

Food and drink guidelines

Outside School Hours Care

The [Food and drink guidelines for outside school hours care](#) (OSHC) will help you provide healthy food and drinks for children that are in line the [Australian Dietary Guidelines](#) and the [Australian Guide to Healthy Eating](#).

Following the Food and drink guidelines for OSHC will also help your service work towards meeting the requirements of the [National Quality Standard](#).

If your OSHC service is located within a school, these guidelines can complement the school's health promotion policy and the [Victorian Canteens, Healthy Eating and Other Food Services Policy](#).

For easy reference when planning a new menu or reviewing your current menu, these guidelines have been summarised into a [checklist](#).

Food and drink guidelines

→ Breakfast



Breakfast should be planned and documented on the menu. Breakfast should include:

- grain (cereal) foods such as bread, breakfast cereal, rice, noodles or flour based products. A wholemeal or wholegrain choice should be available every day.
- Breakfast cereals should be low in added sugars (less than 15g of sugar per 100g if dried fruit is not an ingredient, or less than 25g per 100g if dried fruit is an ingredient).
- milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives. Alternatives such as rice and soy products (e.g. rice drink, soy yoghurt) need to be calcium fortified. Milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives should be mostly reduced fat. Plain reduced fat milk should be provided as a drink every day.

Fruit and vegetables are also encouraged at breakfast. Other good choices are lean meat, poultry, pork, fish, eggs, legumes and alternatives.

→ Afternoon tea



Afternoon tea should be planned and documented on the menu. Afternoon tea should include:

- vegetables
- fruit
- milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives (mostly reduced fat)

Other good choices are:

- grains (cereal) foods such as bread, rice, pasta, crackers, flour based products and breakfast cereals. If grain (cereal) foods are provided, they should be mostly wholemeal or wholegrain. Examples include wholemeal bread, wholemeal flour and wholegrain crackers.
- lean meat, poultry, pork, fish, eggs, legumes and alternatives.

Dried fruit should not be provided every day as it leaves a sticky residue on teeth and can contribute to tooth decay.

Baked items should not be provided every day. If provided, they should not contain large amounts of fat and sugar and should preferably include some fruit or vegetables and wholemeal flour.

→ Drinks



Water and milk are the best drink options for children. Water should be freely available and encouraged throughout the session.

Reduced fat, plain milk is the best everyday milk choice. Flavoured milk should not be provided every day.

Fruit juice is a concentrated source of sugar and should not be offered as a drink.

Sugar sweetened drinks such as soft drinks, fruit drinks, cordial, sports drinks, sports waters, flavoured waters, flavoured mineral waters, iced teas and energy drinks should not be provided.

→ Fats and oils



Use mostly polyunsaturated (e.g. sunflower, safflower) and/or monounsaturated (e.g. canola, olive, peanut, sunflower, soybean, sesame) oils and spreads in cooking and baking.

Avoid palm, cottonseed and coconut oils or oil blends that contain these, as well as cream, sour cream, butter, copha, ghee and lard.

→ Foods and drinks that should not be included in the daily menu



Some foods and drinks should not be included in the daily menu. These items are generally higher in saturated fat and added salt and/or sugar or a combination of these, and typically have little nutritional value.

Examples of foods and drinks which should not be included in the daily menu are:

- sweet drinks such as soft drinks, fruit juice and fruit drinks, cordial, sports drinks, sports waters, flavoured waters, flavoured mineral waters, iced teas and energy drinks
- confectionery, chocolate, jelly
- deep fried foods, such as hot chips
- pastry-based foods, such as pies, sausage rolls and pasties
- some processed meats, such as sausages, frankfurts, hot dogs, salami, strasburg, Devon, some commercial
- chicken nuggets and fish fingers
- most fast food and takeaway foods
- high fat and salt savoury snack foods, such as crisps, chips, biscuits
- ice creams and ice confections
- high sugar and high fat baked and packaged goods, such as cakes, some muffins, sweet pastries, slices, biscuits and bars.

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