

Mini Messenger for Families

Introduction

Welcome to the third edition of the Mini Messenger for Families. This edition focuses on breastfeeding at childcare and encouraging healthy eating at home.

Cheers,
Your Northern Sydney
Munch & Move team.



Childcare does not have to mean the end of breastfeeding

One of the key messages of the Munch & Move program is 'Encourage and support breastfeeding'. Are you aware that childcare services are supportive environments for breastfeeding? If you would like to continue to breastfeed your child during care all it takes is a quick conversation with your director if this is something that would work for you. Breastfeeding at childcare might not relate to your child in care but rather a younger sibling, with pick-up/drop-off time sometimes coinciding with feeding time. This might be a time that suits you to breastfeed at childcare.

For mothers wishing to continue breastfeeding but are unable to visit the service throughout the day, expressing breastmilk is an excellent option. Childcare services are knowledgeable in the storing and preparation of expressed breastmilk (EBM).

If this is something you would like to do or are already doing there are a few things you should consider when transporting EBM:

- Store the EBM in sterilised bottles for transportation, using smaller (120mL) bottles will reduce wastage.
- All bottles should be labelled with baby's name, contents of bottle and date/time the breastmilk was expressed.
- All EBM should be cooled in the fridge before transporting to the service.
- Place all EBM in the fridge immediately upon arrival at the service.

If you have any questions about breastfeeding your child whilst in care please speak to your director who can outline the specific support their service offers to mothers who wish to continue breastfeeding.

What's in this issue?

- Childcare does not have to mean the end of breastfeeding
- Tips to encourage healthy eating at home



Tips to encourage healthy eating at home

Helping your child to establish healthy eating behaviours from a young age is one of the most important skills you can pass onto your child. Children who develop these skills are more likely to have a healthy relationship with food and a reduced risk of chronic health diseases later in life.

Interestingly, a study by Fiese & Hammons (2011) found that the frequency in which families share meals together correlates with the weight and nutritional status of a child. Children (and adolescents) who consume at least three or more meals together in the week were more likely to be within the healthy weight range and have healthier eating behaviours.

Here are four simple tips to facilitate healthy eating behaviours in your home:



1 Role model healthy behaviours - Children admire their parents and are very aware about their parents likes, dislikes and their relationship with food. Make a conscience effort to eat healthy foods in front of your children and use positive language to encourage them to eat their vegetables or try new foods at the dinner table. Avoid making remarks linking specific foods and body weight/image, as children should be focusing on the enjoyment of eating food and taught about the importance of eating a variety of foods and nutrients for good health.

2 Keep healthy foods easily accessible - Make healthy foods easily accessible and convenient for snacking. For example, have fruits on your dining table and cut up vegetables in your fridge. Try to reduce the amount of processed snacks available in your home so that they are less tempting for children (and adults!).

3 Make meal times a positive family experience and establish routine - Meal times may be one of the few opportunities you have to spend quality time together with you family. Make this opportunity a positive experience. For example, sit down for meals together, remove any distractions such as mobile phone, televisions or ipads and allow ample time for an enjoyable family meal time.

4 Remember children sometimes need to try food up to 14 times! Try not to label your child as 'not liking' a particular food or food group. It can take children up to 14 times trying a new food before they get used to it. So persist in offering the food to your child and experiment with presenting it in different ways.

References:

Fiese, B. & Hammons, A. 2011.

Is Frequency of Shared Family Meals Related to the Nutritional Health of Children and Adolescents?. PEDIATRICS, [Online]. Vol 127, Available at:<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/127/6/e1565.full.html> [Accessed 21 November 2014].



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