

HEALTH & SAFETY – FOOD HANDLING

POLICY

To minimise transmission of food borne illness in children and educators, educators should:

- Have a designated area for food preparation and storage, and for preparation of bottles, which is safe and hygienic.
- Store cooked and uncooked meat in separate refrigeration compartments.
- Use separate chopping boards for cooked and uncooked food.
- Have facilities that include a stove or microwave oven, sink, refrigerator, suitable waste disposal, and a hot water supply.
- Ensure all food or bottle preparation and storage areas are separate from nappy change and toileting areas.
- **If involved in food preparation and serving:**
 1. wash hands before and after handling food or utensils
 2. wash hands and clean nails after:
 - using the toilet
 - having contact with unclean equipment and work surfaces, soiled clothing and dish cloths
 - toileting children
 - wiping children's noses or their own noses
 - Avoid direct touching of ready to eat food by following proper food handling technique and using clean implements and gloves.
 3. advise the Scheme Coordinator of any gastrointestinal illness,
 4. Do not prepare food while suffering from any gastrointestinal illness until at least one full day after recovery, or from any hand infection.
- **If involved in food preparation and nappy changing or toileting on the same day**, use principles of infection control and safe food handling, particularly hand washing and using gloves.
- **Preparation and serving of food** - consume food as soon as it is cooked/heated to 60°C or higher. Food can be left to cool at ambient temperature, but can become contaminated as soon as it starts to cool. It is recommended that you allow food to cool enough to be safe for children to eat, but no longer than 2 hours. Left over food should immediately be stored in the refrigerator at 5°C or lower.
- **Clean and sanitise the food preparation and serving areas at the end of each day.** For cleaning and sanitising food contact surfaces and utensils, use neutral detergent and water to remove visible contamination such as food waste, dirt and grease, then sanitise. Chemical sanitisers must be used according to supplier or manufacturer's instructions.
- **Be aware of and accommodate the special needs of culturally and linguistically diverse families** in relation to special rules for storing, preparing and serving foods such as Halal and Kosher food :
 - Halal and Kosher food can be stored or refrigerated in separate sealed containers,
 - ask families about any special requirements for storing, preparing and serving foods, and ask them for preferred recipes.

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HEALTH & SAFETY – FOOD HANDLING - Continued

- **Ensure microwave food safety by:**
 1. Being aware that microwaves are useful for defrosting, cooking and re-heating foods, however food borne disease can also result if the usual rules of food safety are not followed. Defrosting in a microwave also partially cooks the food and makes an ideal medium for growth of bacteria.
 2. Using a microwave oven appropriately:
 - use only microwave safe dishes, utensils and wrap,
 - defrost foods only if the food will be cooked immediately after it has thawed,
 - use microwave safe dishes for defrosting foods, and cover with microwave plastic wrap or microwave safe covers,
 - as different food items defrost, remove them to avoid cross contamination or mixing of food juices,
 - care must be taken when removing food or liquids from the microwave and removing the plastic wrap. Food and liquid continues to cook for some time and can cause burns from escaping steam or boiling liquid,
 - food that has been cooked or reheated in a microwave and is not going to be consumed immediately should be placed in the refrigerator for cooling, not left on the bench to cool,
 - leftover food that has been cooked and reheated should be discarded
 - rotate and mix foods in the microwave at intervals to ensure they are cooked through evenly
 - when re-heating foods such as casseroles the liquid should be stirred every 3 - 5 minutes to ensure it is fully heated through,
 - clean the microwave daily as food may be spattered inside.

- **Use the following principles in preparing infants' bottle feeds:**
 1. Store bottles of milk in the refrigerator, do not store in the door of the refrigerator.
 2. Use only sterilised bottles and teat assemblies for all infant feeds.
 3. Wash hands before preparing or handling expressed milk or formula.
 4. Prepare formula strictly according to instructions on the container.
 5. Do not use a microwave for heating expressed breast milk. Warm these bottles by standing in warm/hot water.
 6. Warm infant milk bottles only once.
 7. Test the temperature of the milk on your wrist before giving it to the baby.
 8. Discard any unused infant milk leftover after each feed or that has not been consumed by the infant after 30 minutes.
 9. Infants must be held when feeding; do not feed infants when they are lying down.
 10. In choosing a method of heating babies' bottled milk and sterilising bottles and teats, utilise risk management principles to determine which method will best minimise risks to both children and staff.

- **For sterilising bottles and teats:**
 - wash first in soap and water and rinse with water,
 - if using a microwave, use purpose designed containers, and if using a microwave or other sterilising device, use according to manufacturer's instructions,
 - if using a cold water steriliser, use and dilute chemicals according to manufacturer's instructions and store securely out of access by children when not in use.

Source: Mt Alexander FDC handbook
National Law, Regulations and Standards (ACECQA 2011) 168 (2)(a)
"Staying Healthy In Childcare" NHMRC publication
Mt Alexander Shire Environmental Health Dept

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