



Nutrition matters in early years settings

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4 Children Conference
Let's talk quality! Making early years quality achievable for all
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Today's presentation will cover:

- **Importance of nutrition in early childhood**
 - Current dietary intake and nutritional status of young children in UK
 - Food provision in early years settings
- **How to meet the EYFS welfare requirement for food and drink**
 - Rationale and evidence base for voluntary food and drink guidelines
 - Defining a healthy, balanced nutritious meals and snacks in practice
 - Encouraging children to eat well
 - Practical tools and advice

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The Children's Food Trust

Our Vision: A healthy future for every child

Our mission: Our children must be **healthy** in order to reach their **full potential in life**. Through ensuring a **balanced diet** in their early years and school days, together with better family cooking skills, lifestyle and food education.

The Children's Food Trust exists to help **protect** every child's **right to eat better** – and so, to **do better**



Impact Report 2012
Ensuring a healthy future for every child

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The Children's Food Trust

Our goals:

All our work drives one or more of these three goals.

1. We will **protect** child health through **promoting** relevant **legislation** and **guidelines**, and **monitoring** their impact.
2. We will **maximise** the number of children benefiting from the legislation and guidelines in educational settings.
3. We will help **improve** children's out of school eating and **lifestyle** behaviours.



We all have a duty of care to **act now – start early**

Let's get **cooking**

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Nutrition in First 1,000 Days

The first 1,000 days are critical for health and development:

"The period from the start of a mother's pregnancy to the child's second birthday is a critical window when a child's brain and body are developing rapidly and good nutrition is essential to lay the foundation for a healthy and productive future"



Save the Children

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Source: Save the Children (2012)

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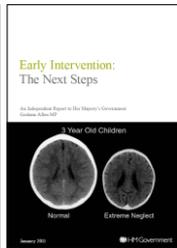
Importance of early intervention



Marmot review (2010)



Field (2010)



Allen (2011)

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Importance of children's early years

- **children's early years** influence their health, development, learning, attainment and economic participation
- **eating habits** during children's early years, influence growth, development and academic achievement in later life
- **giving every child the best start in life** is crucial to reducing health inequalities across the life course

Key message

- The early years of a child's life are critically important
- in their own right
 - as a foundation of success at school and for all adult life

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Establishing healthy eating habits – impact on growth and behaviour

Diet and healthy weight

- EarlyBird Diabetes Study cohort of 307 healthy children
- Early weight gain and metabolic health (e.g. *blood pressure*)
- Most excess weight gain before puberty is gained before 5 years of age
- Weight at 5 years closely predicts weight at 9 years
- Important to ensure healthy weight during the early years – key to targeting public health interventions

Source: Gardner (2009)

Diet and academic achievement

- Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC) cohort looked at association between dietary patterns at age 3,4,7 years and academic achievement at Key Stage 2
- Dietary patterns divided into three groups: 'junk food', 'health conscious' and 'traditional'
- 'Junk food' diet at age 3 years associated with lower school attainment at Key Stage 2, independent of later diet

Source: Feinstein (2008)

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Young children's diets and health in England

Evidence from national dietary surveys suggests **diet's** of young children in England are:

- **low** in fruit and vegetables
- **low** in iron, zinc and vitamin A
- **high** in saturated fat, sugar and salt



Consequences for children's health

- more than a fifth of children are either **overweight** or **obese** by the time they join reception class
- **type II diabetes** starting to appear in children
- **poor dental health** in many young children
- more than one in four young children are at risk of **iron deficiency**
- cases of **rickets** appearing more frequently

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Rationale and evidence for the Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England

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Advisory Panel recommendations

- **Maintain** Early Years Foundation Stage welfare requirements for food and drink
- **Develop** clear, practical guidance and support tools
- **Deliver** a comprehensive training package
- **Provide** a consistent approach to quality improvement/benchmarking for parents
- **Conduct** a survey of food provision and consumption in early years settings.



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Food provision in early years settings

Limited information available suggested:

- **not enough** energy, carbohydrate and some essential minerals such as iron and zinc
- **too much** salt and added sugars
- **too many** fruit and vegetables

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Recommendations for guidance



Laying the Table report recommended 'Government should introduce guidance that helps practitioners meet the welfare requirement for the provision of *healthy, balanced and nutritious food and drink*'.
Advisory Panel on Food and Nutrition in Early Years (2010)

"I recommend that the Government act on the report of the Advisory Panel for Food and Nutrition in Early Years and consider providing further advice and good practice for practitioners".

Dame Clare Tickell (2011)



Meeting the welfare requirement for food and drink

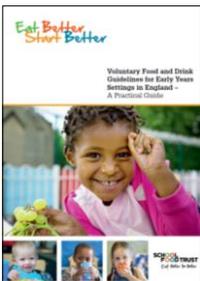


Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) section 3.45 states 'Where children are provided with meals, snacks and drinks, they must be *healthy, balanced and nutritious*' (2012)

New national guidance
Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England (2012)



The practical guide



Seven sections

- 01 Eat better, start better: why healthy eating matters for young children
- 02 Planning menus
- 03 The food and drink guidelines
- 04 At a glance – the food and drink guidelines for each meal and snack
- 05 How to encourage children to eat well
- 06 Practical tools and resources
- 07 Where to find additional information

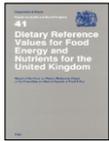


What is a healthy, balanced, nutritious diet for children aged one to five years?

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Defining the nutritional framework

- Food and drink guidelines, legislation and healthy eating advice should be evidenced based to ensure that it meets nutritional requirements:
 - providing **appropriate amounts of energy**
 - providing **adequate amounts of nutrients**
 - encouraging **dietary diversity** – eating variety of foods
 - **limiting** foods high in **saturated fat, added sugar and salt**
 - guiding appropriate **portion sizes**



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Balanced diet for children aged 1-5 years

- Based on a **wide range of foods** from four food groups below:
 - **Starchy foods**
 - **Fruit and vegetables**
 - **Meat, fish, eggs and other non-dairy sources of protein**
 - **Milk and dairy**
- **More energy from fat** than diets of older children and adults – choose unsaturated fat not saturated fat
- Not too much **salt** or **added sugar**

Key message:

Eating a wide variety of foods from these groups will provide children with the good balance of nutrients they need

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Guidelines for starchy foods



- ✓ Provide a portion of starchy food as part of each meal
- ✓ Provide a starchy food as part of at least one snack each day
- ✓ Provide at least three different varieties of starchy food across each day and for each meal each week
- ✓ Provide a variety of wholegrain and white starchy foods each week
- ✓ Limit starchy foods which have been fried
- ✓ Limit canned pasta in sauce

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'At a glance' information by meal

Breakfast at a glance	
General planning advice	Remember to an appropriate time for young children, including snacks. Make sure children are given water that children should not be offered, whether at home or when they arrive at the setting.
Food groups	Food and drink guidelines
Starchy foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Provide a portion of starchy food as part of breakfast each day 2 Provide at least three different varieties of starchy food across breakfast each week 3 Provide a variety of wholegrain and white starchy foods as part of breakfast each week 4 It is good practice to provide wholegrain starchy foods for at least one breakfast each week 5 Choose breakfast cereals with low or medium sugar content. Alternatively, offer a range of fruit or sugar sweetened cereals, such as porridge. 6 Choose bread and toast products with a low salt content where possible.
Fruit and vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Provide a portion of fruit or vegetables at breakfast each day 2 A fruit offer that pairs at breakfast. This should be unseasoned and should not have salt added.
Milk, fish, eggs, beans and other dairy sources of protein	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Food from the group provides a useful source of iron and zinc and can be provided as part of breakfast.
Soft (cheese) bread	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Children should have their portion of milk with their foods rather than drinking three glasses of milk, one of these can be provided as part of breakfast.
Drinks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Children must have access to fresh drinking water 2 If you offer fruit or vegetables, this should be unseasoned and should not have salt added.

- **Section 4 'At a glance'**
Lists the food and drink guidelines by meal occasion
 - Breakfast
 - Mid-afternoon and mid-afternoon snacks
 - Lunch
 - Tea
- Particularly useful if catering for one meal or snack
- This section also includes examples of meals and snacks meeting the food and drink guidelines

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How does a healthy, balanced diet for children aged one to five years differ from that needed by older children and adults?

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Encouraging children to eat well

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How to encourage children to eat well

How to encourage children to eat well

- Developing a food policy and putting it into practice
- Communicating with children and their families
- The eating environment and social aspects of meal times
- Celebrations and special occasions
- Providing food for all



Food Group	Portion Size	Frequency	Examples
Grains	1/2 cup	3-5 times per week	Bread, rice, pasta, cereal
Vegetables	1/2 cup	3-5 times per day	Broccoli, carrots, spinach, peas
Fruits	1/2 cup	3-5 times per day	Apples, bananas, berries, oranges
Protein	1/4 cup	2-3 times per day	Eggs, beans, tofu, nuts, seeds
Dairy	1/2 cup	3-5 times per day	Milk, yogurt, cheese
Oils	1/2 tsp	3-5 times per day	Olive oil, canola oil
Sweets	1/2 tsp	1-2 times per week	Candy, pastries, sugary drinks
Salty Snacks	1/2 tsp	1-2 times per week	Chips, crackers, pretzels

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How to encourage children to eat well

How to encourage children to eat well

- Encouraging fussy eaters to eat well
- Food brought from home
- Learning about and through food
- Cooking with children
- Food safety and hygiene
- Sustainability
- Protecting children's health



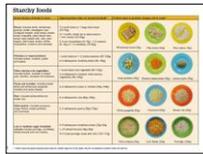
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Practical tools

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Portion sizes

- The nutrient content of food and drink provided for children depends on the **portion size** of the food and drink offered.
- Typical portion sizes included in the practical guide are given as a range
 - Smaller portion sizes for children aged one to two years
 - Larger portion sizes for children aged three to four years
- However, children's appetites will vary, and they should be encouraged to eat healthy food according to their appetite.

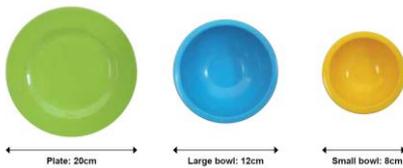


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Menu and recipe documents

Plate and bowl pictures

- Page 71 in the practical guide
- Helps to show the size of the portions pictured in section 3 of the guide



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Portion sizes: Key messages

Key points to remember:

- **Not necessary to weigh portions of food:** the portion sizes in the guide are listed as weights and household measures – we would not encourage settings to weigh portions of food
- **Visual guide:** the portion size information in the guide can be used as a visual guide to how much is a typical portion for children aged one to five years – some will eat less than this and some children will eat more
- **Settings can manage portion sizes by:**
 - offering initial portions to children that are smaller than the typical portion sizes in the guide, and then offering seconds of different foods to children when they would like more
 - encouraging children to serve themselves at lunchtime – great for development of motor skills and counting.

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Early Years Code of Practice for Food and Drink

Demonstrate approach to food and nutrition meets national guidelines and best practice

Seven principles

- Food policy
 - Consultation and communication
 - Varied, seasonal, sustainable menus
 - Meals, snacks and drink meet the new national guidelines
 - Catering for dietary requirements
 - Positive and welcoming eating environment
 - Adequate staff training
- Consider signing up



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Checklists

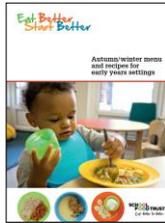
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Menu Planning Checklist	
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CHILDREN'S FOOD TRUST Seasonal menus and recipes
Eat Better Do Better



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Eat Better Start Better

Eat Better, Start Better programme
to support young children and their families to cook and eat well



Working in **partnership to implement** the voluntary food and drink **guidelines** to **improve health outcomes** for children in the **early years**

Let's get **COOKING**

CHILDREN'S FOOD TRUST
Eat Better Do Better

CHILDREN'S FOOD TRUST
Eat Better Do Better

Overview of programme

Two year programme (2011-2013)

Year 1 (2011-2012):

- Development and testing new 'Voluntary Food and Drink Guidelines for Early Years Settings in England' and practical tools.
- Development and pilot testing a comprehensive training package in collaboration with five local authorities/primary care trusts.

Year 2 (2012-2013):

- Implement a wider roll out of a comprehensive training package up to 20 local authority areas.

Supported by: Department for Education 'Improving Outcomes for Children, Young People and Families' Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) grant.

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Aim: to support healthier food provision in early years settings and families with young children.

Three outcomes

1. **Improved** healthier food provision for children under five in early years and childcare **settings and at home.**
2. **Increased** food, nutrition and healthy cooking knowledge and skills for the **early years and health workforce**
3. **Increased** food and nutrition knowledge and practical cooking skills for **parents and families** attending early years settings

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