

# Term 1, 2023 Munch & Move

## What's coming up?

<b><u>Vegie Month</u></b>	<b>6- 31 March</b> - We hope to make this year's Vegie Month and Big Vegie Crunch bigger and better than ever! It's a month of celebrating vegetables with learning and tasting experiences for the children at your service. (See page 2 for details)
<b><u>World Water Day</u></b>	<b>22 March</b> – Water is the best drink for everyone. Use World Water Day to reinforce the importance of drinking water which is one of the key Munch & Move messages. Reflect on your services processes and be sure children have access to water during the day and at meal times. (See page 3 for ideas)
<b><u>Ride to School Day</u></b>	<b>24 March</b> - National Ride2School Day is Australia's biggest celebration of active travel. Encourage your families to walk, skate or scoot to your service. Consider using bikes for outdoor play on this day.
<b><u>Harmony Week</u></b>	<b>21-27 March</b> - Celebrate multiculturalism and cultural diversity by sharing foods from other countries or exploring dance and movement from other cultures.

## Manager's Update

Welcome to our Term 1 2023 newsletter. I hope educators, parents and children had a safe, fun and relaxing summer holiday. We are looking forward to working with services again to promote healthy eating and active living. The newsletter contains useful information about a number of activities and links to useful resources. Please feel free to reach out to your local support officer or me for assistance.

### Avigdor Zask

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Healthy Eating Active Living Team  
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## To Share with Families

First Lap - \$100 swimming vouchers!  
The First Lap voucher program provides \$100 vouchers for parents, guardians and carers of children aged 3-6 years who are not enrolled in school to go towards the cost of swimming lessons.

Swimming is an important part of life for many Australians. Whether splashing at the local pool or heading to the beach or river, it is important that children have skills and confidence in and around water. The voucher can be used for a program of at least five structured

and supervised swimming lessons from an approved First Lap provider. Be sure to encourage families to make use of these vouchers. They can be applied for via the Service NSW app or website and expire on 30 June 2023.



# Yulunga Traditional Indigenous Games

Traditional Indigenous games are a great way to incorporate the explicit teaching of fundamental movement skills (FMS). This game, 'Apwerte', uses the underarm throw. Apwerte is a game of bowling accuracy where players try to roll a ball between two markers or skittles. Traditionally, men used to roll stones as far as they could to show their strength. They would roll them towards other stones or between markers to demonstrate their bowling accuracy.

Apwerte uses simple equipment. Any balls can be used and cricket stumps, cones or bowling pins can be used as markers. The game can be played either indoors or outdoors. The width of the markers, and distance to be rolled, can be adjusted according to the age and ability of the children.

Full details of [how to play Apwerte](#) or many other [Yulunga Traditional Indigenous Games](#) can be found on the Australian Sports Commission website.



## Veggie Month registrations are now open!

Veggie Month runs from Monday 6th to 31st March, 2023.

Join hundreds of services across NSW to include vegetables in daily programming such as through experiments, songs, stories, art, discussions or gardening.

This year's Veggie Month theme is "Be a Veg Explorer" where activities will focus on using the five senses to explore vegetables. Services who register receive an electronic resource pack including an educator manual and recipe eBook.

The last week of Veggie Month coincides with Vegetable Week, a program run in primary schools. It includes the Big Veggie Crunch, where thousands of children across NSW crunch on a vegetable at the same time!

We know getting children to eat vegetables can be challenging. With only one in 20 children eating enough vegetables each day, opportunities like this are very important.

Fun, interactive events such as Veggie Month and The Big Veggie Crunch can influence the variety and amount of vegies kids eat. Every year services tell us how much children love Veggie Month and how much interest they show and fun they have with it.

Register now and receive free resources:

[healthupnorth.info/vegiemonth](http://healthupnorth.info/vegiemonth)

More information and resources will be emailed to registered services before Veggie Month starts.

### YOUR FEEDBACK IS IMPORTANT

This year we will be seeking feedback from services to help us better understand the impact of Veggie Month on nutrition learning experiences. It will also help us to make improvements. We will invite you to tally vegetable focused nutrition learning experiences across one week before Veggie Month and then again at the end of Veggie Month. This should only take a few minutes to complete each day. At the end of Veggie Month there is also a short five-minute survey so you can share your experiences and ideas. Agreeing to provide feedback is optional.



### EDUCATOR TRAINING - VEGIE MONTH LUNCHTIME WEBINAR

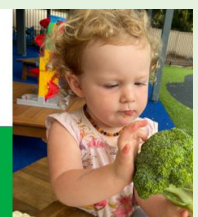
Join us for a 20-minute lunchtime professional development webinar as part of Veggie Month. We will explore the research and evidence on children and vegetables. This year's Veggie Month resources and activities will also be covered.

This year Veggie Month encourages services to use sensory exploration through nutrition learning experiences. This includes looking, listening, feeling, smelling or tasting both familiar and unfamiliar vegetables every day. These activities help familiarise children with vegetables which can lead to an increased willingness to try them.

Be sure to register for Veggie Month to receive your webinar invitation. It will be held on Tuesday 28th February at 12.30pm.

**Veggie Month  
2023**

Registrations are  
now open!





# Choose water as a drink

'Choose water as a drink' is one of the six key Munch & Move messages. Water is vital for the body to function and to maintain good health. It makes up 50%-80% of body weight. It is important for early childhood educators to encourage children to drink water regularly throughout the day. This is especially important during the warmer months when babies and children can become dehydrated quickly. This will also help them to learn healthy behaviours early in life.

Sometimes young children are too busy to notice their own thirst, or they mistake thirst for hunger. Services can support this key message in the following ways:

- Be sure water is readily available for children to drink throughout the day. Consider setting up a water station where they can help themselves

- Have water available on tables at mealtimes
- Set a good example by drinking and enjoying water in front of children
- Display photos of the children drinking water and add to their portfolios
- Include a section on choosing water as a drink in the service nutrition policy. A sample policy template is available in the resources section of the Munch & Move website.
- Include information about the importance of drinking water in parent orientation materials. Consider using the Munch & Move fact sheets 'Water – the best drink for healthy kids'.
- Plan and schedule learning experiences to promote water as a drink with toddlers and

pre-schoolers. Research where local drinking water comes from or where rain comes from. These and other ideas, can be found in your Munch & Move manual and also in the Healthy Eating Learning Experiences resource on the Munch & Move website.



# Book Nook

## 'Give Peas a Chance' by Rob Biddulph

**Themes:** Vegetables, colour green, foods for fuel and health

**Book Brief:** Nancy has peas for dinner. Nancy doesn't like peas. Nancy is not a happy dinosaur. Luckily, she has a plan to make them disappear. A clever plan that's guaranteed not to fail. But she's about to find out that maybe things are not quite so easy peasy. This story can be used to explore the likes and dislikes of green vegetables with children and how life is full of ups and downs.

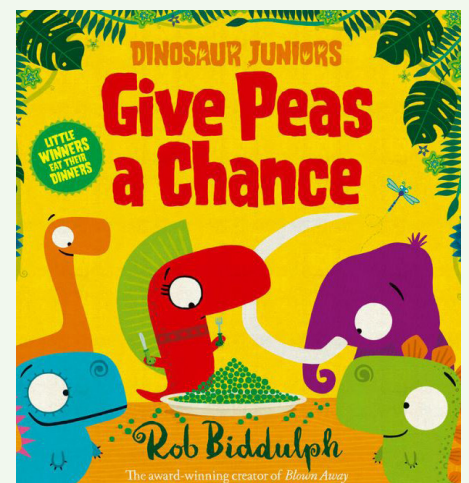
**While We Read:** The colourful, detailed artwork and simple rhyming text makes this an excellent book to read aloud. Many words are used

to describe why peas might be good for your body. This includes: 'super strong', 'super fast' and 'super smart'. Explore these concepts with your children. How does Nancy get rid of all her peas? Is her plan working?

**Illustrations:** Through the illustrations we can see a range of emotions displayed by Nancy and the other dinosaurs. Are the other dinosaurs happy to be eating Nancy's peas? Draw children's attention to these emotions and ask them to describe how they feel about eating peas or other vegetables.

**After:** Ask children: Did Nancy's plan work? Who likes peas? What are your favourite green vegetables? How do you feel when you eat your vegetables? Has anyone grown vegetables? Are vegetables good for our bodies? Consider planting pea

seeds and watching them grow. If you don't have a vegetable garden at the service, use egg or milk cartons. Give one to each child to take home to grow. Track their growth until the peas can be harvested. Consider a tasting session with fresh and frozen peas.



# The importance of the First 2000 Days

The 'First 2000 Days Framework' from NSW Health outlines the importance of the first 2000 days of a child's life (from conception to the age of 5). It is an important time for the development of physical, social and emotional wellbeing. What happens in this time can shape a child's future.

A child's environment and experiences during these early years have a lasting impact on their health, development, learning and wellbeing. This is because the growing brain changes to respond to conditions around it, and these changes can stay for life.

Early life experiences are predictors of how a child will learn and perform in school and behave in adolescence. They are also related to physical and mental health outcomes later on in life. This includes high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, depression and early memory loss.

Exposure to particular stressors before birth, and to adverse experiences in early childhood, increases the chances of poor health and wellbeing later in life. Young children thrive in a nurturing and loving environment, where they feel supported and can develop confidence. Evidence shows that children who attend at least 600 hours of quality early childhood education in the year before school have improved health and well-being outcomes.

For children to have the best possible start in life, early childhood educators have an important role to play. Quality education and care shapes a child's future and lays the foundation for development and learning. Early childhood educators support children to grow, learn and develop. This is recognised in the National Quality Standard, Quality Area 2: Children's Health and Safety. It is also outlined in Outcome 3 of the Early Years Learning Framework: Children have a strong sense of wellbeing.

A strong sense of wellbeing provides children with confidence and optimism which maximises their learning potential. Wellbeing includes good physical health, feelings of happiness, satisfaction and successful social functioning. It influences the way children interact with their environments.

Educators assist children with their physical development, cognitive skills, self-expression, social skills, resilience and self-sufficiency skills in a holistic manner. They do this whilst providing warm, trusting relationships, predictable and safe environments, affirmation and respect for all aspects of the child's being.

Our upcoming Munch & Move newsletters will include information about different aspects of the first 2000 days in relation to the role of

educators and services as a whole. Next term we will cover the impact of screens and devices.

- 90% of a child's brain development happens before age five.
- A child's development at 22 months is a predictor of their educational outcomes at 26 years old.



## Contacting your local support officer

Contact us if your school needs support or have queries relating to this newsletter.

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