

# Meal Time Routines Policy

**Evidence of link to Regulations (ECSNR):**

Part 4.2 Div. 1

R78 – 1, 2

R79 - 1, 2

R80 - 1, 2, 4

**Evidence of link to NQS::**

QA2, St2.2, E2.2.1

Version	Date	Author	Change Description

**Policy Objective**

To provide a meal time environment that promotes culturally appropriate social, communication and self-help skills.

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## Rationale

Meal times offer opportunities for children to develop social skills and develop the art of conversation in a relaxed atmosphere. Mealtimes also provide opportunities for children to practice their self- help skills and make meaningful choices.

Educators can promote socially acceptable meal time behaviours by role modelling and setting simple rules. Educators can also model positive attitudes towards healthy foods and encouraging children to try new foods.

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## Relevant Legislation:

Education and Care Services National Regulation, 2011

National Quality Standards <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

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## Strategies and practices

### Strategies:

- Mealtimes will be recognised as opportunities for the children to socialise and communicate with each other, and with educators.
- Educators will sit with children and have child-sized meals.
- Educators will encourage good eating practices and to model expectations and appropriate behaviours.
- Educators will determine the placement of children in groups to take advantage of peer role modelling.
- Table and chairs will be arranged in small groups of 4 -6 children.
- Where possible children will sit in the same place for each meal.
- Food will not be used as a form of punishment either by its provision or denial.
- Special occasions may be celebrated with culturally appropriate foods.
- The service will use child sized plates, utensils and equipment and children will be encouraged to develop self help skills such as feeding themselves, serving themselves food and scraping their own plate (as appropriate to the child's developmental ability)
- There is a daily table-setting roster for the children.
- The weekly menu will be in display for parents and staff

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## References

Education and Care Services National Regulation, 2011

National Quality Standards <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

## Resources

The Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority: <http://www.acecqa.gov.au/>

Raising Children Network: Australian parenting resource. [www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au)

### **Department of Health and Aging: Get Up and Grow Resources**

Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood - Staff/Carers Book  
<http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources>

<b>Policy Written by:</b>	<b>Position:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Approved Date:</b>	<b>Next review date:</b>

**Staff Sign:**