



DENTAL HEALTH POLICY

Early childhood is an important time for developing good dental hygiene practices. From the time a baby starts teething, keeping gums and teeth clean can safeguard against cavities in the ‘baby’ teeth which can also cause damage to the permanent teeth underneath. Our Service promotes the importance of good dental health to children and families.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN’S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1	Health	Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted.
2.1.2	Health practices and procedures	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.1.3	Healthy Lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL LAW AND NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
78	Food and beverages
87	Incident, injury, trauma and illness record

RELATED POLICIES

Administration of First Aid Policy Bottle Safety and Preparation Policy Health and Safety Policy	Incident, Injury, Trauma and Illness Policy Nutrition and Food Safety Policy
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PURPOSE

We aim to promote children’s general wellbeing by creating an environment that supports healthy dental and oral health habits and practices that can be maintained throughout the child’s life. Our Service will

provide food and drinks with consideration to the sugar content and ensure that drinking water is always available.

SCOPE

This policy applies to children, families, staff, educators, management, approved provider, nominated supervisor, students, volunteers and visitors of the Service.

IMPLEMENTATION

Our Service believes it is important for all children to practice a high level of dental hygiene. We follow the guidelines of the Australian Dental Association and State Government Health Departments when caring for children's teeth.

We provide information and guidelines on good dental health practices, which are implemented into the daily routine, including drinking water after mealtimes, providing information and education about brushing teeth and tooth friendly snacks and drinks, and going to the dentist.

To minimise the risk of cavities forming we encourage children to eat nutritious foods and to avoid sticky and sugary foods. All food served and prepared at our Service comply with these guidelines by providing a variety of recommended vegetables, fruit, and dairy products. Children will be encouraged to drink water.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER/ MANAGEMENT/ NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL:

- ensure that obligations under the Education and Care Services National Law and National Regulations are met
- ensure educators, staff, students and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy and associated procedure
- ensure that food and drinks provided by the Service adhere to recommendations from organisations such as 'Get up and Grow'. The Royal Children's Hospital of Melbourne recommends that children should avoid foods and drinks such as:
 - Chocolate
 - Lollies
 - Sweetened breakfast cereals
 - Biscuits
 - Fruit bars

- Dried fruit
- Muesli bars
- Soft drink
- Flavoured milk
- Juice
- Sports drinks
- Cordial
- Flavoured water
- always ensure children have access to safe drinking water
- ensure the routine incorporates drinking water after each mealtime
- provide information to families about the [Guide to the Child Dental Benefits Schedule \(CDBS\)](#)

EDUCATORS WILL:

- provide opportunities to discuss dental health education and food and drink choices to support dental health with children
- provide resources to support dental health learning
- pay particular attention to meal and snack times to ensure healthy food is being eaten
- encourage drinking water after each mealtime
- give children bottles *before* they go to bed. When children take a bottle to bed it allows the lactose (sugar) in the milk to sit on their teeth which can cause tooth decay
- never dip dummies in sweet foods such as honey or jams as this could cause severe tooth decay
- arrange visits by dental professionals so that children and families can learn correct brushing techniques and oral care
- provide dental care information to families if needed
- provide information to families about the problems that are caused by the prolonged use of dummies

DENTAL EMERGENCIES

It is important for educators to be aware of how to manage dental accidents and emergencies. Our Service will:

- ensure there is an educator on duty at all times with current first aid qualifications to follow dental accident procedures
- ensure procedures for Administering First Aid are adhered to

- ensure families are notified of any injury as soon as is reasonably practicable
- ensure that the phone number of an emergency dentist is located near the office phone
- ensure children are supervised at all times to minimise accidents and incidents.

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

Our *Dental Health Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in consultation with children, families, staff, educators and management.

CHILDCARE CENTRE DESKTOP- RELATED RESOURCES

Administration of First Aid Procedure	Incident Injury and Trauma Record
Dental Health Procedure	

SOURCES

Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
 Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2024). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).
 Australian Government Services Australia *Child Dental Benefits Schedule*
<https://www.servicesaustralia.gov.au/individuals/services/medicare/child-dental-benefits-schedule>
 Australian Government. Healthdirect. (2023) [Dental care for babies and children](#).
 Dental Health Services Victoria: <https://www.dhsv.org.au/oral-health-advice/Professionals/early-childhood>
 Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).
[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023)
 Raising Children Network: www.raisingchildren.net.au
[Western Australian Legislation Education and Care Services National Regulations \(WA\) Act 2012](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Megan Hipkiss	Centre support	September 2024
POLICY REVIEWED	SEPTEMBER 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	SEPTEMBER 2025
VERSION NUMBER	V11.9.24		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hyperlinks checked and repaired as required • minor formatting edits within text • Added the procedure to the bottom of this policy. • Added more references from ‘get up and grow’ • Added link to ‘Guide to the Child Dental Benefits Schedule (CDBS)’ for families. 		

POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE
SEPTEMBER 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy review • links to health programs added within policy • sources checked for currency • continuous improvement/reflection section added • CCD related resources added 	SEPTEMBER 2024



DENTAL HEALTH AND DENTAL ACCIDENT PROCEDURE

Early Childhood staff have an important role to play in promoting and implementing good oral health practices. Policies are vital to promote good dental hygiene behaviour in children, to reduce the incidence of dental caries and to facilitate the prevention and management of dental trauma in children.

A dental emergency may occur whilst a child is being educated and cared for by the Service from a fall or collision with another child or a knock to the face. Knowing the correct first aid may save the tooth.

Working in conjunction with the *Dental Health Policy*, this procedure provides detailed steps for educators to promote the importance of good dental health to children and families and detailed steps for educators to follow in the event of a dental accident at the Service.

DENTAL HEALTH	
1	The approved provider, nominated supervisor and educators will review and update the Service's <i>Dental Health Policy</i> each year to ensure appropriate response strategies are in place in the event of a dental emergency
2	The Service will consult with the latest information regarding dental health during the review of the <i>Dental Health Policy</i>
3	The Service will provide and maintain a healthy food policy that is consistent with advice from recognised authorities
4	Educators will role model, actively discuss and incorporate oral health practices and nutrition into children's learning program
5	Educators will encourage and support families in seeking dental care where appropriate
6	Educators will report to families any sign of tooth caries, any accident, injury or suspected injury to teeth and gums, gum swelling, infection of the mouth, or problems, pain or discomfort the child has with chewing, eating or swallowing.
7	Educators will avoid the use of bottles containing sweetened milk, fruit juices, cordials or soft drinks
8	Educators will ensure meal planning incorporates low sugar intake and high calcium intake to support dental health
9	Educators will provide direct access to and encourage the drinking of fresh water frequently throughout the day and after mealtimes
10	Educators will encourage children to drink water after each meal

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY DIAL 000

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A MOUTH/TOOTH INJURY

The child may have bleeding from the mouth, lips or gums
 Pain around the mouth
 Loose or broken tooth (from impact)
 Swelling of lips or jaw
 Inability to open or close their mouth/jaw

PROCEDURE FOR MOUTH OR DENTAL INJURY OR LOSS OF TOOTH

1	Educators will respond to the child immediately and implement first aid procedures while remaining calm
2	Educators will implement DRSABCD following an incident
3	Call an ambulance immediately if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child is having trouble breathing or • there is a lot of blood going down the throat, or • there is swelling of the tongue or throat that could affect breathing
4	If there is a lot of blood in the mouth/gum, apply firm but gentle pressure to stem bleeding
5	An educator will try to find the tooth and place it in a container. A dental professional may want to see the tooth and/or the tooth fragment(s).
6	It is vital to know if the tooth or tooth fragment(s) has been inhaled. Inhaled teeth are a medical emergency, and the child MUST be taken immediately to the Emergency Department of a hospital for a check-up and a possible chest x-ray
7	Educators are to gently place the tooth or tooth fragments in milk or saline to avoid dehydrating and damaging the delicate cells on the root
8	The nominated supervisor or educator will notify the parent/guardian or emergency contact to collect the child as soon as possible to seek dental or medical advice as soon as possible
9	Educators will accurately document the child's symptoms on the <i>Incident, Injury and Trauma Record</i>
10	If emergency services attend, the nominated supervisor will ensure the regulatory authority is notified as soon as possible and within 24 hours of the injury, illness or trauma.