans
- Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or their alternatives, mostly reduced fat (reduced fat milks are not suitable for children under the age of 2 years).

And drink plenty of water.

**Guideline 3**  
Limit intake of foods containing saturated fat, added salt, added sugars and alcohol.

- Limit intake of foods high in saturated fat such as many biscuits, cakes, pastries, pies, processed meats, commercial burgers, pizza, fried foods, potato chips, crisps and other savoury snacks.
  - Replace high fat foods which contain predominantly saturated fats such as butter, cream, cooking margarine, coconut and palm oil with foods which contain predominantly polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats such as oils, spreads, nut butters/pastes and avocado.
  - Low fat diets are not suitable for children under the age of 2 years.
- Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added salt.
  - Read labels to choose lower sodium options among similar foods.
  - Do not add salt to foods in cooking or at the table.
- Limit intake of foods and drinks containing added sugars such as confectionary, sugar-sweetened soft drinks and cordials, fruit drinks, vitamin waters, energy and sports drinks.



**Guideline 4**  
Encourage, support and promote breastfeeding.

**Guideline 5**  
Care for your food; prepare and store it safely.

### Sample daily food pattern for infants aged 7-12 months

It is recommended that infants should be exclusively breastfed to around 6 months of age. Breastfeeding is best, however sometimes this is not possible. Babies who are not breastfed need an infant formula.

First foods should be introduced at around 6 months, starting with iron-fortified infant cereal and/or iron rich foods such as pureed meat, followed by other foods from the Five Food Groups.

| Food   | Serve size                 | Serves a day | Serves a week |
|--|----------------------------|--------------|---------------|
| Vegetables and legumes/beans                         | 20g                        | 1½-2         | 10-14         |
| Fruit  | 20g                        | ½            | 3-4           |
| Grain (cereal) foods                                 | 40g bread equivalent       | 1½           | 10            |
| Infant cereal (dried)                                | 20g                        | 1            | 7             |
| Lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, legumes/beans | 30g                        | 1            | 7             |
| Breast milk or formula                               | 600ml                      | 1            | 7             |
| Yoghurt/cheese or alternatives                       | 20ml yoghurt or 10g cheese | ½            | 3-4           |

### Sample daily food pattern for toddlers aged 13-23 months

| Food   | Serve size            | Serves a day |
|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| Vegetables and legumes/beans                         | 75g                   | 2-3          |
| Fruit  | 150g                  | ½            |
| Grain (cereal) foods                                 | 40g bread equivalent  | 4            |
| Lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, legumes/beans | 65g                   | 1            |
| Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives            | 250ml milk equivalent | 1-1½         |

## Sample daily food pattern for children aged 2-8 years

Recommended average daily number of serves from each of the Five Food Groups\*

| Food   | Boy 2-3 years | Girl 2-3 years | Boy 4-8 years | Girl 4-8 years |
|--|---------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| Vegetables and legumes/beans   | 2½            | 2½             | 4½            | 4½             |
| Fruit  | 1             | 1              | 1½            | 1½             |
| Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties   | 4             | 4              | 4             | 4              |
| Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans  | 1             | 1              | 1½            | 1½             |
| Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat  | 1½            | 1½             | 2             | 1½             |
| Additional serves (from the Five Food Groups or unsaturated spreads/oils or discretionary choices) for more active, taller or older children and adolescents | 0-1           | 0-1            | 0-2½          | 0-1            |

\* Includes an allowance for unsaturated spreads or oils and nuts or seeds: ½ serve [4-5g] per day for children 2-3 years of age, 1 serve [7-10g] per day for children 3-12 years of age.

Note: It is recommended that children receive half (50%) of their daily nutritional requirements serves during 8 hours of care.

## What does a serve look like?

**Vegetables and legumes/beans – a standard serve of vegetables\* is about 75g (100-350kJ) or:**

- ½ cup cooked green or orange vegetables (for example, broccoli, spinach, carrots or pumpkin)
- ½ cup cooked dried or tinned beans, peas or lentils
- 1 cup green leafy or raw salad vegetables
- ½ cup sweet corn
- ½ medium potato or other starchy vegetables (sweet potato, taro or cassava)
- 1 medium tomato

\*for canned varieties, choose those with no added salt

**Fruit – a standard serve of fruit is about 150g (350kJ) or:**

- 1 medium apple, banana, orange or pear
- 2 small apricots, kiwi fruits or plums
- 1 cup diced or canned fruit (with no added sugar)
- Or only occasionally:
  - 125ml (½ cup) fruit juice (with no added sugar)
  - 30g dried fruit (for example, 4 dried apricot halves or 1½ tablespoons of sultanas)

**Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties – a standard serve (500kJ) is:**

- 1 slice (40g) bread
- ½ medium (40g) roll or flat bread
- ½ cup (75-120g) cooked rice, pasta, noodles, barley, buckwheat, semolina, polenta, bulgur or quinoa
- ½ cup (120g) cooked porridge
- 2/3 cup (30g) wheat cereal flakes
- ½ cup (30g) muesli
- 3 (35g) crispbreads
- 1 (60g) crumpet
- 1 small (35g) English muffin or scone

**Lean meats, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans – a standard serve (500-600kJ) is:**

- 65g cooked lean meats such as beef, lamb, veal, pork, goat or kangaroo (about 90-100g raw) \*weekly limit of 455g
- 80g cooked lean poultry such as chicken or turkey (100g raw)
- 100g cooked fish fillet (about 115g raw) or one small can of fish
- 2 large (120g) eggs
- 1 cup (150g) cooked or canned legumes/beans such as lentils, chick peas or split peas (no added salt)
- 170g tofu
- 30g nuts, seeds, peanut or almond butter or tahini or other nut or seed paste

**Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat – a standard serve (500-600kJ) is:**

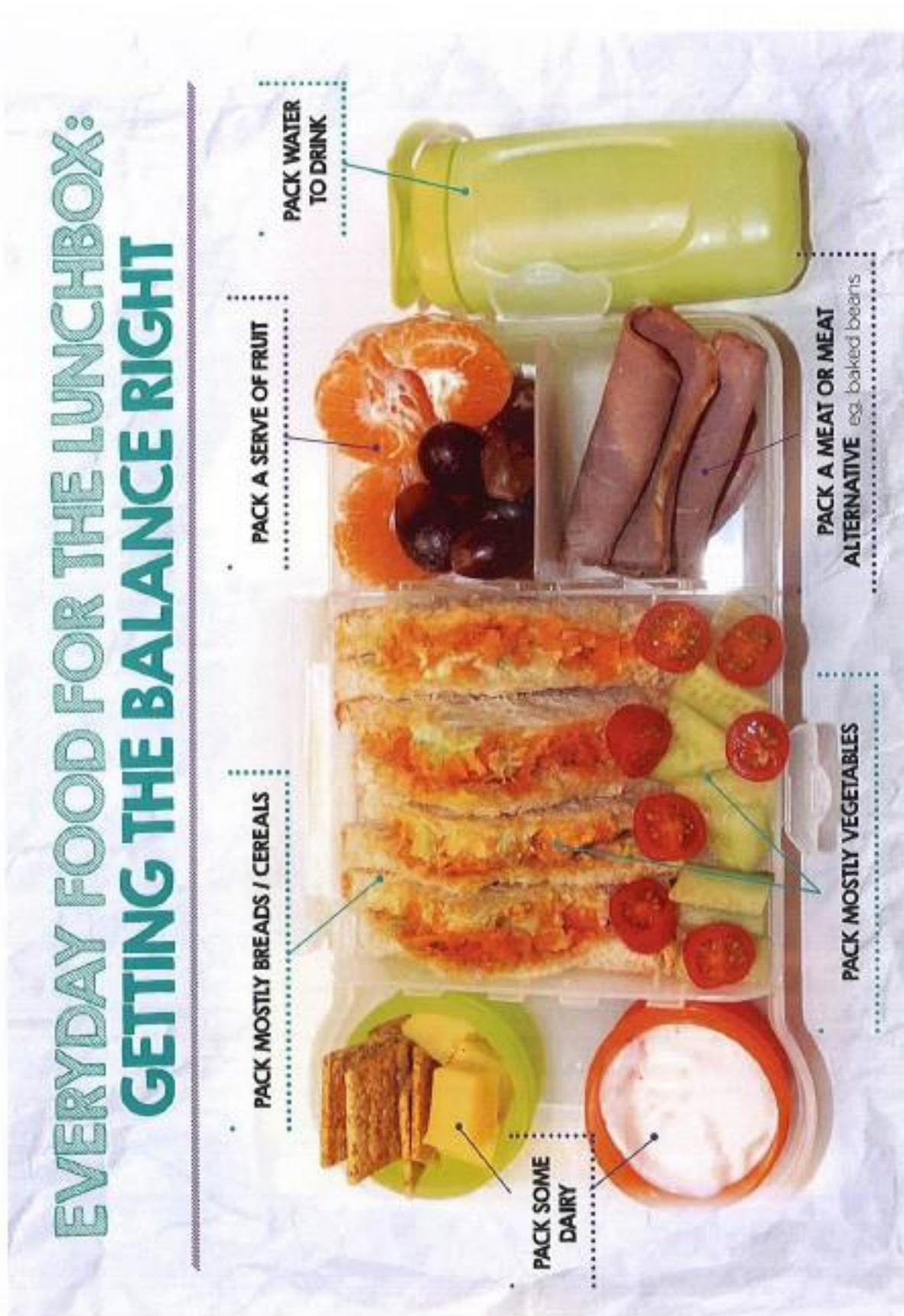
- 1 cup (250ml) fresh, UHT long life, reconstituted powdered milk or buttermilk
- ½ cup (120ml) evaporated milk
- 2 slices (40g) or 4 x 3cm x 2cm cube (40g) of hard cheese, such as cheddar
- ½ cup (120g) ricotta cheese
- ½ cup (200g) yoghurt
- 1 cup (250ml) soy, rice or other cereal drink with at least 100mg of added calcium per 100ml

Source: Eat for Health – Australian Dietary Guidelines, 2013, Commonwealth of Australia, [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)

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For more information and ideas on healthy eating and physical activity go to [www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au)

## Attachment 3 – Everyday food for the lunchbox: Getting the balance right





## Attachment 4 - Choosing healthier packaged foods

# CHOOSING HEALTHIER PACKAGED FOODS

Use these nutrition guidelines when choosing packaged foods

|                          | Per Serve<br><small>serving size 23.2g (4 crackers)</small> | Per 100g |
|--------------------------|---|----------|
| Energy (kJ)              | 364 kJ  | 1579 kJ  |
| Protein (g)              | 2.8 g   | 12.2 g   |
| Fat - total (g)          | 2.2 g   | 9.4 g    |
| Fat - saturated (g)      | 0.3 g   | 1.1 g    |
| Carbohydrate - total (g) | 14.4 g  | 62.3 g   |
| Carbohydrate - sugar (g) | 0.4 g   | 1.8 g    |
| Sodium (mg)              | 105 mg  | 452 mg   |
| Fibre (g)                | 3.1 g   | 12.0 g   |

Use the "per 100g column" to compare similar products.

Aim for foods with no more than 20g fat per 100g. Products with less than 10g of fat per 100g are best.

Aim for foods with no more than 5g of saturated fat per 100g. Products with less than 3g per 100g of saturated fat are best.

Products with less than 15g per 100g are best.

Aim for foods with no more than 600mg of sodium per 100g. Products with less than 400mg of sodium per 100g are good choices.


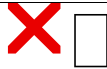
Not all labels include fibre. Bread, crackers, pasta, rice and cereals may be more likely to have fibre listed. Products with 3g or more fibre per serve are best.

# NUTRITION, FOOD, BEVERAGES & DIETARY REQUIREMENTS POLICY

## Attachment 5 – Table of foods that should/should not be included in your child’s lunch box

\*Please try and minimise the amount of packaged food in your child’s lunch box. Whole foods are best.

\*This list does not contain every food item that is available. If you are unsure of anything please see staff.

|  Foods to include in your child’s lunch box |  Foods best left out of your child’s lunchbox     |
|--|--|
| Fruit  | Nuts   |
| Vegetables   | Sweet biscuits - tiny teddies, iced biscuits   |
| Yoghurt  | Chocolate, or any product with chocolate in it, or products that have the appearance of chocolate. E.g Cacao and beetroot muffins. |
| Block cheese   | Lollies  |
| Leftovers from dinner  | Fruit bars, fruit straps, fruit filled bars, roll ups, fruit lollies   |
| Meat   | Processed cheese and biscuits e.g. le snacks   |
| Baked beans and spaghetti  | Jam  |
| Unflavoured rice cakes   | Honey  |
| Pikelets   | Donuts   |
| Fruit or vegetable based muffins   | Processed meats - Devon, frankfurt’s, salami, twiggly sticks   |
| Salad  | Muesli bars, rice bars   |
| Plain rice crackers  | Chocolate custard  |
| Pumpkin or cheese scones   | Lamingtons, donuts   |
| Unflavoured crispbreads – Cruskits, Vita Wheats, Saladas   | Potato chips, corn chips and similar   |
| Pasta  | Sausage rolls  |
| Rice   | Meat pies  |
| Unflavoured corn thins   | Jelly  |
| Tomato salsa   | Flavoured biscuits - Shapes, rice wheels   |
| Vegetable dips, hummus   | Pizza  |
| Vanilla/plain custard  | Chicken nuggets  |
| Sushi  | Fruit bread  |
| Wholegrain, whole meal wraps, bread, rolls, pita bread   | Fried or battered food - hot chips   |
| Tuna/salmon  | Processed cheese sticks/cheese triangles   |
| Popcorn (Investigators and Inventors Rooms only)   | Nutella  |
| Quiche   | Peanut butter  |
| Egg sandwiches   | Sweet drinks   |
| Frittata   | Dried fruit and sultanas   |
|  | Tinned fruit, fruit cups   |
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