

Nutrition Policy

Policy Statement

Y Canberra Region recognises the importance of healthy eating to the growth and development of its participants and is committed to supporting their healthy food and drink choices. Dietary and healthy eating habits formed early are shown to continue and can reduce the risk of medical conditions such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease. The Y Canberra Regions interaction with children, young people, parent / guardians and participants places us in a position to be a leader in advocating for and actively promoting healthy eating and lifestyle behaviours. This policy ensures our facilities support healthy eating through the provision of healthy food and drink choices, education on healthy eating and positive role modelling.

Our Mission - Y Canberra Region works from a base of Christian values to provide opportunities for all people to grow in body, mind and spirit.

Objectives

- To promote healthy lifestyles, good nutrition and the wellbeing of all participants
- To plan and provide healthy menus with nutritious meals for participants
- To outline the professional standards used to guide menu and meal plans
- To encourage communication with Y participants about the provision of healthy food and drink options
- Identify and reduce the availability of less healthy food and drink choices
- Supporting healthy eating across all facilities and events

Procedures

- Healthy eating is vital to achieving the overall health and wellbeing of our participants. We aim to achieve this by providing nutritious, healthy and delicious meals. Y Canberra people will support and model healthy eating by implementing nutrition standards and practices based on the below professional standards in context with the environment: Australian Guide to Health Eating <https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating> National Healthy School Canteens: Guidelines for healthy food and drinks supplied in school canteens - Australian Government Department of Health 2014 - <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/publications/national-healthy-school-canteens-guidelines-for-healthy-foods-and-drinks-supplied-in-school-canteens> Eating Healthy Advisory Service / Nutrition Australia – The Traffic Light System <https://heas.health.vic.gov.au/>

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RO18	Children Services Executive Manager	Internal	21/10/2015	01/09/2025	Approved

Y Canberra services have a responsibility to support its participants to develop their health, wellbeing and positive eating habits. To achieve this Y People will;

- Ensure participants have access to safe drinking water at all times.
- Ensure children are offered foods appropriate to their nutritional and dietary requirements
- Provide meals consistent with planned menus based on the recognised approved professional standards for nutrition
- Prepare meals in a safe, clean and hygienic manner
- Provide and / or display a planned menu to service participants that accurately describes meals being provided.
- Plan a balanced and nutritious menu based on the Australian Guide to Healthy Eating.
- Present meals in a delicious and inviting manner
- Advocate health and nutrition awareness to its participants
- Provide opportunity and encourage good food choices
- Ensure meal times are implemented in a relaxed and pleasant manner with time for participants to eat at their own pace
- Ensure food is NOT used as a form of punishment, reward or bribe
- Respect participant's food choices and NOT force them to eat what they don't like
- Ensure they collaborate with participants on any allergy or dietary requirements
- Role model healthy eating and meal time habits in the presence of all Y participants
- Where required provide / undertake professional learning on Food Safety and Nutrition
- Provide NUT AWARE environments
- Recognise sugar sweetened drinks are a key contributor to the growing levels obesity and provide no sugar sweetened drinks for consumption or sale within any of its facilities or catering.
- Ensure when sourcing a caterer for events the contractors to supply food and drinks are made aware of this policy
- Refrain from consuming or carrying **RED** food and drinks within eyesight of participants e.g. sugar sweetened drinks, coffee / tea and fast foods.
- Avoid the use of its logo/brand alongside images, logos and brands promoting unhealthy food and drink choices.
- Where able use ingredients that are low in fat (light), low in salt and sugar free.

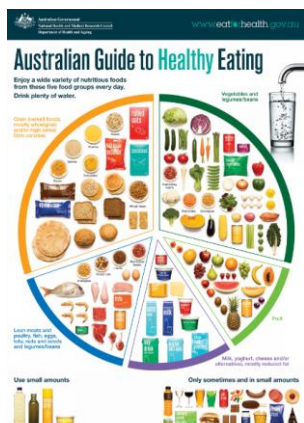
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In addition, Y Canberra Services use the below professional standards to monitor and maintain the nutritional requirements of menus and meals.

Australian Guide to Health Eating - www.eatforhealth.gov.au/guidelines/australian-guide-healthy-eating

This is the National Australian food selection guide. It is consistent with the Australian Dietary recommendations and visually represents the 5 Food Groups and suggested portion sizes.



Eating Healthy Advisory Service / Nutrition Australia – The Traffic Light System
heas.health.vic.gov.au/healthy-choices/guidelines/traffic-light-system

The Eating Healthy Advisory Service recommends using the 'traffic light system' which categorises foods and drinks into three groups according to their nutritional value. These categories are **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED**.

GREEN CATERGORY – Always on the menu

GREEN foods and drinks are the best choices for a menu and meals as they contain a wide range of nutrients and are generally low in saturated fat, sugar and salt.



AMBER CATERGORY – Select carefully

AMBER foods and drinks contain some valuable nutrients but may also contain higher levels of saturated fats, sugar and/or salt. These foods may contribute to excess energy

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(kilojoules) being consumed. They should be provided in smaller serving sizes and modified to be at the more **GREEN** end of the spectrum whenever possible.



RED CATEGORY– Not Recommended

RED foods and drinks are low in nutritional value and may be high in saturated fat, sugar and/or salt. These foods may provide excess energy (kilojoules).



Many combined foods such as sandwiches, casseroles, sushi will sit on the border of **GREEN** and **AMBER** categories depending on the ingredients used. All foods should be moved towards the **GREEN** end of the spectrum by choosing and substituting ingredients at every opportunity.

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The ACT Health Department Go for Green user guide is a useful resource to guide meal and menu planning https://www.health.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/2019-08/Go_for_Green.pdf
The below table is provided to guide Y People to plan and implement menus and meals

Nutrition Standards				
Setting	Information	GREEN	AMBER	RED
Children Services Early Learning Services (ELC) Outside School Hours Care (OSHC / OOSH)	Children's Education and Care Assurance, under the overarching ACECQA ➤ Must meet the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations with regards to nutrition ➤ The majority of items must be GREEN . Menu items/recipes must be modified wherever possible to move them to the far GREEN end of the spectrum. ➤ Added salt should be removed from recipes ➤ Where packaged items are utilised these should be low or reduced salt ➤ Milk, cheese and yoghurt choices should be reduced fat ➤ Water must be available at all times	More than 50% The higher the % GREEN the better	Less than 50% The less the % AMBER the better	0%
Health, Recreation and Accommodation Health / Fitness / Sailing Club (events & retail sales) NOTE: Health, Recreation and Accommodation Y People "where able" will be guided by these Nutritional Standards.	➤ The majority of items should be GREEN . Menu items/recipes must be modified wherever possible to move them to the far GREEN end of the spectrum. ➤ AMBER items may be provided in small serves and small quantities ➤ Added salt should be removed from recipes ➤ Where packaged items are utilised they should be low or reduced salt products ➤ Milk, cheese and yoghurt choices should be reduced fat ➤ Water must be available at all times ➤ RED category items should not be promoted or placed in prominent areas such as at point of sale, on reception counters	More than 50% The higher the % GREEN the better	Less than 50% The less the % AMBER the better	Less than 10% of available choices

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The Y Canberra Region acknowledges healthy, nutritious eating habits as best practice however also understands the importance of balance. The following exemptions apply under these circumstances:

- Birthday or special celebrations
- Special events, fundraisers, functions, meetings - no more than once a quarter, a small portion (no more than 20%) of **RED** foods may be provided in small serving sizes. The remaining food choices may be **AMBER** or **GREEN** however, the majority of food choices available must be **GREEN**
- Exemptions not indicated in this policy must be sought and approved by the SLT

Definitions

The Traffic Light System - The Eating Healthy Advisory Service recommends using the 'traffic light system' which categorises foods and drinks into three groups according to their nutritional value. These categories are **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED**.

Sugar Sweetened Drinks - refers here to all non-alcoholic water based beverages with added sugar, including soft drinks, energy drinks, fruit drink, sports drinks, cordial and any juice with less than 99% juice and/or with added sugar and/or greater than 250ml in size.

Scope

All Y Canberra Region business units and managed events:

- Where we sell food and drinks (inclusive of vending machines)
- Where we prepare and provide food and drinks
- Where we contract food provision within a Y facility

Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

- The implementation of the policy will be monitored regularly using menu audits and assessments, informal observation on site and via purchase order reviews.
- Review Date: July 2027 or as required

Roles and Responsibilities

Department/Area	Role/Responsibility
Y People	- Adhere to the policy - Role model healthy eating - Educate and advocate for healthy eating.

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Cooks / Chefs / Food preparation & planning staff or volunteers	- Ensure the policy guides menu planning and food provision. - Refer to the 'Traffic Light System' where able to classify meals GREEN, AMBER or RED - Ensure the policy is the guide for planning food and drink provision at any events/functions/catering - Where able modify recipes by substituting ingredients for GREEN options e.g. low fat, sugar free, low salt - Educate Y People on recommended suppliers where able
Nominated Supervisors / Managers	- Ensure understanding and compliance to the policy - Facilitate training in the application of the Traffic Light System - Ensure the policy is the foundation for planning food and drink provision at any meetings/training/events/functions.
Board of Directors	- Promote the Y Canberra Region Nutrition Policy at governance level. Communicate and advocate for the policy to stakeholders, government and partners.

Supporting Documents

ACT Government, Towards Zero Growth Healthy weight action plan,
https://www.parliament.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/2548033/QON-208-Answer-Att-B-Towards-Zero-Growth-Healthy-Weight-Action-Plan.pdf?

National Healthy School Canteen Guidelines 2014 (NHSCG)
<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/national-healthy-school-canteens-guidelines-for-healthy-foods-and-drinks-supplied-in-school-canteens.pdf?>

Education and Training Directorate, ACT Public School Food and Drink Policy
https://www.education.act.gov.au/publications_and_policies/School-and-Corporate-Policies/school-administration-and-management/food-and-drink/act-public-school-food-and-drink-policy

Australian Dietary Guidelines
<https://www.health.gov.au/sites/default/files/australian-dietary-guidelines.pdf>

ACECQA Guide to the National Quality Framework
<https://www.acecqa.gov.au/sites/default/files/2025-01/Guide-to-the-NQF-250101.pdf>

Education and Care Services National Regulations
<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2011-0653>

We respect and support the diverse needs of all children and young people including those who are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, are from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds (CALD), have a disability or identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex or Asexual (LGBTQIA+). Children and young people's ideas and responses to diversity are influenced by what they see and hear around them. This is why we ensure diversity and inclusion is reflected in everything we do at the Y.

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