Barmera Kindergarten Food and Nutrition Policy

Background

The Barmera Kindergarten is committed to providing a safe and educational environment for our children. We aim to look at children’s growth and development and establish habits that will prevent disease in later life, eg. diabetes.

The number of children in Australia who are overweight or obese is increasing rapidly. Expert’s cite sedentary lifestyle ie. lack of active play and exercise, and diets high in fat and sugars as cause for this trend. There is also an increase of tooth decay in young children and speech pathologists are reporting a greater incidence of speech problems which is partially attributed to the decrease in children eating foods which require extensive chewing (eg. whole raw fruit).

Mindful of the growing weight and tooth decay problems plus the links between eating and learning, the Barmera kindergarten has a nutrition policy that aims to promote healthy eating.


Through this policy we aim to: (goals)

1. Promote knowledge and awareness of the importance of good food and nutrition to children, families and carers of the centre.

2. Promote safe eating practices and food related activities.

3. Foster healthy, social, emotional, physical and cultural development.

These goals will be achieved by: (strategies)

1. Promote knowledge and awareness of the importance of good food and nutrition to children, families and carers of the centre.

   1.1. Education and Promotion to parents and carers
     - Pamphlets
     - Newsletters
     - Talks and workshops by guest speakers

   1.2. Education and Information to children
     - interactive cooking session
     - food and nutrition related play activities
     - food and nutrition related skill development activities
     - food sharing days where foods brought are cut up, shared and discussed
     - growing foods in the garden
     - staff role models

   1.3. Regulate the types of food allowed at the centre
     Excluded foods are:
     - Foods that may contain traces of nuts
     - Chocolate
- Muesli bars
- Potato or corn chips
- Lollies or sweet biscuits
- Fruit leathers eg. roll up
- Foods containing more that 10% sugar
- Foods containing more than 5% fat

1.2.2 Excluded drinks are:
- Cordials
- Softdrinks
- Milk drinks
- Fruit drinks or juice

1.2.3 Excluded items will be communicated to parents/carers by:
- A note stating an alternative suggestion
- Newsletters
- Pamphlets
- Education sessions

1.3 Water is the preferred drink.
- Water bottles are encouraged
- Water to refill drink bottles is available from sink on the verandah

1.4 Preferred foods are promoted by:
- Pamphlets
- Information sessions by Dietitian
- Newsletters
- Displays

2 Promote safe eating practices and food related activities.

2.2 Food Hygiene practices will be observed and role modeled
- Wash hands prior to meals and food handling
- Cooking activities will involve low risk foods
- Wash hands after touching non hygienic items eg. animals
- Lunch items are to be stored in the refrigerator
- Non lunch items are stored in the child’s bag and therefore items should not be requiring cold temperatures unless a frozen ice brick is provided.

2.3 Minimise choking risk
- Children are seated while eating
- No food is taken into play areas
- Foods that are at risk for causing choking will be communicated to parents via newsletters, pamphlets and information sessions.

2.4 Special dietary needs
- It is the parents and carers responsibility to notify the centre if their child has a special need. In the enrollment package is a form to be complete by parents and carers about special dietary needs, allergies and medications.
- Due to the lethality of nut allergies the Barmera Kindergarten is a nut free zone. No foods containing nuts or traces of nuts are permitted.
3 Foster healthy, social, emotional, physical and cultural development.

3.1 Promote independent self feeding by ensuring foods provided to the children can be open and consumed without assistance.

3.2 Promote cultural appreciation by:
   - Role playing
   - Cooking session of multicultural foods
   - Bilingual worker
   - Involve parents of culturally and Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds (CALD) backgrounds in the centre’s activities.

3.3 Special occasions
   - Any foods provided must be nut free.
   - Birthdays are celebrated at kindergarten with stickers, lucky dips and a birthday song.
   - Fundraising should aim to use foods that fit in with the healthy eating guidelines outlined in this policy.

Policy
- will be kept in the staff room but a copy will be available in the information book accessible to all parents and carers
- Provided to all parents/carers in the enrollment package
- Reviewed annually and nothing can be changed in the policy except by staff in consultation with parents and carers.

Policy Endorsement Governing Council and Barmera kindergarten community
Date: Term 1 2012.

Contacts for more information about Food, Nutrition and allergies.

- Community Dietitian-Nutritionist, Riverland Regional Health Service Inc. (RRHSI)
  Phone 8588 0400

- Women’s and Children’s Hospital, Department of Clinical Immunology or Department of Nutrition and Dietetics
  72 King William Road, North Adelaide Phone 8161 7233

- Local Doctor

- Allergy specialist/Pediatrician

- Royal Prince Alfred Hospital Department of Clinical Immunology
  New South Wales, 2050