

April 2015

Dear Families:

As you know, we have several policies in place to help protect children with allergies and we appreciate your cooperation with these policies as we work to provide the safest possible environment for children. We continue to work toward the most effective policies and beginning July 1, 2015, the center will officially become a "Nut Safe" center.

Most families are probably familiar with what it means to be a nut safe environment but for those who are not, please be advised that this means that families, teachers and staff must refrain from bringing any products that contain nuts into the center. This includes all foods, lotions and ointments including almond products like milk and butter.

We ask that families and staff check to screen-out products that contain nuts or are prepared in a factory where nuts are present. Additionally, all food for special events like birthday celebrations should be store-bought and have all ingredients listed. Food for pot luck events can be made at home but should have a list of ingredients provided with the item.

For families impacted by allergies (food, material or environmental):

- As always, families are responsible for notifying the center of any allergies affecting their child, that have been documented by a physician or if there is an allergy suspected by the family.
- Allergies which are documented/managed by a physician require an allergy health care plan completed and updated annually (or if there is any change in the child's allergy or medication) by the child's medical provider.
- If medication has been prescribed by the child's medical provider and is documented on the health care plan, it must be provided to the center.
- The child may not attend the center if the medication has expired or is not on site.
- If an allergy is suspected by the family, a Bright Horizons Suspected Allergy Form must be completed. For suspected allergies, over-the-counter medication may be administered consistent with the Medication Policy.
- Children w/documented medical allergies will be listed on an Allergy Chart which will be posted in the classroom and kitchen. Children with documented medical allergies will be highlighted in red; children w/suspected allergies will be highlighted in yellow.
- All children will have a colored placemat w/the child's picture and allergy listed to be used for all meals/snacks:
 - Red: life-threatening and suspected allergies
 - Green: vegetarian or cultural/religious food preferences

Allergies can be very serious, in some cases life-threatening, and we appreciate your understanding of why these precautions are necessary. We are grateful for your cooperation and support and if you have any questions at all, please speak with me.

Director Judie Stevens

Regional Manager Jennifer Aguilar

Bright Horizons Food From Home



Bright Horizons
FAMILY SOLUTIONS®

Packing a Safe Lunch for Your Child

Bright Horizons believes meal times should be a happy and enjoyable time for children. We offer the following peanut and nut free suggestions in the hope of developing healthy eating habits for the children in our care. Lunch can be fun, nutritional, and easy for you to prepare.

Please note we are not able to heat or prepare meals for children as this not only keeps the children waiting for their lunch but also takes the staff away from their time with the children. Additionally, microwaves often heat food unevenly. Due to limited spaced, refrigerators are not available to keep your child's lunch cold. We suggest that you use insulated lunch bags and ice packs to keep food cool and thermoses to keep food warm.

However, there is a wide variety of healthy, enjoyable lunches that can be made for your child. To assist you in preparing your child's lunch, we have prepared the following tips to help ensure that your child has a safe and healthy lunch.

Additionally, we strongly recommend avoiding foods that are high in fat or sugar in your child's lunch and using the USDA's MyPlate recommendations to assure your child's meal is well-balanced. Providing a healthy lunch will assure your child has the energy and stamina to get the most out of their day and fully participate in all of the fun learning experiences.

- Always wash your hands in warm, soapy water before handling any food. If your child is helping you, make sure that he/she has done the same.
- Use an insulated lunch box or bag.
- Refrigerate over night any perishable food items such as sandwiches prepared for the next day. Add non-perishable food items the following morning.
- Use a gel-pack, frozen drink (such as a bottle of water), a commercial ice pack or fill a plastic refrigerator container with water and freeze for a homemade freeze pack to keep food cold. Place foods that must be kept cold, closest to the ice pack. If sending dairy products, extra ice packs may be required to keep food at the proper temperature.
- Use a thermos to keep drinks cold until lunchtime. Also use a thermos to keep soups or other hot liquids hot. Fill a thermos with hot water and let it stand for approximately 10 minutes before putting the hot food in. Do not pack soups with a cream or milk base.
- Plastic food containers or recyclable butter tubs work well for packing fruits and vegetables, cheese, or pieces of meat or chicken and homemade leftovers from the night before.
- Cut all food into bite-sized, easy-to-swallow pieces.
- Children often like finger foods as an alternative to the traditional lunch box meal
- Avoid using mayonnaise or eggs on sandwiches, especially if the sandwich or item isn't refrigerated or properly cooled.
- Wrap sandwiches in separate plastic bags or aluminum foil.
- All lunch boxes/ bags should be labeled with the child's full name.
- Wash out reusable lunchboxes every night, including the ice packs. Use a baking soda and water solution once a week to eliminate odors.
- Use only new, clean brown bags. Don't reuse bags that have carried groceries. Never use a bag that is wet or stained.

Food Suggestions

Commercially prepared and ready-to-eat meats, such as ham and turkey are good lunchbox choices because they last well. Leftovers from dinner the night before are always a good choice.

Many foods like baby-cut carrots, cheese and crackers, string cheese and other nutritious foods now come packaged in child-sized portions. These are also good lunch options.

Fresh fruits and vegetables are not only nutritious; they also travel well, making them perfect for lunch. Remember to wash fruits and vegetables before packing. The center may serve milk at lunch and 100 % fruit juice, milk or water at snack time depending on the snack and space availability.

<p>Cold Sandwiches Chicken Salad Egg Ham and Cheese Tuna Turkey or Chicken Turkey Salad</p>	<p>Canned Fruit (in light syrup or its own juice) Applesauce Fruit Cocktail Mandarin Oranges Peaches Pears Pineapple</p>	<p>Fresh/Dried Fruit Apples Bananas Blueberries Cantaloupe Fruit Salad Honeydew Oranges Peaches Pears Pineapple Plums Raisins Raspberries Strawberries</p> <p>Note: Grapes should not be given to children under four years old, unless they are seedless and cut in bite size pieces lengthwise.</p>	<p>Vegetables Carrot Sticks Celery Sticks Cucumber Sticks Other Raw Veggies</p> <p>Note: Do not give children under four years old celery or carrot sticks.</p>
<p>Miscellaneous Chicken Drumstick Cottage Cheese Hard Boiled Egg Hummus Salad Salsa Yogurt</p>	<p>Breads Banana* Carrot* Oatmeal Pita Raisin Rye Whole Wheat Zucchini *without nuts</p>	<p>Additions Bread Sticks Cheese Sticks Whole Wheat Crackers</p>	<p>Foods To Avoid Nuts Soda Sweets (Candy, Cookies, Donuts, Cakes, and Sugary Cereal)</p>

Note: Honey should not be given to children under one year of age due to bacterial spores; however, it is harmless for older children.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that foods that are round, hard, small, thick, sticky, smooth, or slippery, should not be given to children less than 4 years of age due to their potential choking hazard. Examples of such foods are:

- Banana rounds
- Celery
- Chips
- Chunks of meat larger than can be swallowed whole
- Grape/Cherry tomatoes
- Green beans (whole)
- Gum
- Hard candy
- Hard pretzels
- Hotdogs (whole or sliced into rounds)
- Lollipops
- Marshmallows
- Nuts
- Peanuts
- Popcorn
- Raw carrot rounds
- Raw peas
- Seeds
- Spoonfuls of peanut butter
- Whole grapes

If feeding hotdogs or grapes, they should be cut into bite-sized lengthwise pieces. Bananas should be cut lengthwise into small pieces and raw carrots chopped or cut into thin strips will be safe for your child. Carefully remove bones from any fish or meat and cut into small pieces.

Our center is a **peanut and nut safe facility**. Please carefully review labels of any foods you send in with your child to the center to ensure they are "nut safe" and have no warning labels of potential peanut or tree nut traces or manufactured on equipment that processes peanuts or tree nuts to help eliminate any potential risk to children with severe nut allergies. Any food that is brought in for *sharing* among the children must be either whole fruits or commercially prepared packaged foods in pre-sealed containers. Only sealed products with ingredient labels verifying there are no nuts, no nut products and no potential traces of nuts from the equipment used for processing will be served to the children.

Food Temperatures

When packing your child's lunch, you want to make certain that you pack the foods safely, keeping foods at the correct temperature. Below is a list of foods and what temperature they should be kept at to ensure the lunch you pack will be safe for your child. Please keep in mind that these foods should be free of peanuts, other nuts and nut products.

Foods to be kept Cold	Room Temperature Foods	Hot or Cold Foods
Meats, Fish, Poultry, Processed Meats	Breads, Crackers, Cereal	Soups
Eggs	Jelly	Chili
Milk, Soft Cheese, Yogurt, Custards and Puddings	Whole Uncut Fruit, Dried Fruit, Unopened Canned Fruit	Casseroles (lasagna)
Peeled and Cut Vegetables	Unopened Juice Boxes	Refried or Baked Beans
Opened Fruit Juice	Hard Cheese	
Pasta Salad, Chicken and Tuna Salad, Salad	Unopened cans of Tuna, Meats, Poultry	
Cooked Pasta, Rice and other Cooked Grains	Raw Vegetables	
	Ketchup, Mustard, Margarine	