



Physical Activity & Nutrition Outside School Hours

NUTRITION FACT SHEET #2

FOOD SAFE PRACTICES

Food poisoning and infectious disease can be a serious health problem for children. If food is not safely stored or properly handled, bacteria can multiply to dangerous levels and cause illness. The use of safe and hygienic food storage and handling practices can prevent food contamination and the transmission of bacteria and infectious disease amongst children and adults. Every person who handles food has an important responsibility to maintain safe and hygienic food practices.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

School age care services need to comply with the Food Safety Standards developed by Food Standards Australia New Zealand (FSANZ). These were developed to provide effective and nationally uniform food safety legislation for Australia. Food Safety standards include requirements relating to:

- Health and hygiene of food handlers
- Correct transportation and storage of food
- Food preparation practices
- Cleaning and sanitising procedures

FSANZ works in partnership with Australia's Commonwealth, State and Territory governments to ensure safe food practices by all food businesses and food handlers. All Australian states and territories have food or health authorities who provide advice on implementing the Food Safety Standards.

Regulation 77 of The Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011 states that:

The Approved Providers/Nominated Supervisor of an education and care service must ensure that all staff members implement:

- *adequate health and hygiene practices; and*
- *safe practices for handling, preparing and storing food -*

to minimise risks to children being educated and cared for by the service.

In Queensland, school age care services also need to comply with the requirements of the Queensland Food Act 2006 and, in particular, the type of food being provided. For further information, see Queensland Health Fact Sheet #47 available at <http://www.health.qld.gov.au/foodsafety/documents/fs-47-outschoolcare.pdf>



**Queensland
Government**

A joint Australian, State and Territory Government initiative
under the National Partnership Agreement on Preventative Health



POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Documented food handling and hygiene policies should detail practice that is consistent with recommendations from recognised health authorities. These practices should ensure the service stores, handles, prepares and serves food and drinks safely and hygienically. Service policies could include (but not be limited to):

- Preventing food poisoning;
- Food preparation facilities and equipment;
- Communicating with families;
- Involving children in food safety;
- Safe food storage;
- Safe food preparation and serving;
- Cleaning and sanitizing;
- Personal hygiene;
- Food brought from home.

CONSISTENT PRACTICE

To ensure consistency of practice staff should have access to current information and ongoing training and professional development from recognised authorities. Procedures for monitoring staff compliance with food safety and hygiene policies and practices should also be put in place.

Ideally all staff responsible for food preparation and handling should complete a food safety training course delivered by a Registered Training Organisation (RTO). If this is not possible, staff who attend the training should pass this information on to other staff. Services can also arrange for external audits of food safety and hygiene practices to seek recommendations for changes and improvements to their practice.



FOOD FROM HOME

To ensure that children are protected from food borne illnesses, services can provide guidance on safe food handling to families that provide meals from home. Once the food has arrived at the service it is the service's responsibility to handle, store and prepare it safely and hygienically. Educators should be aware of the 'temperature danger zone' and ensure food is stored and served at temperatures that prevent the growth of bacteria.

Australian Government. (2011). *Education and Care Services National Regulations*. Retrieved December 2012, from Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority: www.acecqa.gov.au

FSANZ. (n.d.). *Safe Food Australia - A Guide to the Food Safety Standards*. Retrieved December 2012, from Food Standards Australia New Zealand: http://www.foodstandards.gov.au/_srcfiles/complete_safefood.pdf

