

Mini Messenger

Welcome

Welcome to all new and existing directors, child care staff and volunteers to the Autumn 2011 edition. By now a number of staff from Long Day Care Centres will have attended the Munch and Move training. We hope you have enjoyed the experience and have returned to your centre motivated with lots of great Munch and Move ideas. A reminder that your Munch and Move folders are a valuable resource you can refer to when in need of new ideas and games, or to communicate the Munch and Move message to parents and new staff.

Elissa has given us an overview of the Munch and Move training to date and provides two valuable websites for you to access lots of great resources. There are also interesting articles on the importance of developing fundamental movement skills for pre-school children and some tips for good eating habits for babies, toddlers and pre school children.

We'd love to hear from some of our Munch and Move centres about healthy eating or physical activity projects happening out there. We hope you find these articles of interest and inspiring for the cooler months.....your Munch and Move team.

If your centre would like to share your Munch & Move® ideas with other centres, please don't hesitate to email or phone us.

Sally Inglis Health Promotion Officer, Munch and Move, Northern Sydney and Central Coast, NSW Health

Spotlight on Munch and Move Training Days

NSW Health and the local health promotion teams are so excited that Phase 2 of Munch and Move has begun. This means we are now enrolling Long Day Care Centres into training and training now covers the birth to 3 years age group.

The training calendar is extremely busy, both ECTARC and Community Childcare Cooperative are working hard to deliver a fantastic training program. An added extra is the option for staff to obtain a Statement of Attainment after attending the full-day workshop and completing some bridging materials for two units of competency (contact ECTARC for more information about this).

Long Day Care Centres will be offered training places as a priority, however if vacancies exist Preschools will have the option to send up to two staff members. If you have staff that would like to attend Munch and Move training, please register your interest with Elissa on (02) 9976 9876.

Re-order the Munch and Move fact sheets for your new families. Find the order form at www.healthpromotion.com.au. Translated versions now also available.

Order the Munch and Move Music CD for your families or download the tracks and song book from www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au! (limit of 120 music CD's per centre)

The local Munch and Move website has also been updated, please visit us at: www.healthpromotion.com.au. There are many resources and lots of new information for your centres. Also checkout the NSW Health Munch and Move website at www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au.

in this issue

- Moving into 2011
- Healthy teeth for children
- Fun outdoor games to play
- Why is it important for children to eat more vegetables?

Let them be Active ... Let them Play

As we already know physical activity should be part of a child's daily routine. Environmental settings can influence motor development greatly and need to be taken into consideration with careful planning required to fit within the "big physical activity/fundamental movement skills development picture" It is important to create a positive and enjoyable environment.

Learning optimal fundamental movement skills (FMS) correctly is important for every individual; staff, parents and children alike. Factors affecting FMS development include:

- The degree of practice opportunities and instruction that match the individual's capabilities and potential.
- The ability to tailor goals and expectations to individual capabilities and characteristics.
- Allowing people to learn, develop a sense of achievement and enjoy the experience. The way to introduce activities has to be well planned and considered carefully.
- Recognition of each child that a certain standard of skill has been reached.

The pre-school age group is the time for refining basic movement and co-ordination skills and in doing so preparation for group games. It is important to remember that

- Children mature physically at different rates and achieve specific levels of movement at different rates. This rate of improvement is very individual and children develop a wide range of skills over an extended period of time.
- Children who are socialized in FMS experiences are more likely to learn FMS and thus increase proficiency and will be more likely to want to continue participating in activities compared with children less exposed to FMS experiences.

Some tips to assist children in the development of fundamental movement skills and socialization processes include:

- Providing appropriate toys and equipment. As we know, children love to play with objects, toys and equipment, although be careful of toys that may encourage children to be inactive.
- Provide plenty of opportunities for organised free exploration to allow children to experiment and explore lots of different equipment in many ways. By undertaking this activity they will develop skills at their own pace and learn how to use the equipment and so become confident in using these in future physical activity sessions.
- Group games should be clearly explained, defined and well supervised. Your Munch and Move manual has some great ideas for group games. For example the game 'Duck Duck Goose' (refer to page 66 of your Munch and Move manual) is an old favourite that the children love to play. The game involves running, an important locomotor skill to develop correctly. *(continued next page)*



Let them be Active ... Let them Play (continued)



- How to Play Duck Duck Goose
- Set out a rectangular area with markers. Practice running technique by asking the children to run in a straight line from one side of the marked area to the other side. Check they are not running 'flat footed'. If so, demonstrate running again using exaggerated leg movements.
- Ask the children to sit in a circle. One child is chosen to stand up and walk around the circle touching each person on the shoulder. As they touch each person they say "duck, duck, duck" (a number of times) and then "goose". The person who is touched when they say "goose" stands up and chases the other child around the circle back to where they were sitting. Then the game starts again.

In addition to the Munch and Move manual you can also refer to early childhood physical activity books for more ideas.

"GOOD EATING HABITS"

Developing good eating habits in early childhood is a good start for health. Childcare services can play a major role in developing good eating habits.

Breast milk or formula is all that baby needs up until about six months. Then comes the introduction of solids and that is just what it is, an introduction to foods other than milk. It is recommended to give one food at a time and leave a few days before starting another new food. At this stage, small amounts of food such as rice cereal, pureed or well mashed fruit, mashed pumpkin, potato, and sweet potato are given after the milk feed. Progress then to foods like well cooked mince or other finely divided meat including fish (canned or fresh).

Babies grow rapidly. A six month old could gain about one kilogram every eight weeks so their energy needs are high. At the toddler age growth begins to slow down. Toddlers usually don't eat as much and often become more "selective" in what they eat. Toddlers are easily distracted at meal time, develop taste and texture preferences and, may genuinely not like some food. Toddlers may be reluctant to try new foods and parents are often surprised by what their toddler eats at childcare. "Peer Pressure" can be turned into a positive as the child care setting provides the perfect environment for enjoyable mealtimes and fun food experiences. Here are some suggestions from page 14 of your 0-3 year Munch and Move manual to make mealtimes positive and enjoyable

- Organise high chairs and/or tables and chairs in a safe and attractive manner that encourages social interaction
- At least one educator should sit at the table with the children, being helpful and enthusiastic about the meal and eating the same food.
- Educators should actively engage in conversations with children during mealtimes. This builds relationships and foster related learning experiences.
- Create a relaxed atmosphere at mealtimes where children have ample time to eat and enjoy their food.
- Older children can assist to set and clear the table and serve their own food and drink providing opportunities to develop independence and self-esteem
- Respect each child's appetite. If a child is not hungry or is satisfied, do not insist he eats.
- Be patient with messy or slow eaters.
- Encourage children to try different foods but do not force them to eat.

For child care centres that provide food, planning menus that can be modified to suit the different age groups attending the centre, makes good sense. Discussing menus with parents is important. Refer to pages 9-16 of your 0-3 Munch and Move manual for more information about meal times and Munch learning experience ideas.

Snack Foods

Childcare services, whether they be preschool or long day care centres can make a difference. They can start the “healthy eating ball” rolling.

Remember

- Fruit juice is not necessary for infants, toddlers or preschoolers
- Tap water is the thirst quencher of choice
- Snacks should contribute to daily nutrition. Snack time is an opportunity to improve vegetable, fruit and dairy food intake.
- Some healthy snack ideas include (refer to p23 of your Munch and Move manual)
 - o Fresh, frozen or dried fruit
 - o Lightly steamed short celery sticks filled with cottage/cream cheese, grated carrot or sultanas.
 - o Reduced fat yoghurt
 - o Reduced fat custard with fruit
 - o Scones or pikelets (plain, fruit or savoury)
 - o Rice crackers, rice cakes or corn cakes (served plain or add ricotta, topped with tomato or grated carrot)
 - o Cheese slices or sticks

Try talking with children about setting limits on the number of less healthy snacks that they eat each week.

Choose the 'Right Stuff' pocket guide to food labels from Food Standards Australia and New Zealand and 'The Parents Jury Nutrition Guide for Shoppers' can also help. Contact your Munch and Move team for more information.

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