



# Information sheet

## Respite Services

### Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

#### What is our Policy?

Disability ACT recognises that each person with a disability has a right to be encouraged and actively supported to make their own decisions and exercise informed choices in relation to how they live their lives.

Each person has a right to receive education and information in ways that make sense to them, about healthy lifestyles when they are staying with one of our respite services.

#### Guidelines for Staff

Components of a healthy lifestyle are identified by Disability ACT as:

- healthy eating practices
- maintaining a healthy body weight by balancing physical activity and food intake
- not smoking
- safe and appropriate use of medications and other drugs including alcohol
- management of stress
- participation in regular preventative medical reviews and screenings
- safe sex practices

Where clients are unable to make choices, support staff will follow the practices outlined in Disability ACT's *Promoting Healthy Lifestyles policy* in consultation with the person's guardian.





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## Diet

To encourage healthy eating practices, visitors to Disability ACT respite houses will be assisted to make healthy eating choices. This may be assisted by the preparation of healthy eating meals and the provision of healthy snack options. Healthy eating practices as defined by the Dietary Guidelines for Australians (2003) are outlined below.

Where a client of respite has complex nutritional issues, the guardian needs to provide the respite team with up-to-date advice from the treating dietician, nutritionist or medical practitioner so we can support the person to follow their prescribed healthy eating plan.

Team Leaders are to ensure that household menu plans are developed with the people staying at the respite service and that they provide opportunities for each client to make choices about what they eat.

## Food Hygiene

Adequate hygiene is required by all people involved in the preparation of food. This includes hand washing, cleanliness of boards, utensils and work areas, not cutting raw meat or fish on the same board as fresh fruit and vegetables, and ensuring food is fresh and appropriately stored.

## Definitions

### Healthy lifestyles

- are styles of living inclusive of practices that enhance; and
- encourage and promote good health and well being.

### Preventative health care

- refers to an approach that aims to prevent disease; and
- maintain health; it may include early diagnosis, screening, education and identification of those people at risk of developing specific health problems.





# Information sheet

## Dietary Guidelines for Australian Adults National Health and Medical Research Council

### Enjoy a wide variety of nutritious foods

- Eat plenty of vegetables, legumes and fruits
- Eat plenty of cereals (including breads, rice, pasta and noodles), preferably wholegrain
- Include lean meat, fish, poultry and/or alternatives
- Include milks, yoghurts, cheeses and/or alternatives. Reduced-fat varieties should be chosen, where possible
- Drink plenty of water

### and take care to

- Limit saturated fat and moderate total fat intake
- Choose foods low in salt
- Limit your alcohol intake if you choose to drink
- Consume only moderate amounts of sugars and foods containing added sugars.
- Prevent weight gain: be physically active and eat according to your energy needs.
- Care for your food: prepare and store it safely
- Encourage and support breastfeeding

**Note:** These guidelines are not in order of importance. Each one deals with an issue that is key to optimal health.

Two relate to the quantity and quality of the food we eat—getting the right types of foods in the right amounts to meet the body's nutrient needs and to reduce the risk of chronic disease. Given the epidemic of obesity we are currently experiencing in Australia, one of these guidelines specifically relates to the need to be active and to avoid overeating. Another guideline stresses the need to be vigilant about food safety, and, in view of the increasing awareness of the importance of early nutrition, there is a further guideline that encourages everyone to support and promote breastfeeding.

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Disability ACT, Individual Support Services, Policies and Procedures. **Promoting Healthy Lifestyles** –  
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