

BREASTFEEDING POLICY

Breastfeeding is important for infants' nutrition. Australian and international health authorities recommend exclusive breastfeeding until around 6 months. At around 6 months, solid food can then be offered while breastfeeding is continued until 12 months or longer if the mother and baby wish (NSW Ministry of Health, 2014, p. 10).

Our Service respects and supports mothers' wishes to continue to breastfeed, as we understand that returning to work is a common reason for discontinuing breastfeeding. We provide a welcoming environment for mothers to continue to breastfeed or express breastmilk.

All educators understand their role and responsibilities to ensure the safe storage and handling of breastmilk and adhere to the feeding practices outlined by families.

NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARD (NQS)

QUALITY AREA 2: CHILDREN'S HEALTH AND SAFETY		
2.1.3	Healthy Lifestyles	Healthy eating and physical activity are promoted and appropriate for each child.
QUALITY AREA 6: COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES		
6.2	Collaborative partnerships	Collaborative partnerships enhance children's inclusion, learning and wellbeing

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
77	Health, hygiene and safe food practices
78	Food and beverages
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and Procedures to be followed
171	Policies and procedures to be kept available
172	Notification of change to policies or procedures

RELATED LEGISLATION

[Sex Discrimination Act 1984 \(Cth\)](#)

RELATED POLICIES

Bottled Safety and Preparation Policy Health and Safety Policy	Nutrition and Food Safety Policy Work Health and Safety Policy
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PURPOSE

Our Service recognises the importance of breast milk for the developing infant and will ensure that all families are aware of our commitment to supporting mothers to continue to provide their child with breast milk whilst at the Service.

SCOPE

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

IMPLEMENTATION

An important function of breast milk is to provide the mother's antibodies to the infant, assisting in the prevention of illness whilst the immune system is developed. Mothers of infants will be supported to continue to breastfeed, whether by providing expressed breast milk or visiting the Service to feed their child.

THE APPROVED PROVIDER AND NOMINATED SUPERVISOR WILL ENSURE:

- educators, staff, students, visitors and volunteers have knowledge of and adhere to this policy
- families are aware of this *Breastfeeding Policy*
- families are provided with breastfeeding information during enrolment and orientation
- the Service is identified as '*Breastfeeding Friendly*' (see Resources section below)
- a quiet, clean, and comfortable place is provided for mothers to comfortably breastfeed or express breast milk
- easily accessible brochures, pamphlets and other resources about breastfeeding are available for families
- staff are aware that it is a mother's legal right to breastfeed
- an individual breastfeeding support plan is developed in consultation with families, including contingency plans for if the Service does not have enough expressed breast milk to meet the child's needs
- literature on the benefits of breastfeeding is updated and distributed to staff as required to support understanding and 'best practice'.

EDUCATORS WILL:

- provide mothers with a private, clean and quiet place to breastfeed their children or express milk
- store and handle expressed breast milk in accordance with the *Bottle Safety and Preparation Policy*
- provide daily information to families regarding infant's feeding intake
- communicate regularly with families about infant and children's feeding patterns and routines
- establish and maintain connections with local breastfeeding support networks, including VIC Health and the Australian Breastfeeding Association
- refer mothers with breastfeeding concerns to appropriate resources, including support services offered by VIC Health, Australian Breastfeeding Association groups or private lactation consultants.

FAMILIES WILL:

- be informed during orientation of requirements relating to the safe transportation of breast milk between home and the Service, and labelling bottles of breast milk (as per- *Bottle Safety and Preparation Policy*)
- be informed of where they are able to breastfeed or express milk
- be encouraged to communicate regularly with educators about children's bottle and feeding requirements

STAFF/EDUCATOR TRAINING

Our Service will:

- familiarise new educators and staff with the *Breastfeeding Policy* and offer appropriate training as required, including alternate strategies for feeding if an infant will not accept a bottle
- ensure all educators that have responsibility for the care of infants and children are able to provide basic breastfeeding information and are able to refer mothers with breastfeeding concerns to appropriate resources
- ensure staff encourage parents to develop babies' individual breastfeeding support plans and regularly update their plans, with support from VIC Health, Australian Breastfeeding Association groups or private lactation consultants where appropriate
- ensure all educators show due respect and support to mothers who cannot, or do not wish to breastfeed.

SUPPORT FOR EDUCATORS AND STAFF WHO ARE BREASTFEEDING

The Service will:

- not discriminate against women who are breastfeeding
- make all reasonable efforts to support a staff member's request to continue breastfeeding their child
- provide breastfeeding employees with a flexible schedule to allow for breastfeeding or expressing breast milk for their infant
- provide breastfeeding employees with a private, clean and quiet place to breastfeed their infant or express milk.

RESOURCES

To request a free *Breastfeeding-friendly zone* sticker for Service entry doors or windows go to:

www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/phd-gug-stickers (sheet 2)

Note: This image can also be copied and printed.

Register for *Breastfeeding welcome here* Service for stickers, posters, and more:

<https://www.breastfeeding.asn.au/services/welcome>

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT/REFLECTION

The *Breastfeeding Policy* will be reviewed on an annual basis in conjunction with children, families, staff, educators and management.

SOURCES

[Australian Breastfeeding Association](#)

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).

Australian Children's Education & Care Quality Authority. (2023). [Guide to the National Quality Framework](#).

Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care. [National Women's Health Strategy 2020-2030](#)

Australian Government National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013). [Infant feeding guidelines: Information for health workers](#).

Education and Care Services National Law Act 2010. (Amended 2023).

[Education and Care Services National Regulations](#). (Amended 2023).

National Health and Medical Research Council. (2013). *Staying Healthy: Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services* (5th Ed.). Australia: Commonwealth of Australia.

NSW Ministry of Health. (2014). [Caring for children birth to 5 years: Food, nutrition and learning experiences](#).

Safe Food and Health Service Executive. (2013). How to prepare your baby's bottle.

State Government Victoria Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2014). *Promoting Breastfeeding Victorian Breastfeeding Guidelines*

[Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Peter Colliver	Approved Provider	May 2024
POLICY REVIEWED	FEBRUARY 2024	NEXT REVIEW DATE	FEBRUARY 2025
VERSION NUMBER	V9.02.24		
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy review • added related legislation- Sexual Discrimination Act • sources checked for currency and updated as required 		
POLICY REVIEWED	PREVIOUS MODIFICATIONS	NEXT REVIEW DATE	
FEBRUARY 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • annual policy maintenance • no major edits to policy • continuous improvement/reflection section added • link to Western Australian Education and Care Services National Regulations added in 'Sources' • Sources checked for currency 	FEBRUARY 2024	
FEBRUARY 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional regulations added • No major edits to policy • Sources checked for currency 	FEBRUARY 2023	
FEBRUARY 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy reviewed- minor editing (no capital letter in dot points), page numbers added • additional Victorian Government resource added • sources checked for currency 	FEBRUARY 2022	
FEBRUARY 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition to opening statement • Sources checked for currency. • New sources/references added. 	FEBRUARY 2021	
FEBRUARY 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed name to Breast Feeding Policy • Deleted information already contained in Bottle safety and preparation policy. • Added resources for stickers & resources. • Rewrote statement and purpose. • Additional information added to points. • Rearranged the order of points for better flow. 	FEBRUARY 2020	
FEBRUARY 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added 'related policies' list 	FEBRUARY 2019	
OCTOBER 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated the references to comply with revised National Quality Standard 	FEBRUARY 2018	
FEBRUARY 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New policy created with the new format • Research conducted from Get up and Grow, which has formulated this policy 	FEBRUARY 2018	