



Nutrition/Food/Beverages Policy

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Version 1			

1. Aim

Breakaway aims to promote healthy lifestyles, good nutrition and the wellbeing of all of clients, staff, volunteers and families using procedures and policies. We also aim to support and provide adequately for clients with food allergies, dietary requirements and restrictions and specific cultural and religious practices.

2. Background

Nutritional health is a basic human right for all people. Eating nutritious food is very important to maintaining our health. Food keeps us functioning, alert and active so that we can fully participate in family and community life. Poor nutrition can have severe adverse consequences for a person's health.

People with a disability are often dependant on others for access to nourishing, enjoyable and culturally appropriate food. Therefore the people supporting people with a disability need to ensure this access.

All disability services have responsibility to ensure good nutrition especially supported accommodation and respite services.

People with a disability have a spectrum of nutritional support needs that include:

1. Assistance in making wise food choices;
2. Assistance in food purchasing, preparation and other aspects of daily living related to food;
3. Managing medical problems where diet is an important part of treatment, eg obesity, diabetes;
4. Special attention to physical or visual difficulties with eating, drinking and swallowing, special seating/ positioning, special utensils, and supervision while eating;
5. Someone else assisting them while they eat or drink;
6. Specifically prepared food to meet their individual needs; and
7. Tube feeding as an alternative or supplementary method of receiving food and liquid.

3. Policy

The policy provides a guide to Breakaway in their duty of care and best practice in the management of nutrition for people with a disability.

This policy establishes the principles of good nutritional support for people with a disability.

Religion and culture should be recognised in food preparation and meal selection.

People with a disability must be involved as far as possible in decisions concerning their nutritional health.

Families have a vital role to play in the nutrition and health of many people with a disability. Their involvement should be promoted, respected and encouraged.

People with a disability may have a range of food related support needs that need to be met.

Service planning, management and review systems should involve nutritional health policy, procedures and outcome review.

Decisions about complex health and nutrition needs should be based on a process that balances duty of care with individuals' self-determination.

Breakaway will strive to achieve and maintain nutritional health in the people they support.

Services provided by Breakaway will have in place a system to assess, manage and review individual nutritional and eating support needs for the people they support.

Services will ensure that each individual's nutritional support needs are assessed at least annually or more often if required, and that nutrition planning is part of individual service plans. The purpose of nutrition plans will be to ensure the provision of appropriate food and nutrition, and access to professional health advice if needed.

4. Principles

Nutritionally adequate food

Food provision is planned so that individual people obtain a nutritionally adequate and healthy diet. Organisations therefore must address individual needs according to:

- Age
- Gender
- Culture and religion
- Level of activity
- Health issues
- Therapeutic requirements

Cultural and religious diversity

Acknowledgement of cultural and religious diversity is applicable to many people receiving support. (N.B. even Anglo Australians have a food culture!) The organisation must therefore check each person's requirements and customs with the person and appropriate family and, or community cultural groupings.

Risk identification and action

Identification of nutrition risks and actions to address obvious and potential risk must be documented and actioned in a systematic and planned way.

Individual choice

It is expected that wherever possible, individuals will be able to express their likes and dislikes about particular foods/drinks (crisp and crunchy, smooth, cold or hot etc) and have these recognised within the daily food selections and menu planning

Balancing the tensions between individual choice and duty of care

There is sometimes a tension between the reality of individual choice and an organisation's duty of care. Balancing a person's right to choose and consume the food they might like and their health needs is an obvious one. A further tension is between a person's physical issues (positioning, swallowing or need for equipment) and their preferences.

5. Persons Responsible

All staff and volunteers are responsible for:

- Familiarising themselves with this policy and relevant procedures

The GENERAL MANAGER is responsible for:

- Implementation of this policy
- Regular review of legislation and amendments to policy

The Board are responsible for:

- Review and approval of this policy

6. Definitions

Breakaway – all Breakaway Incorporated services and programs

Board of Governance– the governing body of Breakaway, comprised of elected or appointed members who jointly oversee the activities and legal responsibilities of the organisation

Client – Anyone using services provided by Breakaway that are not staff, volunteers or visitors

Manager – refers to the GENERAL MANAGER

Supervisor – refers to all senior staff who are responsible for supervising one or more staff members

Staff – refers to employees and volunteers of the organisation

Family – refers to the parents/caregivers of the camper that receive support from Breakaway

Visitor – any person who is visiting a Breakaway service who is not a staff member, client or family

Document review history

30/04/14		Initial Draft