



A nutrition newsletter for carers of children under five

ISSUE 14

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Snacks pamphlet included to copy and distribute.

Summer 2004



Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia



Encourage and support breastfeeding.

Children and adolescents need sufficient nutritious foods to grow and develop normally.

- Growth should be checked regularly for young children.
- Physical activity is important for all children and adolescents.

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods

Children and adolescents should be encouraged to:

- Eat plenty of vegetables, legumes and fruits.
- Eat plenty of cereals (including breads, rice, pasta and noodles), preferably wholegrain.
- Include lean meat, fish, poultry and/or alternatives.
- Include milks, yoghurts, cheeses and/or alternatives. Reduced-fat milks are not suitable for young children under 2 years, because of their high energy needs, but reduced-fat varieties should be encouraged for older children and adolescents.
- Choose water as a drink.

Care should be taken to:

- Limit saturated fat and moderate total fat intake. Low-fat diets are not suitable for infants.
- Choose foods low in salt.
- Consume only moderate amounts of sugars and foods containing added sugars.

Care for your child's food: prepare and store it safely.

Welcome

to issue 14 of Food Matters.

Do you sometimes feel confused about what a healthy diet is for children? In June 2003, the new Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia were released. The dietary guidelines bring together the best scientific evidence to give us clear and simple advice about food and health.

You may already be aware of the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating (AGHE). The AGHE gives details about the amount and type of food to eat each day. The new Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents go together with the AGHE by giving general tips for choosing healthy foods. Some of the key tips from the new guidelines are covered in this edition of Food Matters.

The 'Food for health' pamphlet is available to help us to learn more about the new guidelines. See the 'Resources' section of this Food Matters newsletter for how you can get free copies of this pamphlet.



Physical activity is important for all children and adolescents

Practical ideas for being active

By Jane Taylor, Children's Health Development Foundation

The Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia state that physical activity is important for all children and adolescents.¹ This article provides some information about why physical activity is important for children and gives practical ideas around being active.

Research shows that being active is vital to good health and is essential for children's physical, social and emotional development. For example, taking part in physical activity allows children to develop self-confidence, movement skills, social interaction and the ability to express their feelings and emotions.² All of these can help children develop strong self-esteem and healthy body image.

Changing lifestyle patterns continue to have a bearing on how active we are in daily life. There are now fewer chances for children to be active than before for many reasons. Early childhood services can provide a setting that promotes being active. Many children are spending longer parts of their day in services such as preschools, long day care and family day care so opportunities for structured and unstructured physical activity are important.

Physical activity links to the Developmental Learning Outcomes in the SACSA Framework for the Early Years Band. These include children developing a sense of physical wellbeing and a range of physical competencies.

The SACSA Outcomes for the Early Years Band include: learning movement patterns, refining coordinated actions, developing selfawareness and children recognising the differences and similarities between themselves and others.³

Principles for activity with young children:

- Vary the length and type of activity to keep the interest of staff and children.
- Provide activities that allow new skills to be learnt.
- Include both fine and gross motor skill development while giving children the chance to be active.
- Provide activities that children of all shapes and sizes can do with success, and ensure that children are not excluded from them or made fun of because of their size.
- The 'playing' that children do naturally is a great activity.
- Provide positive role models.

Ideas for activity with young children:

- Free choice dancing to up-beat children's music.
- Have a game of 'follow the leader' where both children and carers make up the actions.
- Have a bouncy game of 'Simon Says'. Include jumping, wriggling, jogging on the spot and other active body movements.
- Ask children what they like doing and try to include their ideas in your program.



Ideas for family involvement in activities and encouraging being active at home.

- Hold your service's planned social events or Christmas parties outdoors in areas where there is room to be active and run around (eg the local park or reserve). Role model providing opportunities for active play at these events.
- Invite families to take part in active events with children, like walking to local places, parks and observational walks around the local area.
- Report to parents on activities children enjoy and have taken part in.
- Encourage families to practise activities that their child has learnt.
- Suggest ways that families can be active with children, eg playing active games like 'chasey', catching and throwing a ball, 'follow the leader', skipping or family 'musical chairs'.
- Provide families with information on the benefits of active play.

References

- ¹ National Health and Medical Research Council (2003). Food for Health: Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia.
- ² Smith M, Schmerlaib Y, Ledger E and Kellett E (1993). Sing Along, Move Along: promoting children's health through music and movement. Health Development Foundation
- ³ SA Department of Education, Training and Employment (2001). South Australian Curriculum Standards and Accountability Framework, Early Years Band.

Limit saturated fat and moderate fat intake

Low fat diets are not suitable for infants

By Cassandra Hood, Nutritionist, Noarlunga Health Services



The Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia state that 'reduced fat milks are not suitable for young children under 2 years, because of their high energy needs, but reduced fat varieties should be encouraged for older children and adolescents'.

What do these guidelines mean in childcare?

Children need fat for energy, growth, brain development and a healthy immune system. Babies get all the fat they need from breastmilk or infant formula. These are high in fat to sustain rapid growth and development during the first year of life. This continues in the second year when full fat milk, cheese and yoghurt provide much of the fat needed for growth and development. Reduced fat and low fat/skim dairy foods should not be given to children under 2 years of age.

By 2 years of age, children should be eating many different kinds of foods such as breads, cereals, fruit and vegetables as well as meat and dairy foods. At this age growth naturally slows down and fat becomes less important.

The number of Australian children that are overweight is increasing and for this reason reduced fat dairy foods are recommended after 2 years. Reduced fat milks and yoghurts contain between 1.5-2.5% fat (ie 1.5-2.5g of fat in 100ml). Reduced fat milks can also be used for cooking custards.

Skim or low fat milks have less than 0.5% fat (ie less than 0.5g in

100ml). Please note these are not suitable for children under 5 years of age.

There are different kinds of fats found in food:

- Saturated fats: found in dairy foods, meat, palm/coconut oils and hydrogenated vegetable oils.
- Polyunsaturated fats: found in seed oils (sunflower and safflower oils) and fish oils.
- Monounsaturated fats: found in olive, canola and peanut oils.

From 2 years of age all types of saturated fats should be limited (see box) as these may cause high cholesterol levels and heart disease in the long term.

The accompanying pamphlet 'Snacks for children 1 year and over' provides some other healthy snack ideas. For more copies of this pamphlet for parents in your centre, please phone the SA Dental Service (08) 8350 3730.



References

National Health and Medical Research Council (2003). *Food for Health: Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia*.

In short

- Provide breastmilk or infant formula until 12 months of age.
- Provide full fat dairy foods between 1 and 2 years of age.
- Provide reduced fat dairy foods from 2 years of age (1.5-2.5% fat milk and yoghurt).

Other healthy ideas to limit saturated fats

- Limit fried foods (like hot chips, nuggets, fish) and fatty meats (like sausages, hot dogs, lunch meats).
- Trim the fat from meat.
- Use polyunsaturated or monounsaturated fats in cooking and for spreading
- Encourage fruit and vegetables as snacks.



For more information

For enquiries about any aspect of Food Matters, including mailing list details phone (08) 8161 7777. For general information about children's health and nutrition, contact the Women's & Children's Hospital Health Information Centre, phone (08) 8161 6875.

Emma Fernee
Editor, Food Matters

What's Happening



'Life. Be in it' has been running a 'Come 'n Try' program in one form or another for the past 25 years.

'Come 'n Try' activities are FREE for the public to attend.

- Come 'n Try March 2004 is volleyball.

For further information on the above activities and others being offered contact 'Life. Be in it'.

Phone: (08) 8232 3944

Email: info@sa.lifebeinit.org

Web: www.lifebeinit.org

WCH Free Public Health Seminars

The Women's and Children's Hospital regularly holds free public health seminars at the hospital. All seminars are held on Wednesday evenings, between 7.15pm and 9.00pm.

Upcoming seminars for 2004:

- Friendships and Young People (17 March 2004)
- Polycystic Ovaries (14 April 2004)
- Asthma and Children (19 May 2004)

To book for the seminars, for information or a full seminar program please contact the Women's and Children's Hospital Health Information Centre on (08) 8161 6875.

Healthy Food Choice in Family Day Care project

Family Day Care fieldworkers have provided training for care providers in the Healthy Food Choice Policy and guidelines. All care providers from all the Family Day Care offices should now be trained. As care providers are trained, implementation of the Policy will begin. The official starting date for implementation was January 1, 2004.

The formal launch of the Policy took place on September 19 at Reynella East High School by The Hon. Trish White MP (Minister for Education and Children's Services) and The Hon Lea Stevens MP (Minister for Health and Minister Assisting the Premier in Social Inclusion).

The launch showcased the successful collaboration of Family Day Care (DECS), Noarlunga Health Services and Flinders University. Family Day Care offices held their own local launches of the Policy with families in October and November.

For more information contact Calli Strongylos or Alison Martin, Project Officers, Southern Districts, Family Day Care.
Ph: (08) 8392 0520.

Next issue!

We will be looking at feeding babies in child care. If your child care centre has recently made some changes to infant feeding practices or is doing something different that you would like to tell other centres about, we would like to hear from you. Please contact Emma Donaghey on phone (08) 8277 2488 for an exciting opportunity to showcase your child care centre in our next edition.

Care for children's food: prepare and store it safely

The Dietary Guidelines include a new section on safe storage and preparation of food. Young children are at higher risk of suffering more severe consequences from food poisoning than adults. So extra care should be taken with children's food. The guidelines focus on some key points for the child care setting:

- If children bring perishable food from home, put it in the fridge as soon as the children arrive at the centre.
- Label food brought from home with the child's name, the date and the type of food.
- Formula and breast milk should also be clearly labeled with the child's name and the date, and refrigerated.
- Wash hands thoroughly after changing nappies.

For more information on food safety issues for child care centres, please see Food Matters Issue 10, or contact the Environmental Health Officer at your local council.

Further food safety information can be accessed at www.dhs.sa.gov.au/pehs and click on 'food'. The food safety training video 'Bug Busters' is available for loan from your local Council.



Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods

Ideas to increase variety in child care centre menus

Centre for Health Promotion Dietitian **Thea Pruul**, for *Food Matters*, asked **Helen Gilgen**, the cook at Margaret Ives Children's Centre, for some tips for increasing variety in the child care centre menu. This is important for several reasons:

- giving children opportunities to try foods they may not eat at home
- introducing a wide range of nutritious foods
- meeting Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS) requirements.¹

Cooks can introduce new foods by providing them as 'extras' or 'tasters' in the normal centre menu. Prepare the normal lunch and make a smaller amount of the new food for children to try. This reduces waste. Parents could occasionally bring special fruit that can be added to the fruit platter.

Below are some simple recipes, suggested by Helen, for increasing variety in the centre menu.

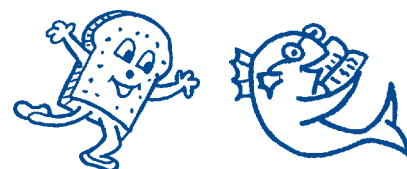
- **Red lentil dhal**
Soak 200g red lentils for 1 hour. Microwave until cooked. Sauté 1 onion, add 1 teaspoon of curry powder and turmeric, put lid on and leave to sweat. Add 440g tin crushed tomatoes and drained lentils. Simmer for 30 minutes.
- **Chickpea curry**
Serve as an alternative on a day when meat curry is served. Add 1 x 440g can drained

chickpeas to sauce base from lentil recipe (above), add green capsicum, and sautéed onion.

- **Spinach in white sauce**
Blanch a bunch of spinach, chop and bind with a small amount of white sauce and a little nutmeg. Sprinkle grated cheese on top and bake until melted.
- **Brussel sprouts**
Halve sprouts and put into boiling water. Bring water back to the boil and cook until just tender. Remove from heat and let cool. Toss with a little olive oil and vinegar.
- **Celery and apple salad**
Quarter and slice red skinned apples. Add equal parts of chopped celery. Dress with a little mayonnaise and lemon juice.

- **Chinese cabbage salad**
Shred cabbage and rinse. Add a few finely chopped spring onion tops and 1 grated carrot. Dress salad with 4 tablespoons oil, 2 tablespoons vinegar, 2 tablespoons sugar and soy sauce.
- **Capsicum strips**
Serve bowls of red capsicum strips as a side dish.
- **Cous cous**
Prepare cous cous as directed on the packet and add some currants before serving.

¹ National Childcare Accreditation Council, 2001. *Quality Improvement and Accreditation System Handbook, Second Edition.*



Cooks Connection

Why not try these Vegeburgers on your centre's menu? They contain legumes (baked beans) and vegetables, along with brown rice and wholemeal flour.

Vegeburgers

Serves 40 children

Adapted from NEAT Recipes for Kids (1998)

Ingredients

3 x 810g cans salt reduced baked beans
2 1/2 cups cooked brown rice
4 grated carrots
4 onions finely chopped
1/2 bunch celery finely chopped
3 tablespoons salt reduced soy sauce
4 tablespoons fresh parsley chopped
400g wholemeal breadcrumbs
2 cups grated cheese
plain flour for coating
4 tablespoons oil



Method

1. Mash beans and rice.
2. Combine beans and rice with carrot, onion, celery, soy sauce and parsley.
3. Add breadcrumbs and cheese and mix thoroughly, form into burgers and coat with a little flour.
4. Heat oil in pan and cook burgers until golden brown.

Variations

Can also be used as rissoles and served with hot vegetables.

Resources

Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia

The Guidelines provide expert advice on the best available knowledge about eating for good health and disease prevention.

Materials include:

- a 'Food for health' poster
- a 'Food for health – Dietary Guidelines for Australians' information booklet
- a 'Food for health – Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents' pamphlet.

All are available free of charge. To order copies contact 1800 020 103 (extension 8654), email:

phd.publications@health.gov.au

View on the website:

www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/dietsyn.htm

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

The Guide provides information about the amounts and kinds of food needed each day for good health and well being. Materials include:

- A1 full colour poster showing the Guide
- A4 full colour poster showing the Guide
- A5 booklet containing specific guidelines about a healthy eating pattern and a blank guide for teaching purposes
- a leaflet with brief information about the Guide.

All are available free of charge. To order copies contact 1800 020 103 (extension 8654), email:

phd.publications@health.gov.au

View on the website

www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/strateg/food/guide/index.htm

Snacks for children 1 year and over

This pamphlet has been developed for parents and childcare services. It

promotes the use of everyday healthy foods and drinks as snacks.

You can get more copies for parents by phoning the SA Dental Service on (08) 8350 3730

How to pack a healthy lunchbox for children under 5

This fact sheet from the Multi-cultural Health Communication Service at NSW Health gives suggestions on healthy lunchbox ideas for parents. It includes foods to pack in lunchboxes, which foods to avoid, keeping food fresh and safe and ensuring that children have enough to drink throughout the day. The fact sheet is available in 21 different languages and can be downloaded at

www.mhcs.health.nsw.gov.au/health-public-affairs/mhcs/publications/5575.html

Planning Nutritious Long Day Care Menus: Nutrition Checklist and Support Materials

The checklist incorporates the key points of the Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia and the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating as required by the Quality Improvement and Accreditation System (QIAS). The Checklist and Support Materials can be downloaded from www.chdf.org.au/childcarenutrition

Eat a Rainbow with Fruit and Vegetables

Dietitians at the Lower North Community Health Service have developed an activity for child care centres and kindergartens aimed at encouraging children to eat different coloured fruits and vegetables each day. Further information on the activity and materials can be obtained by e-mailing LNCHS.dietitian@saugov.sa.gov.au

The SA Child Care Nutrition Partnership aims to promote good nutrition for all South Australian children in early childhood services.

Partners include representatives from Child Care Associations, Department of Education and Children's Services, TAFE, Gowrie Training Centre, SA Dental Service, child care centre cooks, Women's & Children's Hospital, The Cancer Council South Australia, Noarlunga and Inner Southern Community Health Services and Department of Human Services.

Editorial Policy

Food Matters aims to promote good nutrition in early childhood by providing nutrition information, advice and support to carers of young children and showcasing child care food and nutrition initiatives. While every effort is made to include articles which meet these objectives, inclusion does not necessarily imply endorsement by the SA Child Care Nutrition Partnership. This newsletter may be copied for educational and non-profit purposes with acknowledgement.

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Department of Education and Children's Services

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