Food supply

All food and drink supplied in the course of school and preschool activities should comply with the Dietary guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia and be inclusive of community socio-economic, cultural and spiritual perspectives. This includes food supplied through canteens and other food services and vending machines in all education settings such as learning programs, camps, excursions, fundraising and celebrations.

The dietary guidelines refer to ‘extra foods,’ that is, foods that do not comply with the guidelines because, for example, they are high in fat, salt and sugar, and low in fibre and of poor nutritional value and high energy density. Foods from this category should not be supplied on a regular basis. They might be supplied as part of a special event. This should not occur more than twice per school term.

Food safety

All work sites must comply with food safety legislation as required under the Food Act 2001 and Regulations under the Act.

All work sites should comply with public and environmental health authority food safety policies under this legislation. In particular, all members of school and preschool communities should use effective hand washing techniques in the context of food handling (go to <www.dhs.sa.gov.au/pxps> for more information).

Food-related health support planning

Schools and preschools should ensure that students and children with medically warranted individual health care needs related to food and nutrition are supported in line with the Department’s health support planning policy. This includes learners who have special dietary requirements; for example, related to anaphylaxis, diabetes or cystic fibrosis. It also includes learners who have a food-related mental health issue.

Working with families, health services and industry

Families are primarily responsible for the provision of food to their children. Schools and preschools should foster positive communication and relationships with families to support healthy eating outcomes for young people.

Sites should work with health professionals and services to ensure that educators have up-to-date information about relevant food and nutrition issues and community programs.

Sites should ensure any partnerships with food industry and related organisations, including sponsorship arrangements, support the Department’s healthy eating guidelines.

Further information

Further information related to these guidelines can be found on the Department’s website at <www.decs.sa.gov.au/eatwellsa>.

References


Introduction

Schools and preschools have a unique and important role in enabling children and adolescents to develop their capacity for healthy growth and development and healthier futures.

The *eat well sa schools and preschools healthy eating guidelines* provide a framework through which schools and preschools can promote learning, health and wellbeing in relation to food and nutrition.

The guidelines reflect and support a number of Commonwealth and state policies and priorities, principally:

- *Dietary guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia*.
- *The Australian guide to healthy eating*.
- *Healthy weight 2008—Australia’s future*.
- *Creating opportunity, South Australia—Strategic plan*.

The guidelines acknowledge that primarily families are responsible for the provision of food to their children. The guidelines support families in this role, and use strategies that are inclusive of the socio-economic, cultural and spiritual perspectives of their communities.

The guidelines will be implemented in the daily work of schools and preschools through:

- the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework
- creation of safe, supportive and inclusive environments for learning and wellbeing
- provision of inclusive pathways for care and learning that ensure the particular and local needs of individuals and communities are addressed
- partnerships with families, communities, professionals, services and industry to support a whole-of-community commitment to wellbeing and learning.

The *eat well sa schools and preschools healthy eating guidelines* are the result of a very successful collaboration between educators, health professionals and communities. They are a practical framework for planning school and preschool strategies to ensure students and children learn about, experience and practise healthy eating.

Student welfare

Schools and preschools have an obligation to provide a learning environment that is safe and supportive of students’ and children’s learning, health and wellbeing. In relation to healthy eating practices, schools and preschools should operate in line with the *Dietary guidelines for children and adolescents in Australia*, *The Australian guide to healthy eating* and the *eat well sa schools and preschools healthy eating guidelines*.

The implications of all these on schools and preschools are described below in relation to six areas of practice:

- curriculum
- the learning environment
- food supply
- food safety
- food-related health support planning
- working with families, health services and industry.

Curriculum

Schools and preschools are responsible for students’ and children’s learning regarding food and nutrition as part of the South Australian Curriculum, Standards and Accountability Framework.

Learning programs should provide opportunities for developing practical food skills related to growing, selection, storage, preparation, cooking and serving food.

These programs should be inclusive of the socio-economic, cultural and spiritual perspectives of their communities.