



Education and Care Services References

National Quality Standard

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 Law and National Regulations

78	Food and beverages
87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record

Policy Statement

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. Our Service promotes the importance of good dental health to children and families.

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, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

Implementation

Our Service believes it is important for all children to practice a high level of dental hygiene. We follow the recommendations from the [Australian Dental Association](#), NSW Department of Health.

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, fruits, and dairy products. Children will be encouraged to drink water.



The approved provider, management, nominated supervisor will:

- ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met
- ensure educators, staff, students and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- ensure that food and drinks provided by the Service adhere to recommendations from organisations such as [Munch and Move](#) (NSW) and the Department of Health and Age Care program [Get Up and Grow](#), and other 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
- provide information to families about the [Child Dental Benefits Schedule](#) (CDBS)
- ensure enrolment form contains up to date information about each child's family dentist (in case of emergency)

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 toothbrushes, 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
- never dip dummies in sweet foods such as honey or jams as this could cause severe 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
- provide information to families about the problems that caused by the prolonged use of dummies



- promote [Dental Health Week](#) with children and families each year.

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 at all times with current first aid qualifications to follow dental accident procedures
- ensure the Administration of First Aid Procedure is adhered to (including completing an Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Record)
- ensure families are notified of any injury as soon as is reasonably practicable
- 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.

Related Policies

- Administration of First Aid Policy
- Bottle Safety and Preparation Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy
- Nutrition and Food Safety Policy

Policy Review

- The Service will review the Dental Health Policy and related documents regularly or as current information arises.
- Families are encouraged to collaborate with the Service to review the Policies and Procedures.
- Educators and staff are essential stakeholders in the policy review process and will be encouraged to be actively involved.

Policy Version

Version	Version changes
1.0	• Minor changes made to the policy
1.5	• Updated the references to comply with revised National Quality Standard
2.0	• Latest updates include terminology and grammar improvements. • Added the section displaying related policies on page 1. • Added related National Regulation
3.0	• Sources checked and updated • Unavailable or unrelated URLs deleted
3.5	• Minor grammatical changes
4.0	• updated links to Dental Health Week and links to recommendations • sources checked and repaired as required

Source Acknowledgments

- Consultation with management, educators, staff, and families



- Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2025). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#)
- Australian Government Services Australia [Child Dental Benefits Schedule](#)
- Dental Health Services Victoria: <https://www.dhsv.org.au/oral-health-advice/Professionals/early-childhood>
- Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023)
- [Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023)
- National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) (2006). Ask a child care adviser: Dental health. *Putting Children First*, 18, 10-12
- Raising Children Network: [Toddler teeth development, dental health and dental care](#)