

Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers Implementing Best Practice in Pre-school Learning Alliance Settings

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Statutory Requirements

- All registered childcare settings have to meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage which states that:
‘where Early Years settings give children meals, snacks and drinks, these must be healthy balanced and nutritious’
- They must evaluate the effectiveness of their provision in key areas by completing a SEF for Ofsted.



Working in partnership with the Infant & Toddler Forum



- Infant & Toddler Forum (ITF) encouraging wider recognition/adoption of its *Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers*
- Ongoing and enhanced partnership with the Pre-school Learning Alliance
- Champion uptake of the *Ten Steps* in Alliance nurseries and pre-schools



Overall aims

- Assess how the *Ten Steps* can work in early years settings
- Assess how the *Ten Steps* can influence behaviour around feeding and attitudes to healthy eating
- Help Alliance settings improve the quality of nutrition and mealtime experiences for children
- Understand how the *Ten Steps* can be used to meet the Early Years Foundation Stage



Chronology

- **2010** *Ten Steps* pilot launched in a group of Alliance settings in the South
- **July 2011** Alliance and ITF agree partnership to roll out *Ten Steps* nationally in 130 childcare settings
- **Sept/Oct 2011** Roll out begins supported by materials from ITF and Alliance Quality and Practice Managers
- **Dec 2011** Preliminary evaluation
- **March 2012** Follow up evaluations



Adopting the *Ten Steps*

- Challenges
 - Introducing the *Ten Steps* into 130 registered childcare settings across the country
 - Aligning the *Ten Steps* with existing materials
 - Supporting practitioners in 'taking ownership'
 - Keeping up the momentum
 - Evidencing improvement in practice



1. Eat with the children in your groups and make mealtimes relaxed, happy occasions



2. You decide which nutritious foods to offer, taking account of individual dietary needs, but let children decide how much to eat



3. Offer foods from all 5 food groups each day



Practitioners in Alliance settings refer to the ITF five food groups and recommended portion sizes which are now written into their menu planning procedures – menus are displayed for parents

4. Have a routine and offer 3 meals and 2–3 snacks over the whole day



QPMs work with settings to ensure that meal and snack times are organised to meet the children's needs and not staff routines

5. Children need to be offered 6–8 drinks over a whole day



Alliance settings are changing their existing practice and no longer giving drinks in sports bottles for older children

6. Encourage parents to give vitamins A & D each day



Some settings have produced a display on their Parent Notice board to inform parents and have ordered supplies of the leaflets to give out.

7. Respect children's tastes and preferences... don't force feed



8. Reward young children with your attention – never give food or drink as a reward, treat or for comfort



Practitioners are able to draw upon the resources available to them to support parents and to influence Behaviour – a surprising number of parents seek advice from their child's key person.

Over 70% of parents say they use sweet foods or puddings as a reward to encourage their toddler to eat their meals

9. Limit... and avoid



Limit...

- fried food, crisps, packet snacks, pastries, cakes and biscuits to very small amounts
- sweet foods to four times a day

...and avoid

- sweetened fruit squashes, fizzy drinks, tea and coffee
- undiluted fruit juices
- whole nuts which may cause choking or be inhaled.

10. Encourage physical activity for at least 3 hours every day and about 12 hours sleep



Meeting Statutory Requirements

Early years settings have to be able to show evidence that they are providing activities and experiences for children under a set of key themes and commitments:

- A unique child
- Positive relationships
- Enabling environments
- Learning and development



Meeting Statutory Requirements

In their Self Evaluation Form they are asked to evaluate

- the extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles
- the extent to which children develop skills for the future
- the effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers

All of which can be demonstrated by referring to the activities they are undertaking using the *Ten Steps*



Materials and resources

- Every Alliance setting has access to downloadable resources on their designated page on the ITF website
- QPMs continue to visit settings to support and encourage
- Key activities are suggested and added to...



In summary

'Ten Steps is going down really well in our settings, they are all so pleased to have the support and resources available to them' Mary Barna QPM

'I have just helped a group to support a parent whose child is a picky eater using the Ten Steps materials and the parent looked at the little plates web site yesterday' Alliance Nursery Manager

Our nursery is in a deprived area, parents don't like letting their children outside to play at home and have not valued the importance of outdoors at Nursery – we are using the Ten Steps to inform them Manager

I am seeing an improvement in the quality of snack times Robert Jackson QPM



Next steps...

- Including the Ten Steps in our training programmes for practitioners and families
- Roll out information and resources to our 50 Children Centres across the country
- Continue to build on good practice

