

ChildFriendly Lunch & Learn Resource

Nutrition, Brain Development & Behaviour

Quick Reference for Educators

Reminder

This guide supports observation only. Educators are not diagnosing. Look for patterns over time and communicate objectively with families.

Why It Matters

Food impacts:

- Energy
 - Focus
 - Mood
 - Regulation
-

What children eat can influence how they feel and behave throughout the day

What You Might Notice

High Sugar / Processed Foods

You may see:

- Burst of energy
- Difficulty focusing
- Sudden crash (tired, emotional)

Try:

- Pair with protein/fat (e.g., cheese, yogurt)

Low Protein Intake

You may see:

- Low energy
- Short attention span
- Emotional sensitivity

Try:

- Offer small portions of protein alongside familiar foods

Limited / Selective Eating

You may see:

- Hesitation with new foods
- Rigid preferences
- Inconsistent energy

Try:

- Keep offering variety (no pressure)
- Celebrate small steps (touching, tasting)

Hunger / Not Eating Enough

You may see:

- Irritability
- Trouble regulating
- Difficulty participating

Try:

- Offer food regularly
- Notice children who don't ask for food

Balanced Meals (Best Support)

Includes: protein + fat + carbs

You may see:

- Steady energy
- Better focus
- Easier transitions

What to Watch For

- Behaviour changes before/after meals
- Patterns with certain foods
- Times of day children struggle most

Look for patterns, not one-off moments