

Spreads like jam, honey, vegemite, peanut butter and hazelnut spreads are often provided to children in care.



Not all spreads are equal. For example, jam, honey, Nutella, and Vegemite can be high in added sugars, saturated fats or salt.

Here are our top tips for healthy and tasty toppings that will support children's development and learning.

Did you know?

- Sweet spreads, like jam and honey, are the second largest contributor of added sugars for Australian children.
- On average, Australian children eat 60g of added sugar per day. That's more than twice the World Health Organisation's recommended maximum of 25g - and 1/3 of this added sugar comes from sweet spreads!^{1,2}
- Eating too much added sugar from spreads and toppings can lead to^{3,4}
 - increased risk of children developing **tooth decay and gum problems**.
 - children eating more energy (kilojoules) than they need. If children fill up on foods with spreads that are high in added sugar, sugars, saturated fats or salt they may not get enough essential nutrients from healthier foods, which are important for healthy growth and development.

Menu planning tips

- Swap spreads that contain mostly saturated fat (such as butter or chocolate spreads), for ones that have more healthy polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats (such as avocado or nut paste*).
- Add fruit and vegetables to meals with spreads.
- When buying spreads, look for products which have the lowest amount of sodium and sugar possible, and remember to provide them in moderation.

Limit these spreads...	...and choose these instead.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Butter ● Chocolate spread (such as Nutella) ● Jam ● Honey ● Yeast-based spread (such as Vegemite) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Nut pastes* (no added sugar or salt) ● Cottage cheese, ricotta, or yoghurt ● Vegetable-based dips ● Mustard, relish ● Avocado

*If your centre allows nuts.

¹ Intake and sources of added sugar among Australian children and adolescents, Louie, Moshtaghian, Rangan, Flood and Gill, European Journal of Nutrition, V55:8, p2347-2355, September 2016

² Dietary intake and food sources of added sugar in the Australian population, Lei, Rangan, Flood and Louie, British Journal of Nutrition, V115:5, p868-877, January 2016

³ Sugar, National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013, www.eatforhealth.gov.au

⁴ Australian Dietary Guidelines, National Health and Medical Research Council, 2013, www.eatforhealth.gov.au

Spreads and toppings



Try these healthy spread ideas on your menu. They can be served with bread, crackers, fruit toast, scones or pikelets.

We've put the fruits and vegetables in **bold text**, so you can see how easy it is to add them to your menu.

Sweet goodies

Peanut butter* and banana

Top wholegrain toast with natural peanut butter*, sliced **banana** and a sprinkle of cinnamon. **If your centre allows nuts.*

Ricotta and strawberries

Ricotta and **strawberries** make a delicious sweet combination to add on scones or fruit toast.



Yoghurt, cinnamon and berries

Serve natural yoghurt on pikelets with sprinkle of cinnamon, and a small handful of **berries**.

Savoury goodies

Smashed vegetables

Boost your vegetable intake by topping wholegrain toast with **smashed avocado, peas** or **roasted pumpkin**.

Cannellini bean mash

Drain off excess liquid from canned **cannellini beans**. Mash with olive oil and basil leaves. Add to wholegrain toast or crackers with slices of tasty cheese.



Hard-boiled egg slices

Either smashed or sliced, serve hard boiled eggs with wholegrain toast or crackers for a protein-rich meal.

Cheese and veggies slices

Choose some reduced fat cheese and pair it up with a veggie such as **avocado, capsicum, cucumber and/or carrot** to serve on wholemeal bread, crackers or even pikelets.

Tzatziki dip

A delicious favourite with kids. Mix with natural yoghurt, grated **cucumber**, crushed garlic, cumin and lemon juice. Serve with wholegrain crackers, corn thin or crispbread; as well as fresh vegetables.



Hummus dip

A traditional favourite that is lactose, soy and egg free. Blend together canned **chickpeas**, lemon juice, tahini, garlic, olive oil, and cumin. Serve with wholegrain crackers, corn thin or crispbread; as well as fresh vegetables.

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