

YMCA of the NT Policy

Nutrition, Food and Beverages, Dietary Requirements

Procedure Number	Date Approved	Date Last Amended	Status
31	29/03/2019	04/01/2023	Final

1. PURPOSE

The YMCA recognises and acknowledges the importance of providing food that is both nutritious, culturally diverse and appropriate to the needs of the children. The YMCA encourages and promotes the health and wellbeing of children through providing positive learning experiences during meal and snack times where good nutritional food habits are developed in a happy, social environment. Parents and/or Guardians are encouraged to participate in this approach to nutrition for their children, where establishing healthy eating behaviours in childhood can have a significant and positive influence on growth and development throughout life.

2. SCOPE

The scope of this Policy applies to all Board members, Sub Committee members, educators and volunteers.

For the purposes of this document we refer to these as the YMCA.

All Policies and Procedures must conform to this Policy.

3. POLICY

This policy aims to:

- create a supportive environment for healthy food choices
- provide a nutritious and varied menu for children and a positive eating environment
- teach children about food and healthy eating
- encourage educators to learn about healthy eating and role model healthy eating
- encourage families to provide healthy food and drink choices
- consider any specific dietary and health requirements
- acknowledge and celebrate the important social and cultural role of food, and
- communicate with the community about healthy eating.
- Provide information on the safe storage of breastmilk

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Department/Role	Responsibility
Children's Services Management	Is responsible for the development, monitoring, and review of the policy and related systems, ensuring content meets all legislated requirements. To facilitate policy awareness to all educators on the appropriate implementation and use of the policy.
Responsible Persons	YMCA nominated supervisor/and or service management will oversee the implementation and service adherence of the policy Nominated supervisor/person with management and control will seek individual community feedback and facilitate an active consultation process with service users as appropriate. Is responsible for addressing any instance of non-compliance with this policy and implementing strategies to help prevent non-compliance with this policy. Responsible for ensuring suitable resources and support systems to enable compliance with this policy. Drive the consultation process and provide leadership and advice on the continuous improvement of the policy.
All employees, volunteers & students	Responsible for meeting the requirements outlined in this Policy. Responsible for raising concerns or complaints in accordance with this Policy.

5. DEFINITIONS

Term	Definition
Educators	Any person YMCA employs, or engages – including paid employees, volunteers, Board Directors, contractors, consultants and student placements.
Healthy Eating	Includes eating a wide variety of foods from the five food groups each day; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fruit, • vegetables and legumes/beans, • grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain, • milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, seeds and legumes/beans. <p>Healthy eating also means eating in a way that is socially, culturally and developmentally appropriate, having regular meals and snacks and eating food to satisfy hunger, appetite and energy needs.</p>
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6. LEGISLATIVE AND INDUSTRY REQUIREMENTS

- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010
- Guide to the National Quality Standards
- Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011
- Food Act 2006
- Food Safety Act 1984
- Australian Dietary Guidelines 2018
- Children's Services Regulations 2009
- Children's Services Act 1996

7. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

(LINKS TO PROCEDURES AND/OR WORK PRACTICES)

- [Infant Feeding Guidelines 2012](#)
- [Australian Dental Association](#)
- [Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood](#)
- [National Health and Medical Research Council \(NHMRC\) – Staying Healthy in Child Care](#)
- Dietary Guidelines for Children and Adolescents in Australia
- Nutrition Australia Guidelines
- PANOSH Resources
- Eat Smart, Play Smart
- Raisingchildren.net.au

8. APPROVAL AND REVIEW

Approved By: Liz Stiller

Effective Date: 04/01/2023

Policy Owner: Y NT Children's Services

Amendments

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
2	29/03/19	Y Australia	N/A

3	01/02/2021	YMCA NT	Added storage of expressed breastmilk
4	04/01/2023	YNT	Policy owner changed to YNT

PROCEDURES

- Ensure children have access to, and are encouraged to access, safe drinking water at all times.
- Ensure that children are offered food and beverages that are appropriate to their nutritional and specific dietary needs, based on written advice from families that is collected upon enrolment in the centre, and updated as required.
- Provide a weekly menu of food and beverages.
- Ensure that foods provided are consistent with the service menu.
- Menus will be planned with input from children, families, educators and displayed where all staff and families can access them.
- Communicate with families regarding any concerns about their child's eating habits.
- Engage children in a range of interesting experiences and conversations relating to nutrition and healthy eating. We will incorporate nutritional information into our educational programs.
- Encourage families to implement positive nutrition habits at home, providing information and healthy food ideas in newsletters, on notice boards, and through our educational programs.
- To provide relaxed, social mealtime environments, where children can try new foods and enjoy their meals.
- Encourage and supervise children to assist in the preparation, serving and cleaning up at meal times
- Not allow food to be used as a form of punishment, or as a reward.
- Not require children to eat foods they do not like, or do not want to eat.
- Encourage educators to present themselves as positive role models, sitting with children at meals times, where appropriate, eating with children at meal times, while maintaining good personal nutrition habits (especially when visible to children).
- Encourage children to adopt socially acceptable behaviours when sitting and eating food together.
- Provide age and developmentally appropriate utensils and furniture for each child.
- Provide educators with relevant nutrition and food safety training.

Storing Expressed Breastmilk

Some families may choose to provide breastmilk for their child to drink throughout the day. Breastmilk can be freshly expressed or frozen. Breastmilk most commonly is stored in a closed container or special breastmilk storage bag, it should have the date that the breastmilk was expressed written on the storage container.

The guidelines below explain how long you can store breastmilk at different temperatures and when you should use stored or frozen breastmilk.

Freshly expressed breastmilk

You can store breastmilk:

- At room temperature (26°C or lower) for 6-8 hours
- In the fridge (4°C or lower) for up to 72 hours – the best spot is the back of the fridge where it's coldest
- In the freezer compartment (-15°C or lower) inside a fridge for two weeks
- In the freezer section (-18°C or lower) of a fridge with separate door for three months
- In a chest or upright deep freezer (-20°C or lower) for 6-12 months.

Previously frozen breastmilk (thawed in the fridge but not warmed)

You can store breastmilk:

- at room temperature (26°C or lower) for four hours or less – that is, until the next feed
- in the fridge for up to 24 hours – the best spot is the back of the fridge where it's coldest.

Do not refreeze previously frozen breastmilk.

Breastmilk thawed outside the fridge in warm water

You can store breastmilk:

- at room temperature (26°C or lower) until the end of the feed
- in the fridge for four hours or until the next feed.

Do not refreeze previously frozen breastmilk.

If the baby/child does not finish their feed of expressed breastmilk, you can't use it for another feed. You should throw it away.

Transporting Expressed breastmilk

You can transport expressed breastmilk between home and other places. Expressed breastmilk can travel:

- in an insulated container like an esky or cooler bag with one or more freezer bricks
- either frozen or fresh – if the milk has thawed, use it within four hours and don't refreeze it.

Place the labelled breastmilk in the fridge as soon as you arrive or in the freezer if it's still frozen.

Preparing expressed breastmilk for use

A baby/child can have expressed breastmilk with a cup, spoon or bottle.

Warm the container of breastmilk by placing it in warm water. Use fresh breastmilk first if you have some, but if you're using frozen breastmilk, you can thaw it by placing it in either cool or warm water.

Gently swirl the bottle or container, and test the temperature of the milk before feeding your baby. The temperature should be lukewarm or around body temperature. Some babies don't mind it if you feed them milk that's been thawed but not warmed.

Don't use a microwave oven to thaw or warm the milk, because this destroys some of the components of breastmilk. It can also result in hot spots, which can burn a baby.