

# YMCA Canberra Healthy Food and Drink Policy

## INTRODUCTION

The rising rates of overweight and obesity is one of the biggest public health challenges of current times. They are significantly and increasingly contributing to the chronic disease burden within our communities. Unhealthy patterns of eating, sedentary lifestyles and an obesogenic environment are key influencers of rising rates of overweight and obesity.

The ACT Government's "Towards Zero Growth Healthy Weight Action Plan" is based on evidence that the impact of overweight and obesity on quality of life, demand for health services and the ACT economy is growing. Public health issues require a collective response and the YMCA is working with the ACT Government, community organisations and our community to deliver, support and advocate for initiatives that promote healthy lifestyle behaviours. The YMCA's daily interaction with families and individuals across the ACT places us in a position to be a leader in advocating for and actively promoting healthy lifestyle behaviours, particularly for children where we have a strong service delivery presence.

This policy will ensure that all YMCA facilities support healthy eating through the provision of healthy food and drink choices, education on healthy eating and positive role modelling. The YMCA will be working to empower our community to achieve optimal health and reduce the risk of chronic diseases related to overweight and obesity.

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## POLICY

Healthy eating is vital in achieving overall health and wellbeing. YMCA Canberra aims to support and model healthy eating by implementing nutrition standards for all YMCA facilities and events where food and drinks are provided and/or sold, by 1 July 2016.

These standards will be based on:

- *National Healthy School Canteens: Guidelines for healthy food and drinks supplied in school canteens* (Australian Government Department of Health 2014) (NHSCG); and
- *Healthy Food and Drinks Choices Policy*, ACT Health 2013.

The *National Healthy School Canteen Guidelines* (NHSCG) are relevant for children's settings and ACT Health's *Healthy Food and Drink Choices Policy* is relevant for settings where food is provided to adults and children. Both documents are based on the *Australian Dietary Guidelines*.

The objectives of the YMCA nutrition standards are to:

- Improve the availability of healthy food and drink choices
- Identify and promote healthy food and drink choices
- Identify and reduce the availability of less healthy food and drink choices
- Remove all sugar sweetened beverages from YMCA facilities
- Ensure the YMCA supports and models healthy eating across all facilities and events by making healthy food choices the easy choices.

The YMCA nutrition standards apply the *NHSCG* traffic light system to categorise food and drinks into three categories according to their nutritional value. The categories are **GREEN**, **AMBER** and **RED**.

In summary, the *NHSCG* states:

### **GREEN – Best choices**

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

### **AMBER – Choose carefully**

Select carefully, do not let these dominate menu choices. **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 (kilojoules) being consumed. They should be

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provided in smaller serving sizes and modified to be at the more **GREEN** end of the spectrum whenever possible.

**RED – Limit**

Not recommended on the menu. **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).

**Note:** 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.

The *NHSCG* and the *NHSCG User Guide “Go for Green”* will be utilised as the primary resource document for YMCA staff and volunteers implementing the Healthy Food and Drinks Policy. A copy of these documents should be readily available in all facilities that prepare food and drinks and is to be used as a reference guide for assessing, classifying and modifying recipes to make them greener.

Nutrition Standards				
Setting	Information	GREEN	AMBER	RED
Children’s Services Early Learning Centres	Children’s Education and Care Assurance, under the overarching ACECQA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Must meet the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations with regards to nutrition</li> <li>➤ The majority of items must be <b>GREEN</b>. Menu items/recipes must be modified wherever possible to move them to the far <b>GREEN</b> end of the spectrum.</li> <li>➤ Added salt should be removed from recipes</li> <li>➤ Where packaged items are utilised these should be low or reduced salt</li> </ul>	More than 50%  The higher the % <b>GREEN</b> the better	Less than 50%  The less the % <b>AMBER</b> the better	0%

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Tap water should always be available free of charge</li> </ul>			
Children's Services OSHC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Must meet the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations with regards to nutrition</li> <li>➤ Must meet the <i>NHSCG</i></li> <li>➤ The majority of items must be <b>GREEN</b>. Menu items/recipes must be modified wherever possible to move them to the far <b>GREEN</b> end of the spectrum.</li> <li>➤ Added salt should be removed from recipes</li> <li>➤ Where packaged items are utilised they should be low or reduced salt</li> <li>➤ Tap water should always be available free of charge</li> </ul>	<p>More than 50%</p> <p>The higher the % <b>GREEN</b> the better</p>	<p>Less than 50%</p> <p>The less the % <b>AMBER</b> the better</p>	0%
Accommodation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The majority of items should be <b>GREEN</b>. Menu items/recipes must be modified wherever possible to move them to the far <b>GREEN</b> end of the spectrum.</li> </ul>	<p>More than 50%</p> <p>The higher the % <b>GREEN</b> the better</p>	<p>Less than 50%</p> <p>The less the % <b>AMBER</b> the better</p>	0%
Catering for <b>any YMCA</b> organised meeting, event, training, members day (club events included)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>AMBER</b> items may be provided in small serves and small quantities</li> <li>➤ Added salt should be removed from recipes</li> </ul>	<p>More than 50%</p> <p>The higher the % <b>GREEN</b> the better</p>	<p>Less than 50%</p> <p>The less the % <b>AMBER</b> the better</p>	0%

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Take Home Meal Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Where packaged items are utilised they should be low or reduced salt products</li> <li>➤ Milk choices should include low fat milk</li> <li>➤ Tap water should always be available free of charge</li> </ul>	<p>More than 50%</p> <p>The higher the % <b>GREEN</b> the better</p>	<p>Less than 50%</p> <p>The less the % <b>AMBER</b> the better</p>	<p>0%</p>
Health & Fitness (events & retail sales)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The majority of items should be <b>GREEN</b>.</li> <li>➤ <b>AMBER</b> items may be provided in small quantities only</li> <li>➤ Milk choices should include low fat milk</li> <li>➤ <b>RED</b> category items should not be promoted or placed in prominent areas such as at point of sale, on reception counters, at eye level within fridges or displays.</li> </ul>	<p>More than 50%</p> <p>The higher the % of <b>GREEN</b> choices the better</p>	<p>Less than 50%</p> <p>The less the % of <b>AMBER</b> choices the better</p>	<p>Less than 10% of available choices</p>
Runners Club (events & retail sales )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The majority of items should be <b>GREEN</b>.</li> <li>➤ <b>AMBER</b> items may be provided in small quantities only</li> <li>➤ Milk choices should include low fat milk</li> <li>➤ Tap water should always be available free of charge</li> <li>➤ <b>RED</b> category items should not be promoted or placed in prominent areas such as at point of sale, on reception counters, at eye level within fridges or displays.</li> </ul>	<p>More than 50%</p> <p>The higher the % <b>GREEN</b> choices the better</p>	<p>Less than 50%</p> <p>The less the % <b>AMBER</b> choices the better</p>	<p>Less than 10% of available choices</p>
Sailing Club (events & retail sales)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ The majority of items should be <b>GREEN</b>.</li> </ul>		<p>Less than 50%</p>	

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	<p>Menu items/recipes must be modified wherever possible to move them to the far <b>GREEN</b> end of the spectrum.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>AMBER</b> items may be provided in small quantities only</li> <li>➤ Added salt should be removed from recipes</li> <li>➤ Milk choices should include low fat milk</li> <li>➤ Tap water should always be available free of charge</li> <li>➤ <b>RED</b> category items should not be promoted or placed in prominent areas such as at point of sale, on reception counters, at eye level within fridges or displays.</li> </ul>	<p>More than 50%</p> <p>The higher the % <b>GREEN</b> choices the better</p>	<p>The less the % <b>AMBER</b> choices the better</p>	<p>Less than 10% of available choices</p>
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Sugar sweetened drinks are a key contributor to the growing levels of childhood overweight and obesity. The YMCA will provide no sugar sweetened drinks for consumption or sale within any of its facilities or catering with the exception of the following; a) in the event of a medical emergency b) diluted sweetened drinks may be provided by the runners club for rehydration purposes at events

Where the YMCA is managing large events and seeking external contractors to supply food and drinks, contractors will be made aware of this policy and contractors will be sought who can best meet the requirements of this policy.

While in the workplace YMCA staff and volunteers will refrain from consuming or carrying **RED** foods and drinks within eyesight of children and families. This includes all sugar sweetened drinks and fast foods.

Should a conflict arise between Education and Care Services National Law /Regulations and the Healthy School Canteen Guidelines/ User Guide in regards to provision of food and drinks within licensed Children’s Services settings the National Law and Regulation shall take precedence.

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The following exemptions apply to the nutrition standards

- In circumstances where birthday or special celebration food is supplied from home
- Where special events, fundraisers, functions are held, 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**
- Any further exemptions to this policy must be sought in writing and approved by the YMCA Chief Executive Officer in advance.
- The YMCA will avoid the use of its logo/brand alongside images, logos and brands promoting or strongly associated with unhealthy food and drink choices.

## DEFINITIONS

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

This term does not include milk-based products.

## SCOPE

All YMCA business units, volunteer clubs, and any YMCA managed events:

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

YMCA Canberra will work with YMCA Australia to seek to influence partners and change contract specifications, where national contracts exist, to support and promote healthy choices.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Department/Area	Role/Responsibility
All staff and volunteers	Adhere to the policy, role model healthy eating and educate and advocate for

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	healthy eating.
Cooks/Chefs/Food preparation & planning staff or volunteers	<p>Ensure the policy is the foundation of all menu planning and food provision.</p> <p>Consistently refer to the <i>NHSCG /NHSCG User Guide</i> to ensure you are accurately classifying food as <b>GREEN</b>, <b>AMBER</b> or <b>RED</b></p> <p>Ensure the policy is the foundation for planning food and drink provision at any events/functions/catering</p> <p>Modify recipes by substituting ingredients for <b>GREENER</b> options (refer to: <i>NHSCG and NHSCG User Guide</i>)</p> <p>Seek assistance and advice via the ACT Nutrition Support Service when required (<a href="http://www.actnss.org/">http://www.actnss.org/</a>)</p> <p>Educate suppliers on the YMCA policy and advocate to improve healthy eating choices at the supply end.</p>
Volunteer Committees	<p>Ensure compliance to the policy</p> <p>Ensure the policy is the foundation for planning food and drink provision at any events/functions.</p>
Managers	<p>Ensure understanding and compliance to the policy</p> <p>Facilitate training in the application of the Traffic Light System</p> <p>Ensure the policy is the foundation for planning food and drink provision at any meetings/training/events/functions.</p> <p>Educate partners, suppliers, stakeholders on the YMCA policy and advocate to improve healthy eating choices across the community.</p>
Board of Directors	Promote the YMCA policy at governance level. Communicate and advocate for the

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	policy to stakeholders, government and partners.
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## MONITORING, EVALUATION AND REVIEW

- The implementation of the policy will be monitored annually by YMCA Canberra through formal menu audits and assessments, informal observation on site and via purchase order reviews.
- The policy will be monitored and evaluated on a regular basis within YMCA Children’s Services by Children’s Education and Care Assurance under the overarching Australian Childrens Education Care Quality Authority (ACECQA)
- The policy will be reviewed in the event of any significant changes to the following documents;
  - National Healthy School Canteen Guidelines 2014 (NHSCG)
  - ACT Health: Healthy Food and Drink Choices Policy 2013
  - Australian Dietary Guidelines

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (LINKS TO PROCEDURES, LEGISLATION, FORMS, WORK PRACTICES)

ACT Government, Towards Zero Growth Healthy weight action plan,  
<http://www.health.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/Towards%20Zero%20Growth%20Healthy%20Weight%20Action%20Plan.pdf>

National Healthy School Canteen Guidelines 2014 (NHSCG)  
[http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/5FFB6A30ECEE9321CA257BF0001DAB17/\\$File/Canteen%20guidelines.pdf](http://www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/5FFB6A30ECEE9321CA257BF0001DAB17/$File/Canteen%20guidelines.pdf)

Education and Training Directorate, ACT Public School Food and Drink Policy  
[http://www.det.act.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0010/692290/Web-V-Final-ACT-Public-School-Food-and-Drink-Policy.pdf](http://www.det.act.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0010/692290/Web-V-Final-ACT-Public-School-Food-and-Drink-Policy.pdf)

ACT Health Healthy Food and Drink Choices Policy 2013  
<http://health.act.gov.au/sites/default/files/Healthy%20Food%20and%20Drink%20Choices%20Policy.pdf>

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Australian Dietary Guidelines

[https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/n55\\_australian\\_dietary\\_guidelines\\_130530.pdf](https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/files/nhmrc/publications/attachments/n55_australian_dietary_guidelines_130530.pdf)

ACECQA Guide to the National Quality Framework

<http://files.acecqa.gov.au/files/National-Quality-Framework-Resources-Kit/NQF03-Guide-to-NQS-130902.pdf>

Education and Care Services National Regulations

<http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/maintop/view/inforce/subordleg+653+2011+cd+0+N>

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Approved by: YMCA Board

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Review date: 21 October 2017

Policy Owner: Lynn Spratt

Amendment history:

Version	Date	Author	Change Description
1.0	21Oct2015	Lynn Spratt	Replaces OP004 Nutrition policy
2.0	30/10/19	M Taylor	Updated approval dates and policy header/footer

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