

# Establishing healthy habits early: Obesity prevention in NSW Early Childhood Services

**Presented by: Amanda Green and Jaclyn Coffey**

**Co-Authors: Lara Hernandez, Christine Innes-Hughes and Chris Rissel**  
**NSW Office of Preventive Health**



**Early Childhood Australia – National Conference**  
**21<sup>st</sup> September 2018**



# Presentation Outline

- 🍏 Childhood overweight and obesity in Australia
- 🍏 The role of ECEC services in establishing healthy habits
- 🍏 Healthy eating and physical activity in ECEC
- 🍏 The *Munch & Move* program
- 🍏 Future directions
- 🍏 Where to get information for services and families

# Overweight and Obesity

In Australia, 63% of adults are overweight or obese



**How many Australian children aged 3 to 5 years are overweight or obese?**

1. 1 in 5
2. 1 in 20
3. 1 in 50
4. 1 in 100



# Childhood Overweight and Obesity

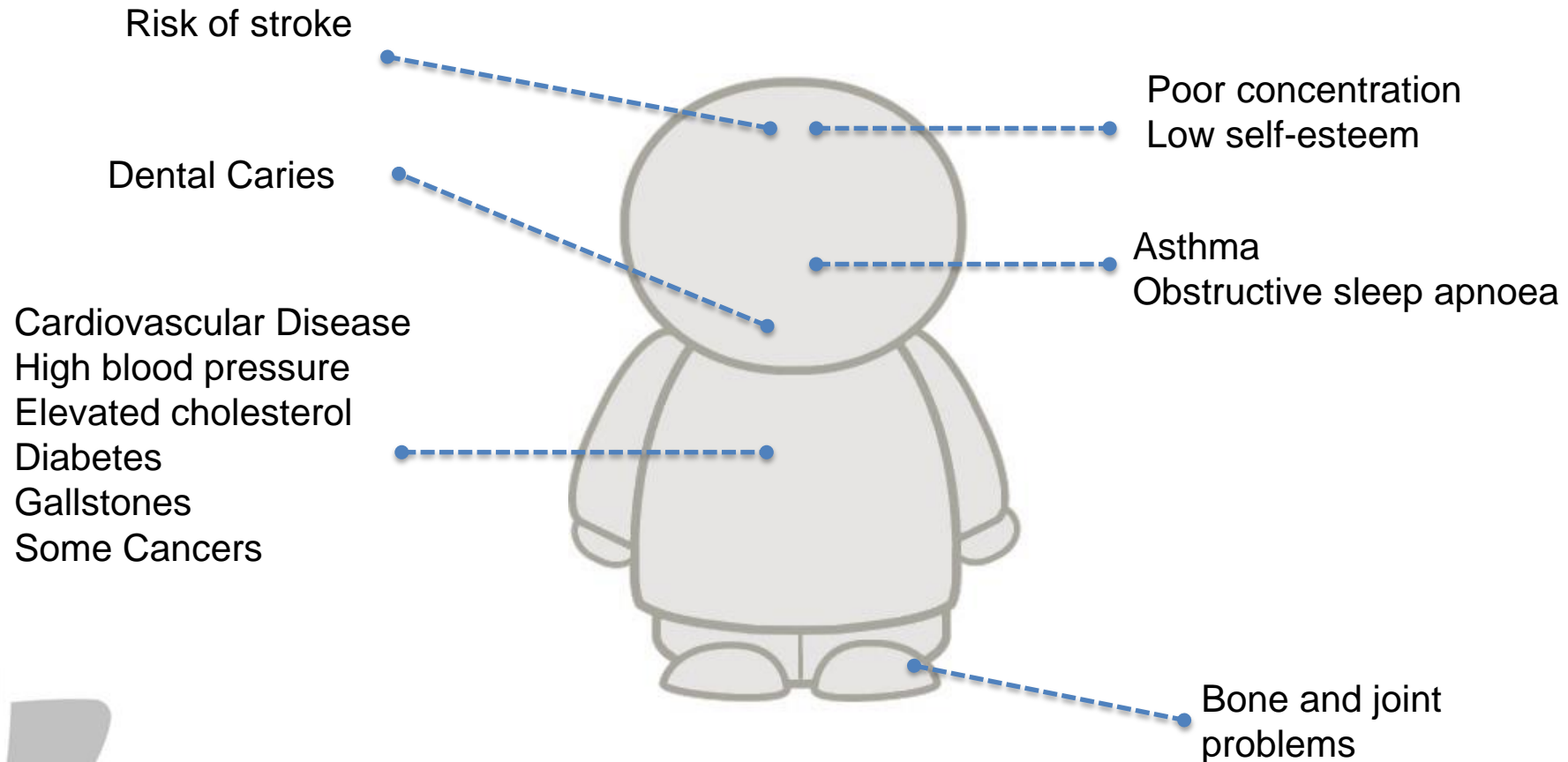
**How many Australian children aged 3 to 5 years are overweight or obese?**

1. 1 in 5
2. 1 in 20
3. 1 in 50
4. 1 in 100



**Obese children go on to become obese adults**

# Consequences



**Poorer health outcomes**

# Causes



- Heavily marketed nutrient poor foods



- Overconsuming sugary drinks



- Private car use



- Increased screen time



- Limited spaces to play



- Safety concerns



- Over-scheduled children



- Working families

# Prevention



**Children who develop healthy eating and activity habits from a young age are more likely to CONTINUE THESE HABITS IN THE LONG TERM – contributing to ongoing health and wellbeing.**

**Healthy habits start early!**

# Prevention



## NSW Premier's Priority:

To reduce overweight and obesity rates of children by 5% over 10 years.

### Premier's Priority:

Reduce Overweight and Obesity Rates of Children by 5% over 10 Years

OCTOBER 2016

MAKE  
HEALTHY  
NORMAL



*Munch & Move* contributes to this obesity prevention effort.



# *Munch & Move*



# Why early childhood education and care services?

- 🍏 Habits are formed at a young age
- 🍏 Families seek your advice



**SOURCE:**  
ABS, Childhood Education and Care, Australia, April 2018.

# The role of services



## The National Quality Framework

EYLF – Learning  
Outcome 3:  
Children have a  
strong sense of  
wellbeing

NQS – QA 2  
2.1.3: Healthy eating  
and physical activity  
are promoted and  
appropriate for each  
child

# Why is healthy eating and physical activity important?

Preventing illness

Fitness

Social skills

Confidence and self esteem

Strong bones and muscles

Helps develop movement skills (gross motor, fine motor, fundamental)

Coordination and balance

Concentration and behaviour

Healthy weight

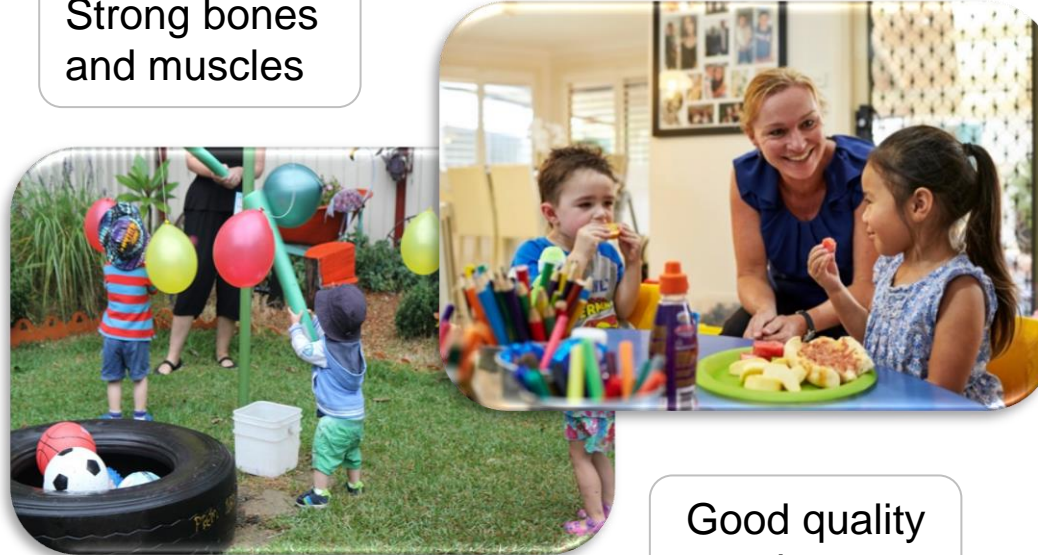
Good quality sleep

Energy to learn

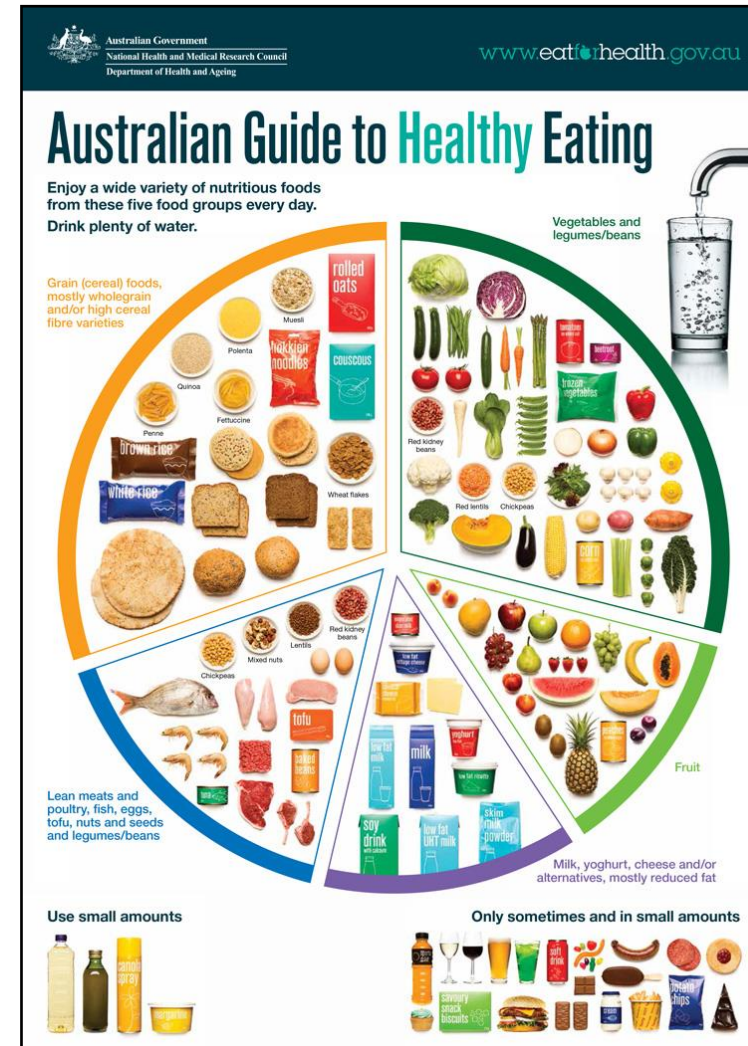
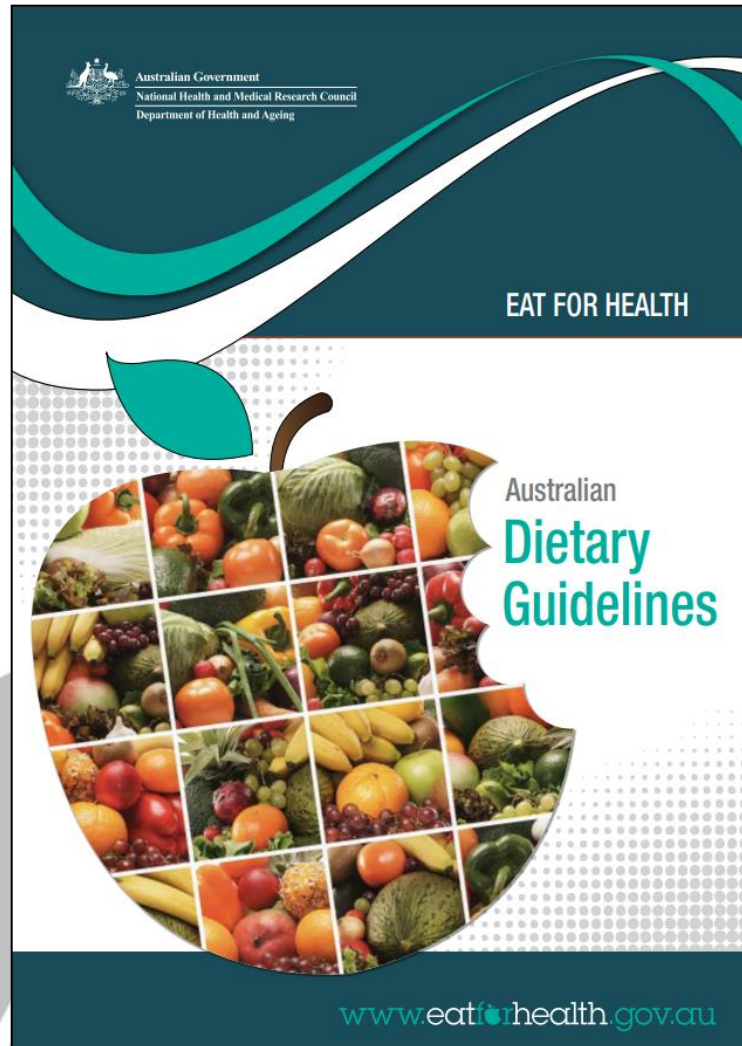
Competence and autonomy

Feel happier, more relaxed

Healthy growth and development



# Healthy Eating in ECEC



# Healthy Eating in ECEC

Grain (cereal) foods,  
mostly wholegrain  
and/or high cereal  
fibre varieties

Lean meats and  
poultry, fish, eggs,  
tofu, nuts and seeds  
and legumes/beans

Healthy fats  
and oils

## Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods  
from these five food groups every day.  
Drink plenty of water.



Water

Vegetables and  
legumes/beans

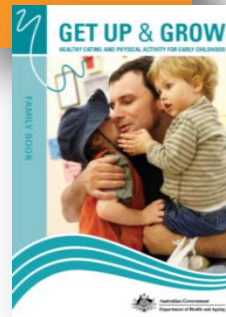
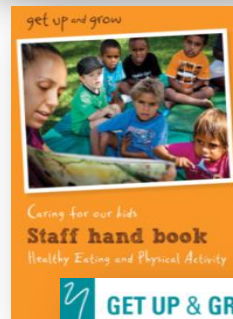
Everyday foods

Fruit

Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or  
alternatives, mostly reduced fat

Sometimes foods

# Healthy Eating in ECEC



## HEALTHY EATING GUIDELINES

Healthy eating guideline 1: Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended, with positive support, for babies until around six months. Continued breastfeeding is recommended for at least 12 months – and longer if the mother and baby wish.

Healthy eating guideline 2: If an infant is not breastfed, is partially breastfed, or if breastfeeding is discontinued, use an infant formula until 12 months of age.

Healthy eating guideline 3: Introduce suitable solid foods at around six months.

Healthy eating guideline 4: Make sure that food offered to children is appropriate to the child's age and development, and includes a wide variety of nutritious foods consistent with the *Australian Dietary Guidelines* (see page 3).

Healthy eating guideline 5: Provide water in addition to age-appropriate milk drinks. Infants under the age of six months who are not exclusively breastfed can be offered cooled boiled water in addition to infant formula.

Healthy eating guideline 6: Plan mealtimes to be positive, relaxed and social.

Healthy eating guideline 7: Encourage children to try different food types and textures in a positive eating environment.

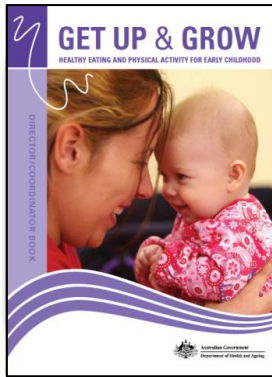
Healthy eating guideline 8: Offer an appropriate amount of food, but allow children to decide themselves how much they will actually eat.

Healthy eating guideline 9: Offer meals and snacks at regular and predictable intervals.

Healthy eating guideline 10: Ensure that food is safely prepared for children to eat – from the preparation stages to consumption.

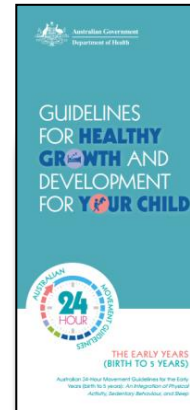
# Physical Activity in ECEC (Birth to 1 year)

## Physical Activity & Sedentary Behaviour



Physical activity, particularly supervised floor-based play in safe environments, should be encouraged from birth.

Not sedentary or restrained for more than 1 hour at a time.



Be physically active several times a day, particularly through supervised interactive floor-based play e.g. crawling, tummy time.

Have at least 30 minutes of tummy time – spread throughout the day.

Not restrained for more than 1 hour at a time.

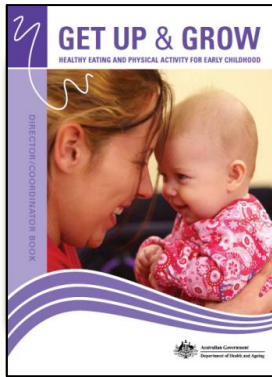
No screen time.

Encourage productive sedentary activities e.g. reading, puzzles.



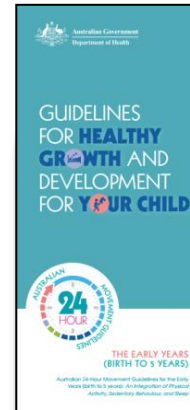
# Physical Activity in ECEC (1-5 years)

## Physical Activity & Sedentary Behaviour



Be physically active for at least 3 hours every day, spread throughout the day.

Not sedentary or restrained for more than 1 hour at a time.



Be physically active for at least 3 hours in a variety of ways, spread throughout the day.

Include energetic play – at least one hour for 3-5 year olds.

Not restrained for more than 1 hour at a time or sitting for extended periods.

No screen time for 1-2 year olds. Less than 1 hour for 2-5 year olds.

Encourage productive sedentary activities.



# How do children's eating and activity habits compare?



of 2-18 year olds eat the recommended daily fruit intake.



of 2-18 year olds eat the recommended vegetable intake.



of 2-4 year olds consume sugary drinks regularly.



Children aged 1-5 years spend  of their day 'sitting' in ECECS.



of 2-4 year olds have less than 1 hour of screen time per day.

# Energiser



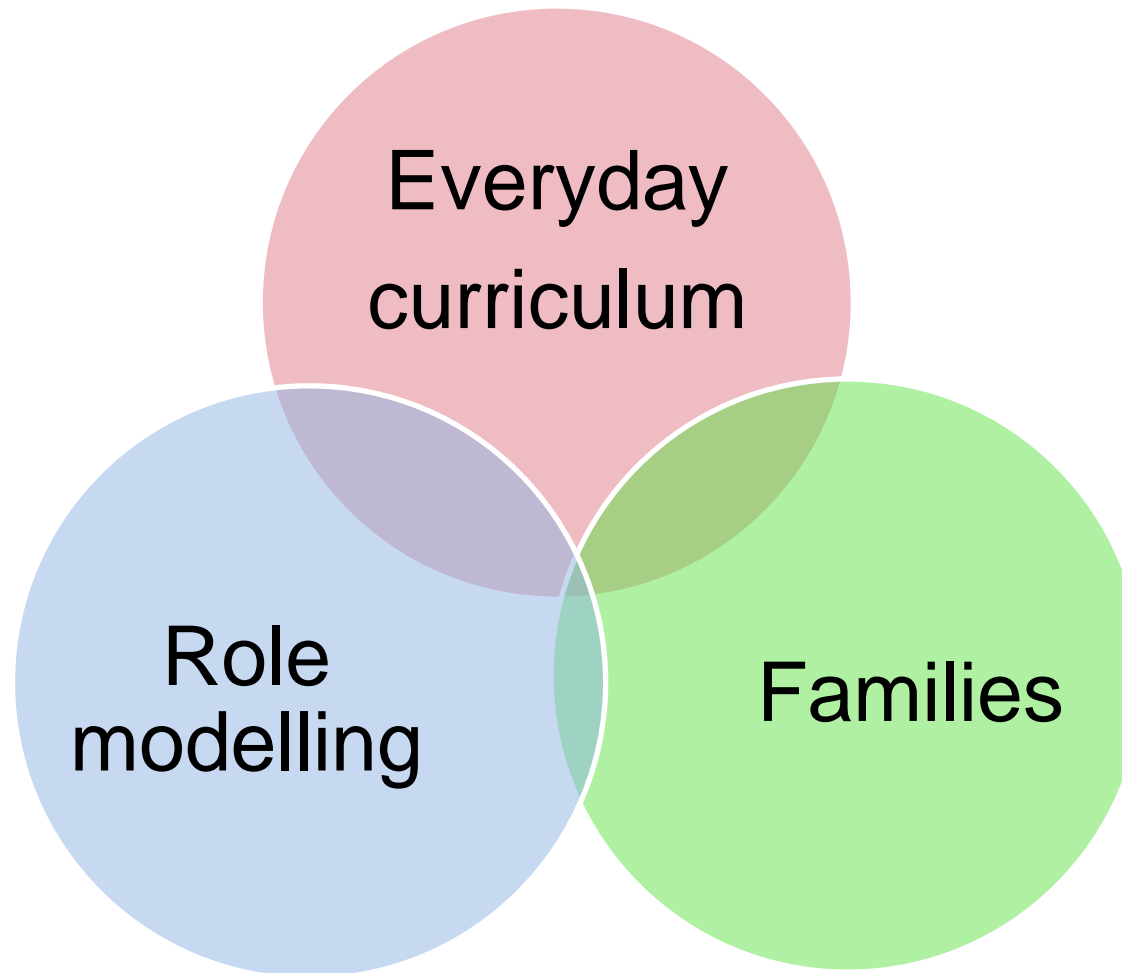
Source: ECTARC

# *Munch & Move* - Implementation

- 🍏 Professional development
- 🍏 Resources
- 🍏 Local Health District Support



# Whole of Service Approach



## **Standard 2.1 - Health**

Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted.

# Program Practices

MUNCH	
1	Service encourages and supports breastfeeding

## MUNCH

2

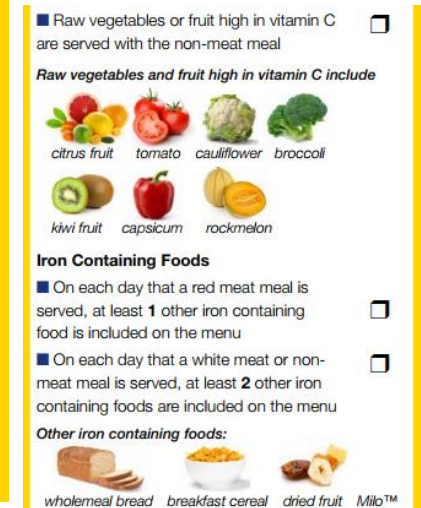
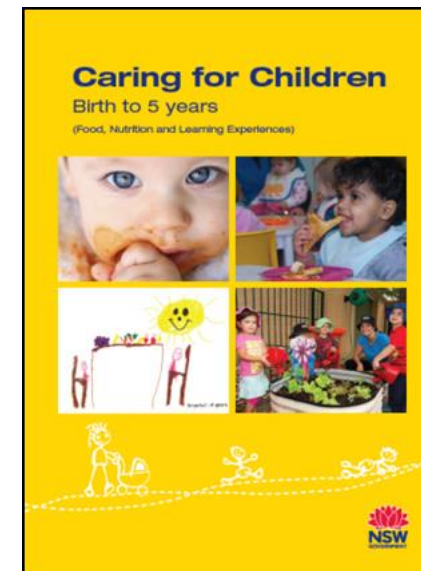
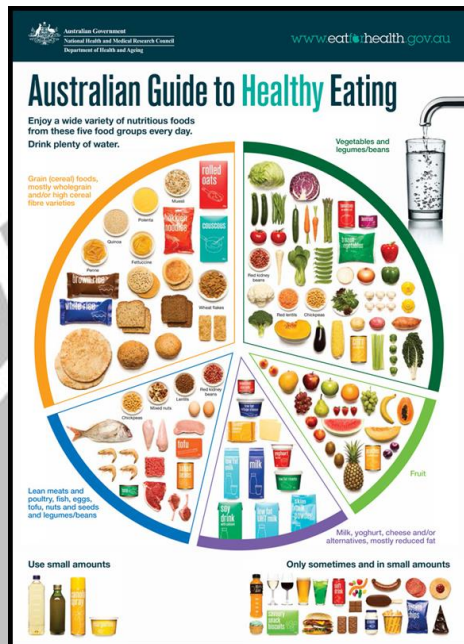
Service communicates with families when children's lunchboxes are not consistent with the Australian Dietary Guidelines

3

Service menu has been assessed against the *Caring for Children* guidelines

### What does this look like?

- Sharing healthy lunchbox information with families
- Sharing the service policy on lunchbox items
- The service menu contains 'everyday' foods only
- Food served to children in care provides 50% of their RDI



## MUNCH

4

Service provides intentional learning experiences about healthy eating at least twice per week

5

Staff create a positive healthy eating environment for children

### What does this look like?

- Play based learning experiences
- Discussions at meal times (e.g. 'everyday' and 'sometimes' foods)
- Role modelling – enjoying healthy foods and water
- Educators sitting and eating with children
- Relaxed meal times
- Positive comments about healthy food



## MOVE

6

Service provides opportunities for PA for 1-5 year olds at least 30% of the daily opening hours

7

Service provides a supportive PA environment

8

Service provides daily opportunities for Fundamental Movement Skills for children 3 to 5 years of age

### What does this look like?

- Planning active play opportunities in daily program
- Incorporating movement in the indoor and outdoor environments
- Extending activities into active play (e.g. acting out books, active transition times)
- Children can access portable physical activity equipment easily (e.g. small play equipment, balls, hoops)
- The 13 FMS are taught skills - planning activities for children to practice FMS/components
- Setting up equipment to facilitate FMS practice (e.g. hanging balloons and placing pool noodles outside)
- Incorporating into transition times (e.g. side-sliding to basin wash hands)



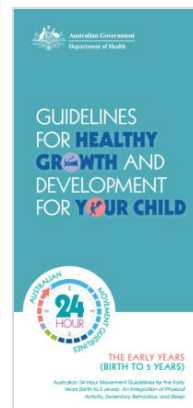
## MONITOR

9

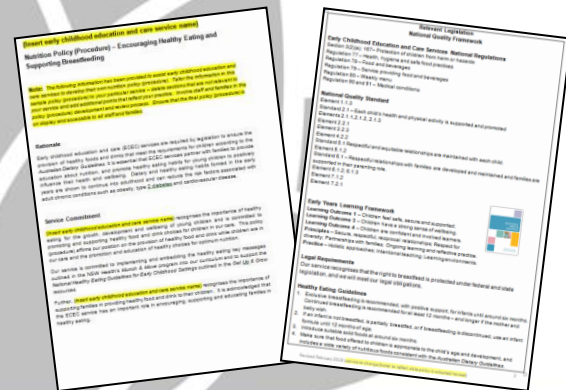
**Service use of small screen recreation for all children is appropriate**

### What does this look like?

- Using screens in line with the 24 Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years
- Not providing screens to children under 2 years of age
- Not using screens passively (i.e. sit and watch / for quite or down time)
- Using screen time intentionally to gain knowledge about a learning area
- Using screens to facilitate exploration or activity, dance or movement



MAKING IT HAPPEN	
10, 11, 12	Written policies on nutrition, physical activity and small screen recreation
13	Health information sent to families annually
14	50% of educators trained in healthy eating and physical activity
15	Cook has completed training in providing nutritious meals and snacks for children
16	Reports healthy eating and physical activity achievements annually
<p><b>What does this look like?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developing policies that reflect what the service does, are based on appropriate guidelines and reflect a whole-of-service approach</li> <li>Sharing health information with families throughout the year</li> <li>Supporting staff/cook with professional development opportunities</li> <li>Sharing information at staff meetings after professional development</li> <li>Reflecting on achievements and areas for improvement in the Quality Improvement Plan</li> <li>Reporting within annual reports (for large services), minutes of service meetings or planning days</li> </ul>	



# Quality Improvement Plan

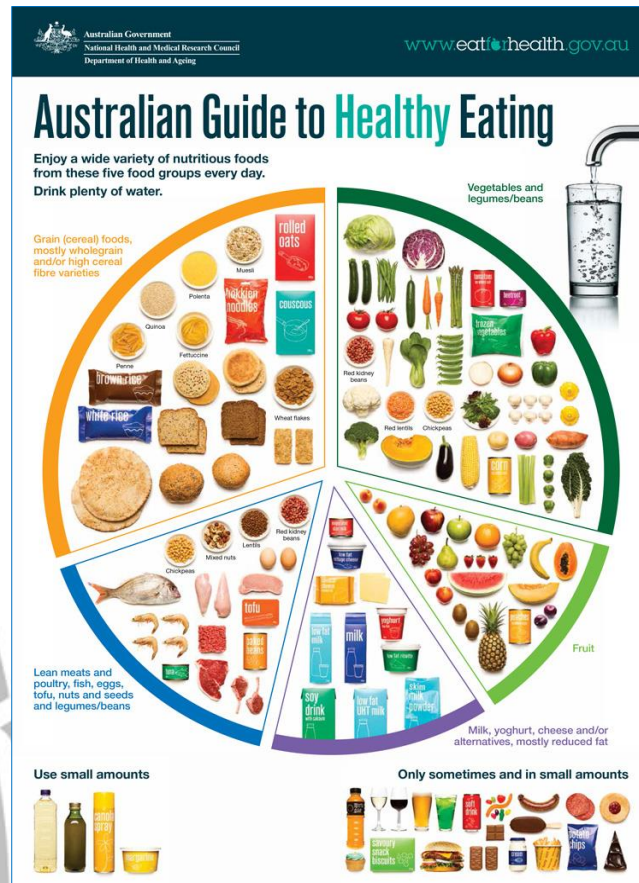
Key improvements sought for : Quality Area 2- Children's Health and Safety						
Standard 2.1 - Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Each child's health and physical activity is supported and promoted</li></ul>					
Element 2.1.3 – Healthy lifestyle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.</li></ul>					
Identified issues / Areas for improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li></li><li></li><li></li></ul>					

## Improvement plan

Standard/element	What outcome or goal do we seek?	Priority (LMH)	How will we get this outcome? (Steps)	Success measure	By when?	Progress notes
2.1.3						



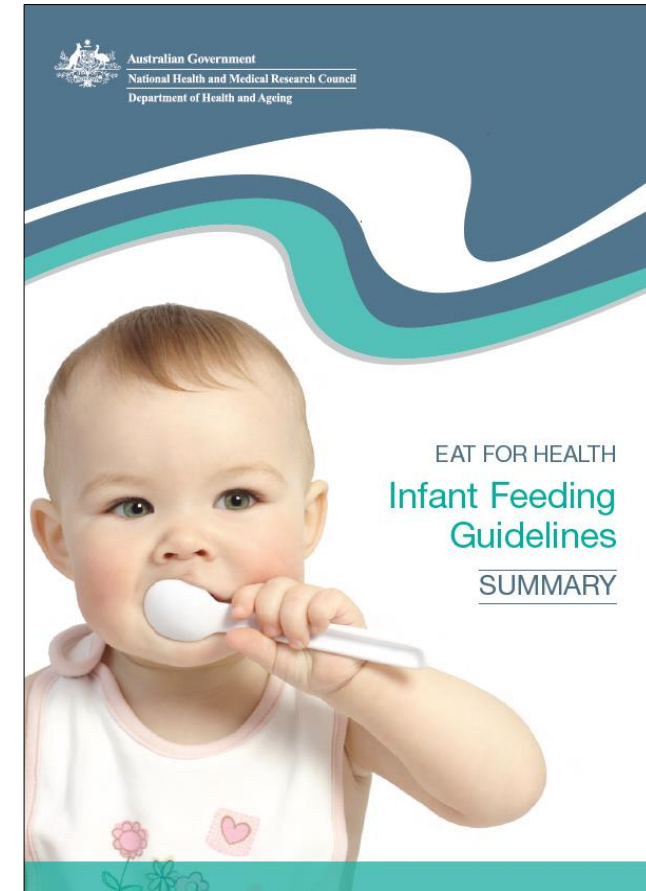
# Resources for families



[www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)



[www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)



[www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)

# Resources for families

The collage features a variety of resources from the [www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au) website, all featuring the 'munch & move' logo.

- Fact Sheet: ENCOURAGE SUPPORT** - Discusses breastfeeding benefits and exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months.
- Fact Sheet: CHOOSE WATER AS A DRINK** - States that water is the best drink for children and provides tips to help parents encourage their child to drink more water.
- Fact Sheet: SELECT HEALTHY SNACKS** - Emphasizes the importance of offering healthy snacks and provides lists of healthy snacks and tips to make healthy snacks.
- Fact Sheet: EAT MORE FRUIT AND VEGETABLES** - Provides information on serving sizes, healthy snack ideas, and tips to get children to eat more fruit and vegetables.
- Fact Sheet: GET ACTIVE EACH DAY** - Explains the importance of active play and provides guidelines for daily activity levels for babies, toddlers, and preschoolers.
- Fact Sheet: REDUCING YOUNG CHILDREN'S SCREEN TIME** - Discusses the Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines and provides tips to reduce screen time and encourage active play.
- Fact Sheet: Starting Family Foods** - Provides information on introducing solid foods to babies.
- Fact Sheet: Healthy mouths for kids under 5** - Focuses on dental health for young children.
- Fact Sheet: The right to breastfeed protected under federal state legislation** - Discusses the legal rights of parents to breastfeed in public.
- Fact Sheet: Resource Fun For Jack's FUNtastic Resources** - Provides information on fun activities for children.

At the bottom of the collage, there is a large banner with the text: "For more information about Munch & Move visit the Healthy Kids website [www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au)"

[www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au)

# Case study



# Monitoring - Program Reach

As of 30 June 2018:



- 🍏 **87% (3,376/3,879) of centre-based services in NSW**
- 🍏 **36% (92/253) of family day care service providers in NSW (since July 2016)**
- 🍏 92% (1,370/1,486) of services in disadvantaged areas
- 🍏 96% (234/244) of services located in outer regional, remote and very remote locations
- 🍏 96% (260/271) of services with a high % of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children

# Practice Achievement

As of 30 June 2018:

- 🍏 **74% (2,418/3,272) of trained services have achieved 50% of the program adoption practices**
- 🍏 75% (990/1,323) of services in disadvantaged areas
- 🍏 71% (179/252) of services with a high % of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children
- 🍏 72% (161/224) of services in out regional, remote and very remote areas



## *Well achieved practices:*

- Providing a supportive physical activity and healthy eating environment
- Communicating with families about lunchboxes
- Providing physical activity, healthy eating learning experiences
- Using small screens appropriately
- Reporting on achievements

# Tips for a healthy ECS!

- 🍏 Consider a whole of service approach
- 🍏 Plan as a service
- 🍏 Review your policies
- 🍏 Share information with families
- 🍏 Role modelling! Healthy eating habits AND enjoyment of active play



**HAVE FUN and be proud knowing that you are leading children with SMALL STEPS in the right direction to lead healthier lives!**

# Where to get further information

- 🍏 NSW - *Munch & Move* [www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au)
- 🍏 ACT – Kids At Play [www.goodhabitsforlife.act.gov.au/kids-at-play](http://www.goodhabitsforlife.act.gov.au/kids-at-play)
- 🍏 VIC – Achievement Program [www.achievementprogram.health.vic.gov.au/early-childhood-services](http://www.achievementprogram.health.vic.gov.au/early-childhood-services)
- 🍏 QLD – Nutrition Australia QLD Food Foundations
- 🍏 TAS – Move Well Eat Well [www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/mwew/early\\_childhood\\_services](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/mwew/early_childhood_services)
- 🍏 Australian guide to healthy eating – [www.eatforhealth.gov.au](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)
- 🍏 Australian 24 Hour Movement Guidelines - [www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/npra-0-5yrs-brochure](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/npra-0-5yrs-brochure)
- 🍏 Australian Breastfeeding Association - [www.breastfeeding.asn.au](http://www.breastfeeding.asn.au)

# Thank you!

## Acknowledgements

- The 15 NSW Local Health District Health Promotion teams
- Early Childhood Training and Resource Centre (ECTARC)
- Wattle Glen Children's Centre

Contact: [Amanda.Green@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Amanda.Green@health.nsw.gov.au) and  
[Jaclyn.Coffey@health.nsw.gov.au](mailto:Jaclyn.Coffey@health.nsw.gov.au)

[www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au](http://www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au)