GUIDELINES

SCHOOL NUTRITION AND HEALTHY EATING

Responsibility of: School Support Services
Effective Date: October 2017
Next Review Date: October 2021
Target Audience: Staff/Parents/Community/ Canteen Managers/ External Services providers

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This document should be read in conjunction with School Nutrition and Healthy Eating policy.

1. INTRODUCTION

In order to improve access to healthy food and drink choices in Northern Territory schools, the Department of Education (DoE) requires all schools to use the food categories in the Australian Government’s Healthy School Canteen Guidelines when providing any food or drinks to students. DoE acknowledges the complexities behind providing nutritious food and drinks to students; however, in the interest of the future health of our students, all efforts must be made to ensure compliance with these guidelines. Food and drinks are classified according to the amount of nutrients they provide and are based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating.

School canteens, vending machines, nutrition education, fundraising, excursions, school sport events, school nutrition programs, classrooms (including classroom rewards), preschools early childhood services, breakfast programs, afterschool programs and outside of school hours care services involving food and drinks must comply with the food and drink categories.

While all schools are encouraged to provide GREEN – ALWAYS ON THE MENU choices in all school settings, there are some situations that are exempt (Attachment A refers). All exemptions may still provide an opportunity to provide healthy eating options, and schools are encouraged to provide GREEN – ALWAYS ON THE MENU foods wherever possible.

All staff are encouraged to play an active role in supporting healthy eating and nutrition in schools by ensuring all foods and drinks provided at school are consistent with these guidelines, and by actively role modelling and promoting healthy eating and good nutrition.

DEFINITIONS

Afterschool programs are programs such as homework centres and sporting programs which are coordinated by a school or an external service provider on school grounds.

Classroom rewards are incentives provided to whole classes or individual students as a form of positive reinforcement.

Dietary requirements refers to a child’s allergy, cultural, religious or medical condition that requires special consideration in planning and providing food and beverages.

Excursion means an educational, sporting or cultural trip by students within or outside the Northern Territory, under the direction of teachers and activity leaders authorised by the department.
**DoE guidelines:** School Nutrition and Healthy Eating

**Exemptions** are activities where schools have discretion about the foods that they provide to students. These activities may involve the supply of RED – NOT ON THE MENU foods; however, schools are encouraged to provide GREEN – ALWAYS ON THE MENU foods wherever possible.

**Fundraising** is an activity that staff, students or the school community co-ordinate inside or outside school hours to raise funds for the school.

**Health** is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.¹

**Food and Nutrition** is a focus area of the Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education for all year levels from Transition to Year 10 which addresses the role food and nutrition play in enhancing health and wellbeing. The learning outcomes support students to develop knowledge, understanding and skills to make healthy, informed food choices and to explore the contextual factors that influence eating habits and food choices.

**Outside of School Hours Care (OSHC) services** are provided for school-age children outside of school hours and are coordinated by the school, school council or operated by external service provider on school grounds.

**School canteen** is the facility that provides food and drinks to students and staff. This includes traditional school canteens in urban settings, rural and remote provision of breakfast, snacks, lunches, and private providers supplying food and drink to school students.

**School sport event** is any sporting event that staff, School Sport Coordinators, School Sport NT or the school community co-ordinate inside or outside school hours.

**School nutrition and breakfast programs** are breakfast and/or lunch services for students which support improved attendance and contribute to learning and engagement in education.

**Whole school events** include those instances where a suspension of normal school activities / classes occurs for celebratory or commemorative purposes and involve all students and the broader school community. Examples include a school fete or disco.

2. **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**Principals** are responsible for ensuring:

- all efforts are made for catering and food supplies contracted through the school to be consistent with the policy and guidelines
- all student centred fundraising activities are consistent with the policy and guidelines
- all members of the school community, including school representative bodies and canteen managers, are made aware of, are familiar with, and comply with related aspects of this policy and guidelines
- the school canteen is appropriately registered by the Department of Health as a food business in accordance with the Food Act
- canteen staff are encouraged to participate in training provided by the Department of Health to ensure awareness of current information
- parents are provided with regular updates and support materials via school newsletters or websites in order to better support students food and drinks choices at home

DoE guidelines: School Nutrition and Healthy Eating

- Food and Nutrition is taught to students from Transition to Year 10 as part of the Australian Curriculum through the Health and Physical Education learning area
- the preschool and outside of school hours care service is compliant with regulatory requirements under the Act and Regulations by implementing the required procedures
- children with specific dietary and health requirements, as indicated in their enrolment form and/or medical management plan, are managed and catered for.

School Representative Bodies (School Councils or Independent Public School Boards) are responsible for ensuring:

- all efforts are made for catering and food supplies contracted by the school to be compliant with the policy and guidelines
- any fundraising or events where food is sold comply with the Food Act
- an outside of school hours care service is compliant with regulatory requirements under the Act and Regulations by implementing the required procedures.

Canteen Managers are responsible for ensuring:

- all efforts are made by canteen staff to meet the requirements of the policy and associated guidelines
- canteen menus actively promote the sale / provision of GREEN- ALWAYS ON THE MENU food and drinks

Teachers and educators are responsible for ensuring:

- Food and Nutrition is taught to students from Transition to Year 10, and general nutritional advice and guidance is provided to all students
- education related activities involving food comply with the policy, including camps, excursions or sporting events
- food or drinks are not used as a reward in the classroom or school setting (regardless of category).

Preschools, early childhood services, breakfast programs, afterschool programs and outside of school hours care (OSHC) services are responsible for:

- ensuring children have access to safe drinking water at all times, and are regularly offered food and drinks throughout the day
- ensuring the healthy, hygienic and safe handling, preparation and storing of food and drinks, including those provided by families
- ensuring food is not used as a reward (regardless of category)
- ensuring children with specific dietary and health requirements, as indicated in their enrolment form and/or medical management plan, are managed and catered for
- ensuring the preschool and OSHC service complies with regulatory requirements under the Act and Regulations and departmental policy and guidelines.

Parents are encouraged to:

- provide healthy food and drinks to their children for consumption at school
- inform the school if their child has any specific dietary requirements or food allergies.

3. GUIDELINES

3.1 Understanding and using healthy food and drink categories in NT schools

The food and drink categories outlined below are the types of food and drinks that can/cannot be provided in schools:
GREEN- ALWAYS ON THE MENU

A large variety of these foods and drinks must be available every day and be the main choices on canteen menus or instances where schools provide food or drink.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Drinks                                         | Low or reduced-fat milk and soy drinks, plain and flavoured.  
- May contain intense (artificial) sweeteners  
- Suggested 375ml serve size or less  
Water: plain (tap, spring, mineral or sparkling), with nothing added |
| Bread and alternatives                         | Bagels, wrap style breads, crumpets, English muffins, focaccia, gluten-free, lavash, Lebanese, multigrain, pita, rye, tortillas, Turkish, wholegrain, wholemeal, white high fibre  
Raisin and fruit bread, un-iced fruit buns, glazed hot cross fruit buns.  
Plain and savoury scones, pikelets and pancakes. |
| Breakfast cereals                              | Wholegrain, whole-wheat flakes, wholegrain puffed cereals, porridge, whole-wheat biscuits, low in added sugar, higher in fibre and without added confectionary. |
| Rice, grains and pasta                         | Plain rice, noodles, pasta, burghul, cracked wheat, polenta, couscous.  
Plain air-popped popcorn with nothing added. |
| Yoghurt, custard and cheese (including soy alternatives) | Low or reduced-fat cheese without added confectionery. Low or reduced-fat plain or fruit yoghurt and custard without added confectionery.  
- May contain intense (artificial) sweeteners. |
| Fruit                                          | Fresh, in-season is the best choice.  
Frozen, pureed or canned in natural juice (does not include dried fruit). |
| Vegetables (including legumes)                 | Fresh, in-season is the best choice.  
Frozen or canned without added flavourings.  
Chickpeas, kidney beans, lentils, baked beans (dried or canned), lentil patties and falafels (grilled or baked). |
| Lean meat, fish, poultry and alternatives      | Unprocessed lean beef, chicken, lamb, pork, turkey, fish.  
Canned tuna, salmon, sardines.  
Eggs, nuts* (un-salted, un-roasted, dry roasted). |

*Check your school policy regarding the use of nuts and products containing nuts.

Water is the preferred option for students in all school settings. All schools and preschools must ensure that children have access to, and are encouraged to access drinking water at all times, particularly in hot weather.
**DoE guidelines:** School Nutrition and Healthy Eating

**AMBER - SELECT CAREFULLY**

These foods and drinks **must** be assessed carefully against the Nutrient Criteria Tables and must not dominate the menu (see pages 8-9 for more details).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Drinks** | Full-fat milk* and soy drinks, plain and flavoured.  
- May contain intense (artificial) sweeteners  
- Suggested 375ml serve size or less  
- Coffee-style milk drinks (including flavoured) may only be sold in Middle/Senior Schools (maximum 375ml serve size)  
Fruit and vegetable juice.  
- At least 99% fruit/vegetable juice, including sparkling varieties, no added sugar (maximum 250ml serve size)  
- Must not contain de-ionised juice  
*For early childhood settings, refer to Exemptions at Attachment A |
| **Yoghurt, custard and cheese (including soy alternatives)** | Full-fat cheese without added confectionery. Full-fat plain or fruit yoghurt and custard without added confectionery.  
- May contain intense (artificial) sweeteners. |
| **Dried fruit, fruit leathers** | All types. Fruit leathers must be 100% fruit. Keep the serve size small. |
| **Fruit ice blocks, fruit jelly desserts, ice crushes and slushies** | At least 99% fruit juice and no added sugar.  
- Ice slushies and fruit jellies (maximum 200ml serve size)  
- Fruit ice blocks (maximum 125ml serve size) |
| **Meat products and alternatives** | Burgers, patties, strips, balls, nuggets, sausages, frankfurts, savolos (crumbed and un-crumbed), stews, casseroles and curries.  
Lean processed luncheon meats, fritz, devon, chicken loaf, free flow chicken, cured meats (for example: ham, bacon). Chicken drumsticks and wings. |
| **Savoury hot food items** | Savoury pastries, filled breads, pasta dishes, pizzas, oven-baked potato products, dim sims, spring rolls, rice and noodle dishes. |
| **Sweet and savoury snack foods** | Baked snack biscuits, breakfast bars, rice/corn crackers and cakes, crispbreads, fruit filled bars, flavoured popcorn, muesli bars, nut * and seed bars, sweet or savoury biscuits.  
*Check your school policy regarding the use of nuts and products containing nuts. |
| **Un-iced cakes, muffins and sweet pastries** | Some un-iced cakes and muffins that are small in serving size or have been modified to reduce the amount of saturated fat and/or sugar or with added fibre. |
| **Ice creams, milk-based ices and dairy desserts, frozen yoghurts** | Low or reduced-fat ice creams (not chocolate-coated), milk-based ices, custards and dairy desserts.  
- Milk must be listed as the first ingredient |
| **Prepacked smoothies, liquid breakfast, yoghurt drinks** |  
- Milk must be listed as the first ingredient |
| **Fats and oils** | Choose polyunsaturated and monounsaturated oils and spreads and use sparingly (for example: sunflower, safflower, corn, soya bean, olive, canola). |
| **Spreads, dips, relishes** | Nut* spreads, fish/chicken/meat pastes, yeast spreads, dips, salsa, relishes. Use Sparingly.  
*Check your school policy regarding the use of nuts and products containing nuts. |
| **Sauces** | Tomato sauce, tomato paste, mustard, sweet chilli, BBQ, soy, satay, gravy and stock.  
Choose low or reduced-salt products and use sparingly. Sauces which are not low or reduced salt must be considered as red foods. |
| **Toppings, syrup, jam, honey** | Small amounts, use sparingly. |
**RED - NOT ON THE MENU**

These foods and drinks must not be sold or provided in schools, unless part of a whole school event (see pages 8-9 for more details).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Drinks</strong></td>
<td>Soft drinks, iced tea, cordial, sports waters, sports drinks, flavoured mineral water, energy drinks, sweetened waters.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intense (artificial) sweeteners</strong></td>
<td>Any product containing intense (artificial) sweeteners* with the exception of flavoured milk, fruit yoghurts and custards.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caffeine and guarana</strong></td>
<td>Any products containing guarana. Coffee-style products (including flavoured), mocha, latte, cappuccino or similar. Coffee-style milk drinks over 375ml serve size.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fruit/vegetable juice</strong></td>
<td>Less than 99% juice and/or added sugar and/or greater than 250ml serve size.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Jelly desserts, ice crushes and slushies</strong></td>
<td>Less than 99% fruit juice and/or added sugar and/or greater than 200ml serve size.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Icy-poles and fruit ice blocks</strong></td>
<td>Less than 99% fruit juice and/or added sugar and/or greater than 125ml serve size.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cakes and slices</strong></td>
<td>Iced cakes and slices, doughnuts, Danishes, croissants, cream-filled buns/cakes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Confectionery</strong></td>
<td>All types: sold separately or added to products including: boiled lollies, carob, chocolate (including choc chips and chocolate-coated), chocolate spreads, cough lollies, 100s and 1000s, juice jellies, icing, liquorice, soft lollies, yoghurt/carob-coated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deep-fried food</strong></td>
<td>All types.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fats</strong></td>
<td>Cream, coconut cream, coconut milk, butter, copha, ghee, lard.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Code number and prescribed name for intense (artificial) sweeteners include: 950 (acesulphame potassium), 951 (aspartame), 952 (calcium cyclamate or sodium cyclamate or cyclamate), 953 (isomalt), 954 (saccharin or calcium saccharin or sodium saccharine or potassium saccharine), 955 (sucralose), 956 (alitame), 957 (thaumatin), 961 (neotame), 965 (maltitol and maltitol syrup or hydrogenated glucose syrup), 966 (lactitol), 967 (xylitol), 968 (erythritol).

**Confectionery in school settings**

All types of confectionery are categorised as RED - NOT ON THE MENU and must not to be sold or provided in schools, unless part of a whole school event.
3.1.1 Understanding Nutrient Criteria Tables for AMBER - SELECT CAREFULLY food and drink

If the food item being assessed has **less than or equal** to the numbers specified in the energy, saturated fat or sodium column, and **more than or equal** to the number specified in the fibre column in Nutrient Criteria Tables 1 and 2, it may be sold or provided in the school. These foods and drinks contain some valuable nutrients, moderate amounts of saturated fat and/or sugar and/or sodium (salt) and serve sizes should be kept small to limit the energy (kilojoules) being consumed.

Note the differences for pre-prepared meals based on core foods which can be classified as **RED - NOT ON THE MENU**, **AMBER - SELECT CAREFULLY** or **GREEN- ALWAYS ON THE MENU**.

If the food being assessed is **over** the threshold for energy or saturated fat or sodium or **under** the threshold for fibre (if any criterion is **not** met) – the food is categorised as **RED - NOT ON THE MENU** and these foods and drinks must not be sold or provided in schools, unless part of a whole school event.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Nutrient Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Energy (kJ) per 100g</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savoury pastries, filled breads, pizzas, oven-baked potato products, dim</td>
<td>1000kJ or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sims, spring rolls</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meat products and alternatives crumbed and not-crumbed (burgers, patties,</td>
<td>1000kJ or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strips, balls or nuggets, sausages, frankfurts and saveloys</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processed luncheon meats (fritz, devon, chicken loaf, free flow chicken</td>
<td>1000kJ or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>products) and cured meats (for example: ham, bacon)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-prepared meals based on core foods including rice and noodle dishes,</td>
<td>greater than 1000kJ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sushi, pasta dishes, stews, casseroles and curries</td>
<td>greater than 5g or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1000kJ or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>750kJ or less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Nutrient Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Energy (kJ) per serve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweet snack food, bars and biscuits</td>
<td>600kJ or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savoury snack food, biscuits, crisp breads and crisps</td>
<td>600kJ or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy must be 1800kJ or less per 100g</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snack packs, dip and biscuit packs, cheese and biscuit packs</td>
<td>500kJ or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dairy based ice creams, frozen yoghurt, dairy dessert</td>
<td>600kJ or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk must be listed as first ingredient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepacked smoothies, liquid breakfast and yoghurt drinks</td>
<td>900kJ or less</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milk must be listed as first ingredient</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Un-iced cakes, muffins and sweet pastries</td>
<td>900kJ or less</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
DoE guidelines: School Nutrition and Healthy Eating

### NUTRIENT CRITERIA - BREAKFAST CEREALS

Breakfast cereals are assessed per 100g

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nutrient Criteria</th>
<th>Sugar</th>
<th>Fibre</th>
<th>Saturated fat (g) per 100g</th>
<th>Sodium (mg) per 100g</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Without added fruit, 20g or more</td>
<td>5g or less</td>
<td>2g more</td>
<td>600mg or less</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With added fruit, 25g or more</td>
<td>5g or less</td>
<td>2g more</td>
<td>600mg or less</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


For home or canteen-made meals refer to the supporting document ‘Ground rules for assessing mixed meals or foods without nutrition information panels’.

#### 3.2 School based activities

The following advice provides specific guidance to support schools when planning school based activities, including activities outside of normal daily operations.

##### 3.2.1 Fundraising

Student centred fundraising activities undertaken during the year must comply with food and drink categories. Any food or drinks categorised as **RED - NOT ON THE MENU** must not be used in fundraising, with the exception of whole school events e.g. sold at a school fete, carnival or disco.

##### 3.2.2 Excursions (including school camps)

All excursions, including camps, must comply with food and drink categories. The **GREEN - ALWAYS ON THE MENU** category must be available (including all days on which the camp is scheduled) and be the main choice on the selection of foods provided to students. Any food or drinks categorised as **RED - NOT ON THE MENU** must not be sold or provided to students.

##### 3.2.3 School sport events

All school sport events must comply with food and drink categories. A large variety of food and drinks from the **GREEN - ALWAYS ON THE MENU** category must be always be available as the main choice for students. Any food or drinks categorised as **RED - NOT ON THE MENU** must not be sold or provided to students, unless part of a special whole school event.

##### 3.2.4 School Nutrition and breakfast programs

All school nutrition and breakfast programs must comply with food and drink categories. A large variety of food and drinks from the **GREEN - ALWAYS ON THE MENU** category must be available every day and be the main choices on the menu. Any food or drinks categorised as **RED - NOT ON THE MENU** must not be sold or provided to students.

##### 3.2.5 Outside of school hours care (OSHC) services

All OSHC services which are coordinated by the school or operated by outside providers on school grounds must comply with the food and drink categories. Food and drinks from the **GREEN - ALWAYS ON THE MENU** category must be available every day and be the main choice on the menu. Any food or drinks categorised as **RED - NOT ON THE MENU** must not be sold or provided to students.

##### 3.2.6 Food Rewards

Food **must not** be used as a reward.
Sweet foods that are high in energy (kilojoules) particularly appeal to children and are frequently used as a tool to change children’s behaviour. This practice can have negative consequences on students. Research shows that when children eat nutritious foods, they perform better at school and learn more effectively. Children should be given consistent messages about food from all adults. It is still important to reward children for positive behaviour and this can be done using non-food rewards.

3.2.7 Afterschool programs

All afterschool programs which are coordinated by the school or operated by outside providers on school grounds must comply with the food and drink categories. Food and drinks from the GREEN - ALWAYS ON THE MENU category must be available every day and be the main choice on the menu. Any food or drinks categorised as RED - NOT ON THE MENU must not be sold or provided to students.

3.3 Food allergies and intolerances

Any food or drink provided in schools must have regard to the medical needs of all students. Schools are required to implement school based processes to ensure students at risk of anaphylaxis are safe (the Students at risk of anaphylaxis policy refers).

3.4 Resources for schools

In order to assist schools to successfully integrate the policy and guidelines, a range of resources have been developed that creatively introduce healthy food and drink choices into a range of early childhood and school activities and situations. These resources are available via the Department of Education website.

3.5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS


iii Staying Healthy in Child Care 5th Edition

### SCHOOL NUTRITION AND HEALTHY EATING - POLICY EXEMPTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exemption</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food and drinks supplied from home</td>
<td>This can include birthday cakes. Schools can actively encourage the provision of healthy food/drink by parents, such as whole grain muffins.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special whole school events</td>
<td>This can include a school fete, carnival or disco. Schools should ensure that students are provided with a range of <strong>GREEN</strong> foods at whole school events, in addition to any <strong>RED</strong> food choice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preschool and early childhood settings</td>
<td>Full fat dairy products are recommended for children aged birth to two years so these products are classified as <strong>GREEN</strong> for this age group. Reduced fat dairy products are suitable for children aged over two years so full fat dairy products are classified as <strong>AMBER</strong> for children over two years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Schools</td>
<td>Food Technologies classes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senior School</td>
<td>Food and Hospitality classes*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senior School only campuses (yrs. 10-12), in consultation with their School Councils, students, canteens and staff determine whether to comply with the policy in their respective school setting.*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Education and Training (VET)</td>
<td>Hospitality courses*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff vending machines / fridges</td>
<td>School staff are encouraged to support the policy by not consuming <strong>RED</strong> foods / drinks in front of students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Although these activities are exempt, schools are encouraged to provide and use green foods and drinks wherever possible.*