



## Tips for a Kindy friendly lunch box.

Healthy lunches and snacks are important for children and help with concentration and learning. Healthy eating changes are not always easy to make. Try to set a good example with your own lunches. Encourage children to be involved in their own lunch preparation, and their choices about foods to include. Praise your child when they choose healthy foods for the lunch box.

### Six items to put in a lunch box

- Vegetables
- Fresh fruit
- Dairy food – cheese or yoghurt
- Protein food – slice of lean meat, or beans
- Starchy food – bread, roll, pita or flat bread, fruit bread or crackers
- Water

### Food suggestions

There are endless food choices available for lunch boxes. It can sometimes be difficult to decide which foods are healthy choices.

### Vegetables

#### **Best choices**

Try vegetable sticks with dips, or a small container with mixed vegetables such as cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, celery, corn, beetroot, sprouts, capsicum, snow peas or cucumbers.

#### **Foods best left out**

Chips are best left for parties.

### Fruit

#### **Best choices**

Fresh, or tinned fruit in natural juice, are everyday foods. Dried fruit is sticky and high in sugar, so eat occasionally or as part of a meal.

#### **Foods best left out**

Dried fruit bars and 'straps' are very high in sugar, low in fibre and stick to children's teeth causing tooth decay.

### Dairy food

#### **Best choices**

Reduced fat cheese slices or cubes.

Yoghurt – natural or fruit yoghurt. Try freezing a tub of yoghurt and putting it in your child's lunch box. By lunchtime it will have partially thawed and be ready to eat.

#### **Foods best left out**

'Dairy desserts' custards and flavoured milks are high in sugar.



**PLANT  
FRUIT & VEG  
IN YOUR  
LUNCHBOX**

### Sandwiches, rolls and wraps

Include a variety of bread and fillings, especially if children begin to lose interest in sandwiches.

#### **Best choices**

Choose one or more of the following:

- reduced fat cheese or cheese spread

- sliced lean cold meats such as ham, turkey, chicken, lamb or beef with vegetables

- grated carrot, lettuce or tomato

Include grainy bread or rolls, flat bread, fruit loaf or buns, bagels, corn or rice cakes, Turkish bread, crispbread or pikelets.

#### **As an alternative try:**

- pasta – make a salad with lots of raw vegetables

- rice – when making fried rice, add lots of steamed vegetables.

#### **Foods best left out**

Avoid chocolate spreads, jam and honey. Avoid fatty meats such as salami and Strasbourg. **NO PEANUT BUTTER OR NUTELLA PLEASE.**

### Biscuits and dips

#### **Best choices**

Wholemeal or multigrain dry biscuits, crispbreads, or rice cakes with yoghurt, hummus or vegetable dips.

#### **Foods best left out**

'Oven baked' and plain savoury biscuits are as high in salt and fat as chips.

### Muffins and cakes

Try making your own healthy muffins and cakes. Include fruit and vegetables such as sultanas, carrot, zucchini, banana and pumpkin.

#### **Foods best left out**

Only offer donuts and cakes occasionally instead of in the lunch box. Store bought pre packaged cakes, muffins and slices are often very high in sugar and fat.

## Do not send Muesli or 'breakfast' bars or chocolate please.

Almost all 'bars' are too high in sugar. Please do not send chocolate bars and muesli bars in lunch boxes. These are expensive and stuck together with lots of fats and sugar.

### Best drinks

Water and milk are the best drinks for children. They can be frozen to help keep foods in the lunch box cool.

All sweet drinks such as fruit juice, juice drinks, cordials, sports drinks, energy drinks, flavoured milk, flavoured mineral waters and soft drinks are high in sugar and are not necessary. These drinks can increase the risk of tooth decay, are 'filling' and may take the place of healthier foods.



**TAP INTO  
WATER  
EVERYDAY**

### Food safety

In most cases food is stored in your child's lunch box for several hours, so the lunch box needs to be kept cool.

- Choose an insulated lunch box or one with a freezer pack, or include a wrapped frozen water bottle to keep the lunch box cool.

If you include left over meals such as meats, pasta and rice dishes, ensure you pack a frozen ice block into the lunch box.

### Peer pressure

Children are influenced by food advertising, and their friends' food choices.

Remember that not all children go to childcare or school with lunch boxes filled with chips and lollies, despite what children think and say! It is important to keep offering healthy lunch box choices in a variety of ways, as children learn to eat what is familiar to them. Remember that it may take time to change your child's food preferences to more healthy choices. Kindy staff will help your children with this and it will become easier with time.

### Severe food allergy

If your child has a severe food allergy you need to talk to the Director who will let you know what the Kindergarten staff need to ensure your child's health and wellbeing is ensured. You will need a medical plan from your doctor and appropriate medication to leave with your child at Kindergarten.

Please note that we have children who have severe allergies and therefore ask that no nuts, eggs, seafood or kiwifruit are sent to Kindergarten.



### Important lunch box tips

#### Best choices

- Vegetables
- Fresh fruit
- Dairy food – cheese or yoghurt
- Protein food – slice of lean meat, or beans
- Starchy foods – bread, rice or pasta
- Water

#### Foods best left out

- Muesli and chocolate bars
- Potato crisps and oven baked savoury biscuits
- Sweet drinks
- Donuts and cakes
- Lollies, honey and jams
- Fatty meats such as salami and Strasbourg