

THE CHILDCARE

Scoop

Exclusive
industry news,
competitions
& deals inside

SPRING

Mark these dates in your diary!

OCTOBER 2025						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	S
		1 	2 	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13 Nutrition Week	14 	15 VIRTUAL 	16 	17 SUMMER MENU due for review	18	19
20 Children's Week	21 	22	23	24 WORKSHOP 	25	26
27	28	29	30 IN CLASS 	31		

NOVEMBER 2025						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	S
					1	2
3 	4	5	6 	7	8	9
10 Food Safety Week	11	12	13	14	15	16
17 	18	19 VIRTUAL 	20	21	22	23
24 	25 	26 IN CLASS 	27	28	29	30

DECEMBER 2025						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	S
1 SUMMER MENU starts today	2	3	4 	5	6	7
8	9 VIRTUAL 	10	11	12	13	14
15	16 	17 IN CLASS 	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day	27	28
29	30	31 New Year's Eve				

JANUARY 2026						
M	T	W	TH	F	S	S
			1 New Year's Day	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13 VIRTUAL 	14	15	16	17	18
19 AUTUMN MENU due for review	20 	21	22	23	24	25
26 Australia Day	27 	28 IN CLASS 	29	30 	31	

Food Safety Training



FOOD SAFETY LEVEL 1
IN CLASS & VIRTUAL SESSIONS



FOOD SAFETY SUPERVISOR
IN CLASS & VIRTUAL



FOOD SAFETY REFRESHER
VIRTUAL



FOOD ALLERGY TRAINING
VIRTUAL

Events



FUELLING YOUNG MINDS
FREE Webinar



GROWING GOOD EATERS
Workshop

Register
HERE

COMPLETE OUR SURVEY

Have your say about
what events you want
to see in 2026

www.oscarcaregroup.com.au/training

www.oscarcaregroup.com.au/events

Food Days



Coffee Day



Bread Day



Pasta Day



Sandwich Day



Baklava Day



Fairy Bread Day



Cookie Day

Your childcare centre could be featured **HERE** in the next edition*

Enter by
DEC 1, 2025
for your chance
to be featured
in the Summer
Edition

To submit your centre, go to
www.oscarcaregroup.com.au/the-scoop/enter-childcare-feature

We love seeing what amazing food, activities and awesome learning spaces you have – the creativity and care is outstanding. So let's inspire each other. We're offering to highlight one childcare centre in the next edition of The Scoop. It's absolutely free too.

To enter, simply submit your details and photos via the website or email our Marketing team. There's no guarantee that your centre will be featured, but not to worry, we're running this throughout 2026. The most inspiring photos and descriptions will be selected.

*Details

- This is open to all Australian Early Learning Centres, Kindergartens, Outside of School Hour Care programs.
- There is no cost to be featured.
- By submitting photos, you are providing OSCAR Care Group with permission to use these photos on our website, social media and emails including if any persons are in the photo.
- PDF Proof of the layout will be submitted to the winners prior to publishing.
- Centres are selected based on how inspiring they are with the photos and descriptions they provide.



NUTRITION

Beyond the Plate: The Importance of Positive Food Memories in Shaping Healthy Habits

Building memories with food isn't just about nostalgia – it's also about setting up healthy habits for the future. Healthy habits form and develop a healthy relationship with food. Plus, food can be a lot of fun! So, let's dive into how you can make food part of building happy, healthy habits for all ages.

Why Food Memories Matter

Food is an essential part of life, and the experiences we have with it often shape our relationship with eating later in life. For children, meals are a time for bonding, learning, and developing habits that will stick with them long into adulthood.

Most of us have a favourite meal or snack that takes us back to our childhood. Maybe it's a homemade pizza, or those perfect peanut butter sandwiches your mom used to make. These food memories create a sense of comfort, security, and joy. By making food a positive experience for kids, we're helping them build healthy habits that can last a lifetime.

These experiences set children up to see food as a positive thing used for both fun and nutrition. In today's day and age with so many mixed messages in the media about dieting and what foods you should and shouldn't eat, encouraging children to have fun with food and focus on how good they feel when they fuel their bodies promotes a lifelong positive relationship with food.

Dietitian Tips for Building Healthy Food Memories

- **BE PATIENT:** Kids' tastes change, and they might not love everything right away. Don't force it but encourage them to try new things. Repeated exposure can lead to acceptance of a wider variety of foods.
- **FOCUS ON BALANCE:** The key to building healthy habits is balance. Offer a variety of foods at each meal, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, protein, and healthy fats. Making food fun doesn't mean compromising on nutrition – it's about finding the right balance.



How Can Childcare Settings Help Build Food Memories?

In childcare settings, food is a great opportunity to create an environment where children can explore new tastes, enjoy a variety of nutritious options, and make connections with their peers. Here are a few ways to incorporate food memories in a childcare setting:

GET CREATIVE WITH FOOD PRESENTATION

Children eat with their eyes first, so make meals fun! You don't need to go overboard, but simple touches can make food more appealing. Try using cookie cutters to shape sandwiches into fun shapes or turn fruit into smiley faces.

INVOLVE THE KIDS

Let the little ones help out in the kitchen (under supervision, of course). They can stir, sprinkle, or even just help set the table. This involvement not only makes mealtime more exciting but also teaches them valuable skills. When they help make the food, they're more likely to enjoy eating it.

INTRODUCE NEW FOODS SLOWLY

While it's comfortable to keep things familiar, don't be afraid to introduce new foods too. Children are more likely to try something new if they see it as a game or part of a fun experience. Consider "theme days" where you explore different cuisines or have "taste tests" where children taste and learn about different fruits or vegetables. You might learn about where and how something grows and then have everyone try that food.

ENCOURAGE FAMILY-STYLE MEALS

Sharing meals family-style can foster a sense of togetherness. When children are encouraged to serve themselves or share dishes, they learn about portion sizes, making healthy choices, and eating together as a group.

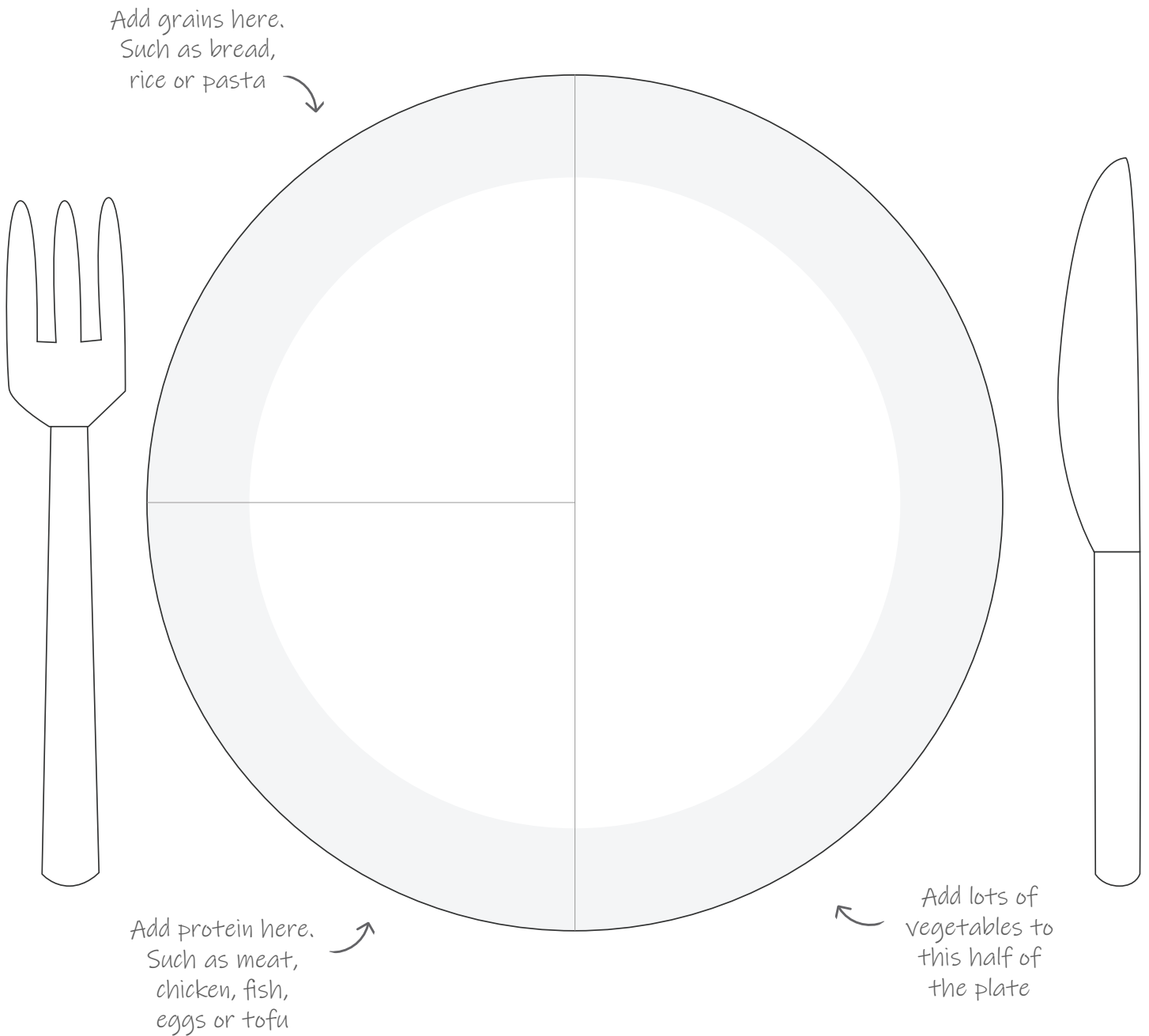
Let's Build Those Food Memories!

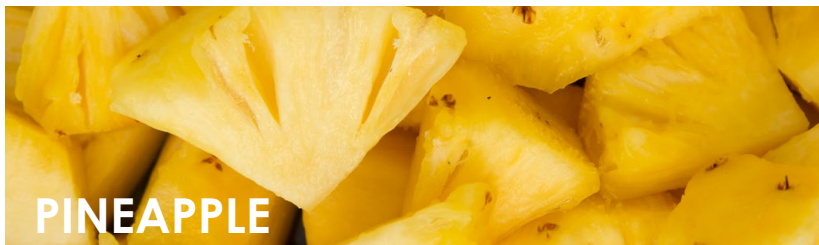
Food is an amazing way to create memories that last a lifetime. So, let's get creative, get cooking, and most importantly, have fun!

NAME _____

Build a healthy plate

Draw or paste pictures of your favourite kinds of foods to create a healthy plate for dinner.





PINEAPPLE



ORANGE



STRAWBERRIES



AVOCADOS



PEAS



SPINACH



ASPARAGUS



MUSHROOMS

SEASONAL FRUIT & VEGETABLES

What's in season

Seasonal produce not only tastes good, but it also comes with other benefits to your health, budget, and environment. Changing food with each season will ensure that children are eating the best of what each season brings. So what's in season right now? Let's take a look.

In Season*

October, November December

FRUIT bananas, strawberries, cherries, grapefruit, loquat, lychee, mango, honeydew, rockmelon, watermelon, orange, papaya, pawpaw, pineapples, starfruit.

VEGETABLES artichoke, asian greens, asparagus, avocado, bean, broccoli, capsicum, celery, cucumber, eggplant, lettuce, onions, peas, silverbeet, spinach, spring onions, sweetcorn, tomato, watercress.

For fresh seasonal fruit & vegetables
DIRECT TO YOUR DOOR, ask us how we can help.

include these fruits & veggies within your spring menu

*This will vary around Australia

RECIPE



RECIPE

Strawberry Nice Cream

This nutritious nice cream is a fun and nutritious alternative to traditional ice cream, made with just three simple ingredients: bananas, strawberries, and Greek yoghurt. Bananas contribute natural sweetness along with potassium and fibre to support energy, muscle function, and digestive health.

Strawberries are rich in vitamin C and antioxidants, which help support the immune system, while Greek yoghurt provides high-quality protein and calcium essential for muscle development and bone health.

INGREDIENTS	
SERVES 20 CHILDREN	
1kg	Ripe Bananas peeled and thinly sliced
1kg	Fresh Strawberries, tops removed
500g	Greek Yoghurt

CONTAINS Milk

PREP TIME 15 minutes
(plus 24 hours freezing time)

FREEZE TIME 2–3 hours
(if firmer texture desired)

METHOD

1. Prepare bananas in advance: The day before, peel and slice bananas into thin rounds. Arrange slices in a single layer on a tray lined with baking paper. Freeze for at least 24 hours or until completely solid.
2. Optional storage: If not blending immediately, transfer frozen banana slices into a freezer-safe bag or airtight container.
3. Blend: Place frozen banana slices, strawberries (with tops removed), and Greek yoghurt into a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth and creamy, stopping to scrape down the sides as needed.
4. Adjust texture: Serve immediately for a soft-serve style texture. For a firmer result, transfer mixture into a freezer-safe container and freeze for 2–3 hours before serving.

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION	PER SERVE (125G)	PER 100G
Energy (kJ)	362	290
Protein (g)	2.5	2
Total Fat (g)	0.1	0.1
Saturated Fat (g)	0.02	0.02
Carbohydrate (g)	17	13
Sugars (g)	12	10
Dietary Fibre (g)	4	3
Sodium (mg)	26	21

STORAGE

Store leftover nice cream in an airtight freezer-safe container for up to 1 week.

For best texture, let sit at room temperature for 5–10 minutes before scooping.

Avoid repeated thawing and refreezing, as this may cause ice crystals to form.



NUTRITION

Dietitians' Insight into the Risk of Food-Based Rewards for Children

Food-based reward systems are just one example of ways we can mean well, but may actually be sending unintentional negative messages about food and our bodies. Let us explain further...

What is a food-based reward system?

Food-based reward systems are methods in which we attempt to influence a child's behaviour either by threatening to take away food or by offering food as a reward. Often this is done with discretionary food choices such as chips, chocolates, ice cream, lollies etc.

Examples of using food to control behaviour include:

"If you stop being silly, I'll get you a lollipop."

"If you go to the potty, you have a chocolate."

"If we pack up our toys now, you get something sweet to eat."

"I know you're sad, how about some chocolate to make you feel better?"

Often parents and caregivers feel that by giving treats, they are bringing happiness to their child through the pleasure of eating something tasty that they wouldn't normally get to eat. Though there are many potential negative outcomes of these types of behaviour control tactics.

Our relationship with food and our bodies, whether healthy or unhealthy, is often established in our childhood. A key issue with these food-based systems of reward and punishment is that they encourage us to view foods as 'good' and 'bad'.

Often children have a good ability to identify when they are hungry and when they are full. The more we encourage children to eat based on mood and behaviours, the more we encourage children to ignore their natural appetite cues. When these natural instincts of hunger and fullness are repeatedly overridden, we can begin to lose these instincts and eat in the absence of hunger or when we are simply bored, tired, sad, or stressed.



So, what do we do instead of rewarding children with food?

Children still need to learn right from wrong, so what are the alternative strategies? Instead of using food as a tool for reward and punishment, consider other things that can be used to encourage good behaviour in children. We know that sometimes simply explaining to children why they need to behave is not enough.

Try these to Fostering good relationships with food whilst promoting good behaviour

1 AVOID LABELLING FOODS AS 'GOOD' AND 'BAD'

Instead focus on all the important things nutritious foods do for our bodies to explain why we need more of some foods and less of others.

2 ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO DEVELOP OTHER SKILLS TO REGULATE THEIR EMOTIONS

Instead of offering food in exchange for calming down, such as deep breathing, talking through their feelings, relaxing activities like colouring, or getting out extra energy by running or jumping.

Recognise that the strategies you use now to regulate a child's behaviours and emotions can become the same strategies they use on themselves as they get older. Try to encourage life-long, healthy, coping skills.

3 REMEMBER IT IS NEVER TOO LATE TO PROMOTE HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITH FOOD.

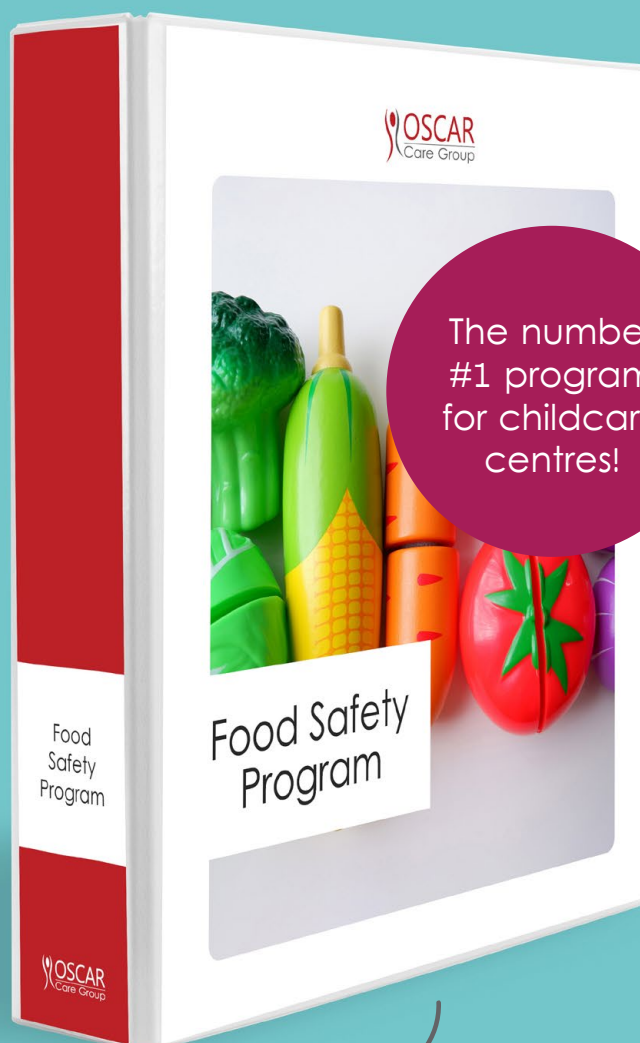
If you have used any of these food reward strategies in the past, you can still find alternative approaches and play an active role in promoting healthy relationships with food.

Your go-to book to keep children safe!

The Food Safety Program is your complete handbook to everything food related within the centre. How to handle high risk foods, hygiene standards, food allergy management, how to store food, danger temperature zones, food preparation & reheating, temperature monitoring, cleaning, waste management and more. It's your Food Safety rule book!

Why do you need one?

As your Childcare centre serves food to young children (vulnerable persons), it is considered a Class 1 food serve premise, which requires a Food Safety Program. A Food Safety Program outlines the food handling process to manage risks of potentially hazardous foods.



OUR FOOD SAFETY PROGRAM



TAILORED TO YOU



COMPLIES WITH SPECIFIC LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS



ACCURATELY REFLECTS YOUR PROCESSES



IT'S A LIVING DOCUMENT WITH ONGOING REVIEWS



CAPTURES ALL FOOD SAFETY HAZARDS



SUPPORTING RESOURCES



SIMPLIFYING RECORD KEEPING

Cut your admin time in half with our monthly workbooks!

Every form you require to complete within a month will be bound together to ensure nothing gets lost, and streamlines the process for staff. It's all part of our practical approach to food safety!

www.oscarcaregroup.com.au/childcare-food-safety-program

A reminder
for all food
handlers



FOOD SAFETY

When to wash your hands



BEFORE COMMENCING WORK



AFTER GOING TO THE TOILET



BEFORE HANDLING FOOD



AFTER HANDLING RAW FOOD



**BEFORE HANDLING
READY-TO-EAT FOODS**



**BEFORE & AFTER
HANDLING ALLERGENS**



**AFTER HANDLING CHEMICALS,
CLEANING CLOTHS OR EQUIPMENT**



**AFTER DISPOSING OF/OR
HANDLING WASTE**



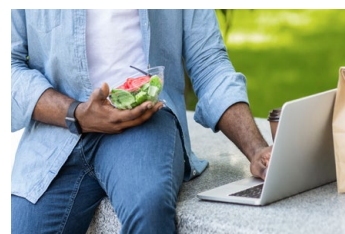
AFTER GARDENING



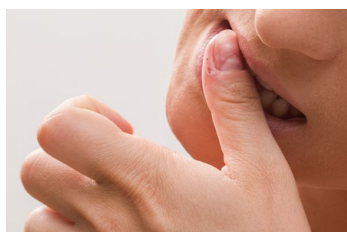
AFTER EATING OR DRINKING



AFTER SMOKING OR VAPING



AFTER EVERY BREAK



**AFTER BITING NAILS, LICKING
FINGERS, OR TOUCHING
PIMPLES OR SORES**



**AFTER RUNNING FINGERS
THROUGH THE HAIR, OR
SCRATCHING THE SCALP**



AFTER USING A TISSUE



**AFTER HANDLING
ANIMALS OR INSECTS**



NUTRITION

Chickpeas

The tiny nutritional powerhouse

Chickpeas promote heart health, lowering cholesterol, aiding in digestion, regulating blood glucose levels, promoting bone strength and gut health, and have anti-inflammatory properties. Chickpeas are a form of soluble fibre that helps to slow movement through the large bowel and help with diarrhoea. It's certainly a mighty legume! Let's take a moment to celebrate this affordable nutritional powerhouse.



Here are 8 things to know about chickpeas

1

NUTRITIONAL BOOST

Combining chickpeas with other food groups such as vegetables, wholegrains and protein and this will help to boost the nutritional value of your childcare meals.

2

CULTURAL DISHES

It blends and fits well in different cultural cuisines and there are plenty of tasty recipes to try.

3

TWO OUT OF FIVE FOOD GROUPS

Chickpeas count towards a vegetable and a meat serve. The Australian Guide to Healthy Eating (AGHE), chickpeas fall under two categories.

4

EASY TO COOK & PREPARE

Dried chickpeas can be prepared by soaking chickpeas in water overnight, boiling and simmering to cool down. Canned chickpeas do not need to be cooked, they are ready to eat.

5

PLANT-BASED DIETS

They are a good plant-based alternative to boost protein intake for vegetarian and plant-based diets.

6

ECONOMICAL

Chickpeas are also a great top up for minced meat dishes such as stews, stir fry, spaghetti Bolognese and burger patties by making the meals more economical.

7

ALLERGIES

A chickpea allergy is not one of the common food allergies in Australia. However, if someone has a peanut or soybean allergy, it is common to also be allergic to chickpeas.

8

SAFE CONSUMPTION

Be wary of too many chickpeas. Chickpeas are highly nutritious, however as they are a type of oligosaccharide carbohydrate, consuming a certain amount may cause bloating, gas, diarrhoea and discomfort for some, depending on the child's tolerance.

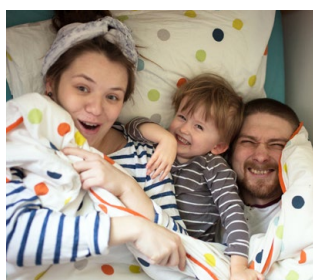
What events do you want to see in 2026?

Have
your say
HERE

 **OSCAR**
Care Group

www.oscarcaregroup.com.au/survey-2025-events

We hold evidence-based webinars throughout the year for Childcare Educators, OSHCs, Parents & Families. They are relaxed, informative and absolutely free to join. We also held our first workshop for the childcare industry in 2025. If you like to see this workshop in your area – let us know!





NUTRITION

Ingredients to limit or avoid

Early childhood is a crucial time for shaping lifelong habits—especially when it comes to food. What children eat during these early years has a big impact on how they grow, learn, and feel. By serving up meals full of nourishing ingredients—and steering clear of salty snacks, sugary treats, and unhealthy fats—we give kids the best chance to grow strong, think sharp, and feel their best.

For children who spend a big part of their day in childcare, what they eat makes up a large proportion of their daily nutritional intake. So, having a balanced, colourful menu packed with fruits, veggies, whole grains, lean proteins, and healthy fats is super important.

Easy on the salt!

- Do not add salt during cooking or at the table.
- Use salt-reduced versions of packaged goods when available rather than regular salt varieties.
- Limit high-salt sauces like fish sauce, soy sauce and tomato sauce to less than 5g per serve (about 1 tsp per child). Instead, choose reduced salt options, in small amounts. Consider making sauces yourself without adding salt, and using herbs and spices instead (e.g. garlic, basil, cinnamon, cumin) to enhance the flavour of dishes.
- Use a variety of cooking techniques like grilling, roasting, steaming, stir-frying and sauteing to further enhance the flavour without reaching for the shaker.

Keep it sweet without the added sugars

- Limit added sugars to less than 5g per serve in baked goods—these should also include some fruit and/or vegetables and wholemeal flour.
- What counts as added sugar? Brown sugar, caster sugar, icing sugar, raw sugar, white sugar, coconut sugar, golden syrup, honey or rice malt syrup.
- Choose cereals with less than 15g sugar per 100g or less than 25g if there's dried fruit in the mix.
- Use naturally sweet ingredients like fruits, dates, or mashed bananas. These add flavour while also adding a little extra goodness. Remember to limit dried fruit to once per week.

Not all fats are created equal

Choose the right types of fats in the right quantities.

- Cook with healthier fats like monounsaturated (e.g. canola, olive, sesame, sunflower, soybean) or polyunsaturated oils (e.g. safflower, sunflower).
- Saturated fats and trans fats should be left off the menu including palm oil, butter, cream, sour cream, coconut cream, copha, ghee and lard.
- Limit fats and oils to 10g/mL (2 teaspoons) or less of the unsaturated oils/spreads per child per day.
- Natural sources or healthy fats: avocado, seeds, nuts (if the centre policy allows), muffins made with healthy oils.

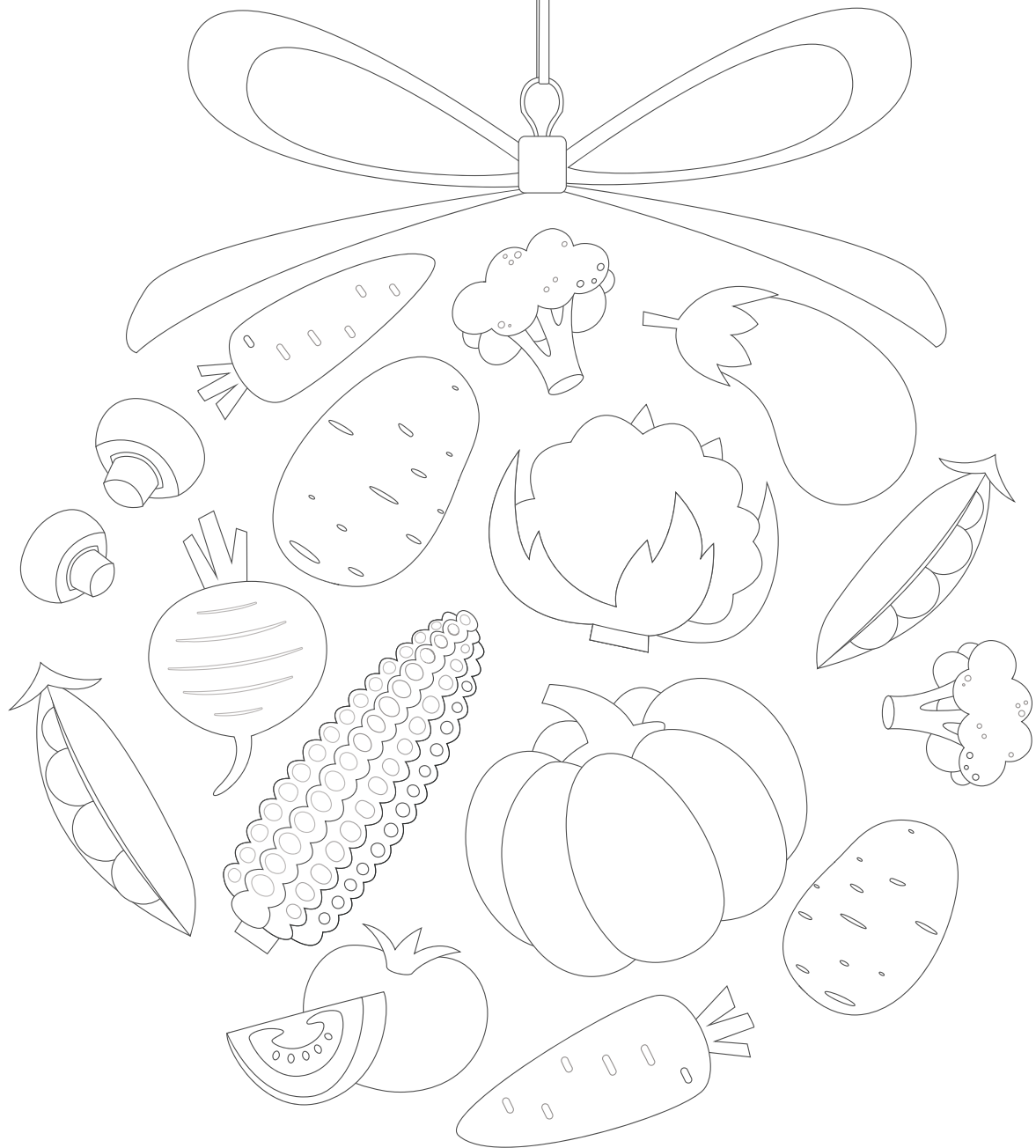
Not sure what to serve...



Our Dietitians can support you to develop a delicious and nutritious menu for your childcare centre. Contact us to find out how.

www.oscarcaregroup.com.au/childcare-menus

NAME _____



Wishing you a very
veggie christmas



NUTRITION

Rudolph rice cakes

A quick to assemble, healthy snack that is perfect for kids at Christmas time! You only need a few staple ingredients for this recipe.

Serve these Rudolph rice cakes for afternoon or late snack or get the older kids involved in making them for themselves. Children will have a ball helping you prepare them – after all, getting kids into the kitchen is one of the many great ways to have positive conversations to encourage healthy relationships with food.

INGREDIENTS FOR SERVES 1

- 1 brown rice cakes OR multigrain corn thins
- 2 tbsp of hummus
- 2 pretzels for rudolph's antlers
- 2 sultanas or raisins for rudolph's eyes
- 1 fresh raspberry, strawberry or cherry for rudolph's nose

METHOD

1. Spread the hummus evenly over the surface of the rice cakes or corn thins to cover.
2. Top with two sultanas or raisins for eyes, two pretzels for antlers and one fresh raspberry, strawberry or cherry or Rudolph's red nose.

NOTE If using a Strawberry don't forget to remove the top. If using a Cherry, ensure it is pitted prior to serving

3. Serve immediately and enjoy!

Why Hummus

Hummus is a delicious source of protein and healthy fats which are essential for supporting growth, development and repair of little bodies. But don't be fooled, this snack is not just great for the kids, but adults will find them equally as delicious! If your centre is not nut-free, peanut butter is a great alternative to hummus!

NUTRITIONAL INFORMATION	PER SERVE (59G)
Energy (kJ)	650
Protein (g)	3.4
Total Fat (g)	9.0
Saturated Fat (g)	1.1
Carbohydrate (g)	13.5
Sugars (g)	2.8
Sodium (mg)	270



www.oscarcaregroup.com.au/post/healthy-food-ideas-for-christmas

Learn to prepare and serve food safely for children with allergies. Join one of our monthly food allergy training sessions.

See upcoming dates on page 2

www.oscarcaregroup.com.au/food-allergy-training





OSCAR Care Group are proud to be members of the Australian Childcare Alliance in Victoria, New South Wales and Queensland!

(03) 9560 1844 | info@oscarcaregroup.com.au | www.oscarcaregroup.com.au

ABOUT US

We're your secret ingredient to nurture and protect growing bodies

We make it our business to know all food related legislative requirements for Childcare Centres to ensure you meet your compliance needs. Our Food Safety experts, Auditors, Dietitians and Speech Pathologists are here to support you raise healthy little ones. We have proudly done so since 2008.

FOOD SAFETY PROGRAMS

Stay compliant with our food safety program.

MENU DEVELOPMENT & REVIEWS

Our menus meet nutritional guidelines. Our Dietitians can review your menu or we can develop one for you.

RECIPES

Dietitian-approved recipes for breakfast, lunch and all snacks that children will love.

AUDITING

Book in your annual food safety audit or organise for a gap audit anytime to ensure you meet regulations.

FOOD SAFETY TRAINING

Anyone who handles food requires food safety training! Our suite of accredited courses are tailored to the childcare industry.

FOOD ALLERGY TRAINING

Everything you need to know when preparing food for children with a allergy.

RESOURCES

Early Childhood Nutrition and Food Safety Resources available to download.

EVENTS

Webinars and events for the Early Learning Centres, Childcare Centres, parents and families.

