

Menu planning in Queensland ECEC settings

Food Foundations • an NAQ Nutrition program

The National Quality Framework

The Australian Children's Education and Care Quality Authority's (ACECQA) Guide to the National Quality Framework (2018) states that Assessors may observe children "being provided with food that is consistent with the Australian Government guidelines,

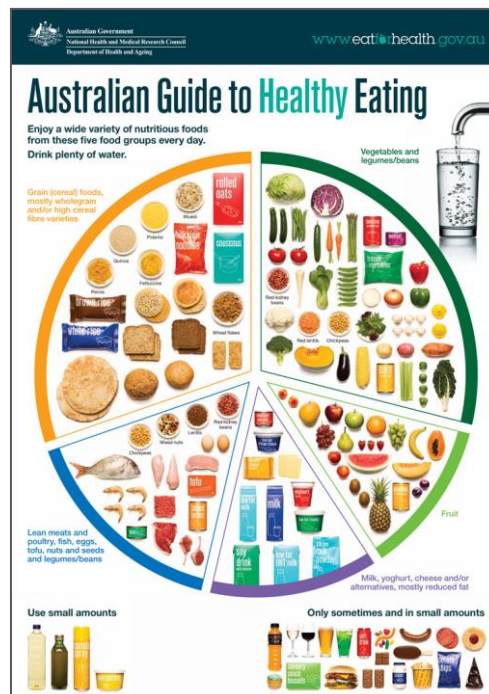
- *Get Up & Grow: Healthy Eating and Physical Activity for Early Childhood, and/or*
- *Australian Dietary Guidelines*" (p153).

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In Queensland, it is generally accepted best practice that Early Childhood Education and Care services providing food to children provide food in a manner that:

- is consistent with the [Get Up and Grow Guidelines](#).
- provides opportunity for children to consume at least 50% of their [Australian Dietary Guidelines](#) core food group requirements across morning tea, lunch and afternoon.
- limits discretionary food on the menu to no more than one serve per day.

Food provided to children under 12 months of age should be in line with the Australian Infant Feeding Guidelines (2013).



The AGHE Plate used with the permission of the National Health and Medical Research Council

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How many serves?

The tables below outline the recommended serves of core food groups per day for children and the minimum number of serves that should be provided in care across morning tea, lunch and afternoon tea.

Table 1: Recommended minimum serves per day for children 13 – 24 months

Food Group	Serves recommended per day	Serves recommended in care (50%)
Vegetables & Legumes	2	1
Fruit	½	¼
Grain (Cereal) Foods	4	2
Lean Meat and Alternatives	1	½
Milk, yoghurt, cheese & alternatives	1	½

Table 2: Recommended minimum serves per day for children 2-3 years

Food Group	Serves recommended per day	Serves recommended in care (50%)
Vegetables & Legumes	2 ½	1 ¼
Fruit	1	½
Grain (Cereal) Foods	4	2
Lean Meat and Alternatives	1	½
Milk, yoghurt, cheese & alternatives	1 ½	¾






Table 3: Recommended minimum serves per day for children 4-6 years

Food Group	Serves recommended per day	Serves recommended in care (50%)
Vegetables & Legumes	4½	2 ¼
Fruit	1½	¾
Grain (Cereal) Foods	4	2
Lean Meat and Alternatives	1½	¾
Milk, yoghurt, cheese & alternatives	1 ½ - 2	1

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What is a serve size?

Food Group	Serve Size
Vegetables and Legumes/Beans 	75g of vegetables <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ½ cup cooked green or orange vegetables • 1 cup leafy salad veg • ½ cup cooked dried or canned beans/lentils • ½ medium potato
Fruit 	150g of fresh or canned fruit <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 medium apple, banana, orange • 2 small apricots • 1 cup diced/canned fruit Or, 30g of dried fruit
Grain (cereal) foods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 slice of bread • 1 medium roll • ½ cup cooked rice, pasta, noodles (35g uncooked) • 1 small English muffin • 2/3 cup wheat cereal flakes
Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds and legumes/beans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 65g cooked lean meats such as beef, lamb, veal, pork (100g uncooked) • 80g cooked lean poultry such as chicken or turkey (100g uncooked) • 100g fish • 2 large eggs • 1 cup cooked/canned legumes
Milk, yoghurt, cheese and alternatives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 cup milk • 2 slices (40g) cheese • ¾ cup (200g) yoghurt • ½ cup ricotta cheese

More information, menu planning tools and support is available from
 NAQ Nutrition's Food Foundations Program – www.naqlld.org.