

DENTAL HEALTH POLICY

Early childhood is an important time for developing good dental hygiene practices. From the time a baby starts teething, keeping gums and teeth clean can safeguard against cavities in the 'baby' teeth which can also cause damage to the permanent teeth underneath.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.1.3	Healthy Lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
78	Food and beverages

RELATED POLICIES

Health and Safety Policy	Nutrition and Food Safety Policy
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PURPOSE

We aim to promote children's general wellbeing by creating an environment that supports healthy dental and oral health habits and practices that can be maintained throughout the child's life. Our Service will provide food and drinks with consideration to the sugar content and ensure that drinking water is always available.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, management, and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

We believe it is important for all children to practice a high level of dental hygiene. We follow the guidelines of the Australian Dental Association and State Government Health Departments when caring for children's teeth.

We provide information and guidelines on good dental health practices, which are implemented into the daily routine, including swish and swallow after mealtimes, providing information about brushing teeth and tooth friendly snacks and drinks, and going to the dentist.

To minimise the risk of cavities forming, we encourage children to eat nutritious foods and to avoid sticky and sugary foods. All food served and prepared at our Service comply with these guidelines by providing a variety of recommended vegetables, fruit, and dairy products. Children will be encouraged to drink water.

MANAGEMENT/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR/ RESPONSIBLE PERSON WILL:

- Ensure that food and drinks provided by the Service adhere to recommendations from organisations such as *Munch and Move* and *Get Up and Grow*, and recognised authorities. The Royal Children's Hospital of Melbourne recommends that children should avoid foods and drinks such as:
 - Chocolate
 - Lollies
 - Sweetened breakfast cereals
 - Biscuits
 - Fruit bars
 - Dried fruit
 - Muesli bars
 - Soft drink
 - Flavoured milk
 - Juice
 - Sports drinks
 - Cordial
 - Flavoured water
- Always ensure children have access to safe drinking water.
- Ensure the routine incorporates 'swish and swallow' after each mealtime.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- Provide opportunities to discuss dental health education and food and drink choices to support dental health with children.
- Provide resources to support dental health learning such as books, posters, 'giant' teeth and tooth brushes, etc.
- Pay particular attention to meal and snack times to ensure healthy food is being eaten.
- Encourage 'swish and swallow' after each mealtime.
- Give children bottles *before* they go to bed. When children take a bottle to bed it allows the lactose (sugar) in the milk to sit on their teeth which can cause tooth decay.

- Arrange visits by dental professionals so that children and families can learn correct brushing techniques and oral care.
- Provide dental care information to families through newsletters, posters, professional visits, web links and brochures.

DENTAL EMERGENCIES

It is important for Educators to be aware of how to manage dental accidents and emergencies. Our Service will:

- Ensure there is an Educator on duty with current first aid qualifications to follow dental accident procedures.
- If a child's tooth becomes dislodged:- - staff are not to attempt to straighten or replace it - the authorised staff member must contact the parent/guardian - if necessary call the emergency dental contact for advice - gently rinse the tooth and place in cling wrap to give to parent or dentist
- Staff will report to the child's family any accident, injury or suspected injury to teeth and gums, gum swelling, infection of the mouth, or problems, pain or discomfort the child may have. This will then be documented in the accident/illness and injury report sheet
- Ensure that the phone number of an emergency dentist is located near the office phone.
- Ensure children are supervised at all times to minimise accidents and incidents.

SOURCE

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Dental Health Services Victoria: <https://www.dhsv.org.au/oral-health-programs/achievementprogram/early-childhood-education>

National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) (2006). Ask a child care adviser: Dental health. *Putting Children First*, 18, 10-12.

Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).

Raising Children Network: www.raisingchildren.net.au

Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED	January 2020	NEXT REVIEW DATE	January 2022
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formatting changed to be inline with other policies 		