

Susan Bates

By email: [fyi-request-11868-29520597@requests.fyi.org.nz](mailto:fyi-request-11868-29520597@requests.fyi.org.nz)  
Ref: H202000011

Dear Ms Susan Bates

### Response to your request for official information

Thank you for your request for information under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act) on 16 December 2019 for:

*"The evidence the Ministry of Health relied on to substantiate its draft guidance to minimise food related choking risks in early learning services as published on the Education Conversations website."*

The process used to create the draft advice described above focused on reviewing the existing Ministry of Health (the Ministry) advice on minimising food related choking risk and considering it for an early learning services (ELS) setting. The original advice, published in 2012, is population health level advice that was focused on the home setting, which is quite different to an ELS setting.

The process for considering the advice for ELS settings included a search of the academic and grey literature, dated from 2010, and working with an external Technical Advisor. This expert in children's feeding and swallowing development provided advice for the draft recommendations based on literature and their own expertise in the area. Nutrition issues were considered by specialists in the Ministry.

I have included links to some publicly available information which may be useful to you.

- The Ministry of Health's current advice on preventing choking in young children is publicly available at: <https://www.health.govt.nz/your-health/healthy-living/food-activity-and-sleep/healthy-eating/food-related-choking-young-children>
- Dietary guidelines for toddlers aged 0-2 can be found at: <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/food-and-nutrition-guidelines-healthy-infants-and-toddlers-aged-0-2-background-paper-partially>
- Dietary guidelines for children and young people ages 2-18 years can be found at: <https://www.health.govt.nz/publication/food-and-nutrition-guidelines-healthy-children-and-young-people-aged-2-18-years-background-paper>

Evidence that the Ministry considered in formulating this advice is released in full and attached as appendices 1 to 7:

| Appendix: | Document:  |
|-----------|--|
| 1         | International Dysphagia Diet Standards Initiative – changing food sizes  |
| 2         | Food related choking in children/early learning centres  |
| 3         | Staff feeding and choking: Grey Literature   |
| 4         | Foreign bodies in the airways: a meta-analysis of published papers   |
| 5         | Increasing awareness of food-choking and nutrition in children through education of caregivers: the CHOP community intervention trial study protocol |
| 6         | Nonfatal choking on food among children 14 years or younger in the United States, 2001-2009  |
| 7         | International Dysphagia Diet Standards Initiative – food texture level 7   |

References to other sources the Ministry used are detailed below:

- Ripton, Nancy. Potock, Melanie. (2016). *Baby self-feeding: Solutions for introducing purees and solids to create lifelong, healthy eating habits.* Quarto Publishing Group, USA.
- Archanbault, Nicole. Coceani Paskay, Licia. (2019). *Unsafe chewing: choking and other risks.* The ASHA Leader, 1 November, 2019.
- Dodrill, P. (2016). Treatment of feeding and swallowing in infants and children. In M. Groher, M. Crary (Eds.), *Dysphagia: Clinical management in adults and children* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 325-348). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier
- Dodrill, P. (2016). Typical feeding and swallowing development in infants and children. In M. Groher, M. Crary (Eds.), *Dysphagia: Clinical management in adults and children* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed., pp. 253-268). St. Louis, MO: Elsevier

I trust this information fulfils your request. You have the right, under section 28 of the Act, to ask the Ombudsman to review any decisions made in this request for information.

Please note this response, with your details removed, may be published on the Ministry's website.

Yours sincerely



Deborah Woodley  
**Deputy Director General**  
**Population Health and Prevention**