

Conversations and information exchange on dental health should be encouraged to promote good dental hygiene practices and lifelong learning for children and their families. Dental health will be included as part of everyday practice at our education and care service.

We aim to promote children's health by creating an environment that supports healthy behaviour including good dental hygiene practices. Our Service will encourage dental health by providing nutritional foods for children, avoiding food and drinks that have a sweet and sugary content and ensuring water is always available.

Good oral health is vital to general wellbeing. Early childhood dental hygiene is a key factor in the development of healthy adult teeth. Encouraging and establishing sound oral health practices early in a child's life will assist in its maintenance and help prevent oral disease and other related conditions over a lifetime.

We believe it's important for all children to have a high level of dental hygiene. We follow the guidelines of the Australian Dental Association and the 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 swish and swallow after meal times, providing information about tooth brushing, tooth friendly snacks and drinks and going to the dentist. To prevent cavities forming, or other adverse dental outcomes, we encourage children to eat nutritious foods and to avoid sticky and sugary foods. All food served and prepared at our Service complies with these guidelines by providing an assortment of recommended vegetables, fruits and dairy products. Children will be encouraged to drink water to quench their thirst and remain hydrated throughout the day.

*Management/Nominated Supervisor/ Certified Supervisor will:*

- Ensure that the daily menu contains a nutritional balance of foods;
- Providing milk at meal time as a source of calcium - dairy products have a proven protective effect in oral hygiene
- The centre integrates educative information and guidelines on good dental health practices into the daily routine. This should include information on tooth brushing, tooth friend snacks and drinks and going to the dentist and/or dental health professionals.
- Minimise the provision of sugary foods;
- Ensure access to safe drinking water at all times.

*Educators will:*

- Include dental health practices in the program;
- Provide opportunities to discuss dental health education with children
- Support children to access dental health resources for research, exploration and identification. These resources will be available through books, posters and visual aids;
- Talk with children about dental health during the day, encouraging swish and swallow after meal time and having children partake in drinking water throughout the day;
- Pay particular attention to meal and snack times to ensure healthy food is being eaten
- Give children bottles before they go to bed. Tooth decay can be reduced by allowing the child to finish the bottle before going to bed and not letting milk settle on teeth;
- Arrange annual visits by dental health professionals as part of the program. Families and children will be encouraged to attend these visits where correct brushing techniques and dental care will be discussed;
- Provide dental care information to families through newsletters, posters, professional visits, web links and brochures.
- Providing water throughout the day which provides fluoride for the teeth educating children by having discussions and stories in relation to correct food choices that strengthen teeth and reduce tooth decay



- Displaying posters promoting healthy teeth and gums and correct oral hygiene
- Educators should actively seek to be positive role models for children and families in attendance at the centre.
- Educators form positive relationships with family members and children to discuss and encourage good dental health practices and ensure the continuity of care of each child. Information should be made available to family members and educators in their home language.
- Children will be encouraged to rinse their mouths with water to remove food debris after every meal or snack. Educators will supervise such practices.
- Family members should be informed without undue delay any incident or suspected injury or issue with their child's dental health which may include teeth and gums, gum swelling, infection in the mouth, or problems, pain or discomfort the child has with chewing, eating or swallowing food or drink.
- Educators will be aware of dental first aid and receive appropriate professional development opportunities where appropriate.

## Dental Emergency

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

- Collect contact information from families about their family dentist (if any). This process should be done during the enrolment process.
- Follow a dental accident procedure
- Ensure there is an Educator on duty with current first aid qualifications
- Ensure children are supervised at all times to minimise accidents and incidents

### *Dental Accident Procedure:*

If a dental accident occurs at the centre, the following will occur:

For younger children:

- The accident will be managed as an emergency. Injury forms will be completed.
- The tooth will not be reinserted into the socket, but gently rinsed in clean water or clean milk to remove any blood and will be placed in a clean container or wrapped in cling wrap to give to the child's parent or dentist.
- Seek dental advice as soon as possible and ensure educators or the parent takes the tooth/tooth fragment to the dentist with the child.

For older children or adults:

- The accident will be managed as an emergency. Injury forms will be completed.
- Gently rinse the tooth fragments in clean milk or clean water for a few seconds to remove excess dirt and blood.
- Handle the tooth by its crown (the white enamel top part of the tooth), not its root and be careful not to rub off the endothelial fragments on the root of the tooth as these are needed for the tooth to take if replaced by the dentist.
- In an adult or older child who can be relied on not to swallow their tooth, it is preferable to replace the tooth back into the socket. (Be certain that the tooth is placed into the socket the correct way round, in its original position, using the other teeth next to it as a guide).
- Hold the tooth in place by gently biting on a clean handkerchief or gauze pad.
- If unable to reinsert the tooth, get the casualty to hold the tooth inside the mouth next to the cheek or place the tooth in clean milk, sterile saline, or clean water. Place a firm pad of gauze over the socket and have the casualty bite gently on the gauze.
- Seek dental advice as soon as possible and ensure parents takes the child to the dentist with the tooth/tooth fragments within 30 minutes, as the root endothelial layer begins to deteriorate after 30 minutes.
- If the tooth has been in contact with dirt or soil, advise the family that tetanus prophylaxis may be required and advise them to consult with both their dentist and doctor.

By promoting all of the above, in conjunction with educating children, educator and families, we hope to promote a strong awareness of dental care throughout our Centre, our programs and within the home.



**Source:** Education and Care Services National Regulations 2011, Early Years Learning Framework, National Quality Standard, Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000, Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2001, Dental Association Australia, Raising Children Network – [www.raisingchildren.net.au](http://www.raisingchildren.net.au) Dental Health Services Victoria <https://www.dhsv.org.au/oral-health-programs/achievementprogram/early-childhood-education>, Health Insite - [www.healthinsite.gov.au](http://www.healthinsite.gov.au), Extract from Putting Children First, the Newsletter of the National Childcare Accreditation Council (NCAC) Issue 18 June 2006 (Page10-12)

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**Schedule for Review:** 15/04/2020

<b>National Quality Standard – NQS</b>		
<b>Quality Area 2: Children’s Health and Safety</b>		
2.1	<b>Health</b>	Each child’s health and physical activity is supported and promoted
2.1.2	<b>Health practices and procedures</b>	Effective illness and injury management and hygiene practices are promoted and implemented.
2.1.3	<b>Healthy Lifestyles</b>	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child
<b>Education and Care Service National Regulations</b>		
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices	
80	Weekly menu	
<b>Early Years Learning Framework</b>		
<b>Learning Outcome 3 - Children have a strong sense of wellbeing</b>		
3.1	Children become strong in their social and emotional wellbeing	
3.2	Children take increasing responsibility for their own health and physical wellbeing	

