

Nutrition and food safety

WAC

WAC 170-295-3140

What kind of milk can I serve?

- Only pasteurized milk or pasteurized milk products can be served to children in your care.
- Nondairy milk substitutes may be served only with written permission of the child’s parent for children over the age of twelve months.

The amount of required milk fat in the milk product is determined by the child’s age:

If the age of the child is:	Then the fat content of the milk must be:
(a) Under 12 months	Full strength formula or full strength breast milk unless there are specific written instructions from a licensed health care provider.
(b) Between 12 months and 24 months	Full strength whole milk or breast milk unless there are specific written instructions from a licensed health care provider.
(c) Over 24 months	With or without fat content of provider’s or parent’s choice.

WAC

Cow’s milk is a significant source of nutrients that are important for growth in children over twelve months of age. Milk substitutes for children over twelve months may be served with parent permission. Children between twelve and twenty-four months of age should consume whole milk and children over the age of twenty-four months can consume whole milk or lower fat milk. Because the typical American diet has a high fat content, it is

usually recommended that children over the age of twenty-four months consume lower fat milks such as 1% (low fat) milk or non-fat milk as a means to lower the total fat content of the diet. (This WAC section is related to milk, not formulas. Formulas are discussed in Section 5, Taking Care of Young Children.)

WAC

WAC 170-295-3150

How many meals and snacks must I serve?

The number of meals or snacks you must serve is based on the number of hours you are open.

If you are open:	You must serve at least:
(a) Nine hours	Two snacks and one meal, or One snack and two meals.
(a) Over nine hours	Two snacks and two meals, or three snacks and one meal.

You must also offer:

- Food at intervals of not less than two hours and not more than three and one-half hours apart
- Breakfast or snack to children in morning care whether or not the child ate before arriving at the center
- Breakfast to the child in nighttime care if the child remains at the center after the child’s usual breakfast time
- A snack or meal for children arriving after school
- Dinner to children in nighttime care if the children are at the center after their usual dinnertime or have not had dinner, and
- An evening snack to children in nighttime care.

WAC

Children have small stomachs and they need to eat small amounts of food often. The following is a guide to help you meet the nutritional needs of the children in your care:

- ◆ Children in care for 5 hours are served at least breakfast or lunch and a snack. If the children are hungry, feed them.
- ◆ Children in care for more than 5 hours a day and up to 9 hours are served at least a mid-morning and mid-afternoon snack and lunch. Or they could have breakfast, lunch and at least one snack.
- ◆ Children who remain in care for 9 or more hours need more food. They could have breakfast (or a mid-morning snack), lunch, a mid-afternoon and a late afternoon snack.

Children still in your care after 4:30 or 5:00 p.m. need to be served a late afternoon snack. Most children are hungry at that time because it has been several hours since the mid-afternoon snack was served.

You can keep the late snack simple. Easy to serve foods allow children to take the snack with them if the parent arrives before they are finished. Foods served for this snack are often just crackers and juice or a cube of cheese and a piece of fruit.

Note: *Some children may need more food than others. It is important that children are provided enough food to be satisfied.*

WAC

WAC 170-295-3160

What kind of food and menus must I have?

You must:

- Prepare, date, and conspicuously post menus one week or more in advance, containing the meals and snacks to be served
 - Provide two weeks or more of meal and snack menu variety before repeating the menu
 - Keep six months of past menus on-site for inspection by the department
 - Make substitutions of comparable nutrient value and record changes on the menu, when needed
 - Provide daily a minimum of one serving of Vitamin C fruit, vegetable, or juice
 - Provide three or more times weekly foods high in Vitamin A, and
 - Maintain at least a three day supply of food and water for emergency purposes based on the number of children in child care.
- Meals eaten at the center must contain the following:
- Each breakfast meal the child eats at the center must contain:
 - A fruit or vegetable or one hundred percent fruit or vegetable juice
 - A dairy product (such as milk, cheese, yogurt, or cottage cheese)
 - A grain product (such as bread, cereal, rice cake or bagel).
 - Each lunch and dinner meal the child eats at the center must contain:
 - A dairy product (such as milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, cheese)
 - Meat or meat alternative (such as beef, fish, poultry, legumes, tofu, or beans)
 - A grain product (such as bread, cereal, bagel, or rice cake)
 - Fruits or vegetables (two fruits or two vegetables or one fruit and one vegetable to equal the total portion size required.) When juice is served in place of a fruit or vegetable it must be one hundred percent fruit or vegetable juice.
- When meals are not provided by the center you must:
- Notify parents in writing that meals they provide for their children must meet the daily nutritional requirements
 - Provide adequate refrigeration for keeping potentially hazardous foods (such as meats of any type, cooked potato, cooked legumes, cooked rice, sprouts, cut melons or cantaloupes, milk, cheese)
 - Refrigerate foods requiring refrigeration at 45 degrees Fahrenheit or less and keep frozen foods at 10 degrees Fahrenheit or less until they are cooked or consumed.

Each snack the child eats at the center must include at least two of the following four components:

- A milk product (such as milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, cheese)
- A meat or meat alternative (such as meat, legumes, beans, egg)
- A grain product (such as cereal, bagel, rice cake or bread), and
- Fruit or vegetable.

Each snack or meal must include a liquid to drink. The drink could be water or one of the required components such as milk, fruit or vegetable juice.

You may allow parents to bring in snacks for all the children that may not meet the nutritional requirements on special occasions such as birthdays. The snacks provided by parents must be limited to store purchased:

- Uncut fruits and vegetables, and
- Foods prepackaged in original manufacturer's containers.

If a child has a food allergy or special menu requirements due to a health condition, you must:

- Receive written directions from the child's health care provider and parent to provide nutritional supplements (such as iron) or a medically modified diet (such as a diabetic or an allergy diet). For allergy diets, the parent and the child's health care provider must identify the foods the child is allergic to
- Post each child's food allergies in locations where food is prepared and served
- Include the allergies on the individual health care plan
- Specify an alternative food with comparable nutritive value, and
- Notify staff of the allergies and reactions. NOTE: You can require parents to supply food for supplements and special diets.

WAC

Families need to know what menus are planned and what food is actually served to their children. This is

particularly true for very young children who cannot communicate about food intake.

You must serve at least one food rich in Vitamin C daily. Vitamin C has a major role in the body. It helps heal cuts, scrapes, burns and infections. It helps form collagen (connective tissue) and promotes healthy bones, teeth, skin and blood vessels. Good sources of foods rich in Vitamin C include: cantaloupe, grapefruit, 100% citrus juice, kiwi fruit, jujube, guava, mango, oranges, papaya, strawberries, tangerines, satsumas, asparagus, Bok Choi, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, red cabbage, cauliflower, kale, kohlrabi, red and green peppers, potatoes, snow peas, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and turnip greens.

Serve fruit or vegetables as the daily Vitamin C source most often (serve juice less often). When juice is used to meet Vitamin C requirements, offer juice that is naturally high in Vitamin C (such as 100% orange, pineapple, or a combination of 100% fruit juices). Minimize juice to one, 4 oz. serving per day. Serve water at snack time as a beverage instead of or along with juice.

You must serve food rich in Vitamin A, three or more times per week. Vitamin A plays a major role in the body. It helps promote good vision. Good sources of foods rich in Vitamin A include: apricots, cantaloupe, mango, mandarin oranges, peaches, broccoli, carrots, Bok Choi, greens (mustard, collard, Swiss chard, and kale), pumpkin, red bell peppers, spinach, sweet potatoes, tomato puree and paste, and winter squash.

Children and Food

The amount of food a child needs depends on the child's activity level, current weight and stature, growth spurts and appetite. The amount of food children eat may be influenced by hunger, appetite, food choices, mood and whatever else is happening in their lives. If a child fills up fast, making the child eat more may cause a negative association with eating.

Unless medically indicated, food may never be withheld from children during scheduled meal and snack times. It is better to limit the amount of foods with

high salt, high fat content, and sugar on the child care menu for all the children than to limit certain foods for specific children. By following the Washington State Meal Pattern found in the WACs and planning healthy meals and snacks you can offer foods that provide the optimal amount of nutrients for growth while helping to satisfy a child's appetite. When meals and snacks are served family style, children choose how much and what foods they eat. They can be reminded to take a reasonable portion size to ensure that everyone gets a serving and that seconds will be available later. This reassures the anxious child that there is more food to eat after the first helping has been eaten while establishing a guideline for what a reasonable portion size looks like.

If a child's eating behavior causes concern, talk to the child's parent to determine if they have concerns about the child's eating pattern. You can call a registered dietitian or a child care health consultant at the local health department for practical approaches to assessing and addressing a child's eating behavior.

Children consume food in varying amounts. Children may use food consumption to demonstrate independence. Making a fuss over a child not eating may increase this behavior.

Note: To help make mealtimes a pleasant social time for children, make sure that you sit down and eat with them (family-style). Encourage them to take small bites and short breaks while eating. Engage them in light conversation. Give them plenty of time.

Menu planning

Menu planning is as important to child care as other types of activity planning. Well-planned menus with a variety of nutritious foods will help to keep the children in your center healthy. As you plan your menus, you need to think about the:

- ◆ Ages of the children in your center
- ◆ Number of children you serve
- ◆ Ways you serve the food (family-style or individual servings)

- ◆ Ethnic mix of the children, and
- ◆ Available equipment and staff.

The menus you post can also:

- ◆ Educate parents about good nutrition
- ◆ Let parents know what their child is eating, and
- ◆ Give parents ideas about new foods to try at home. Children will often try foods at the center they would never eat at home.

You are required to post menus one week or more in advance, in places where parents can easily see them.

Menu rotation

Centers are required to utilize at least a two-week variety menu rotation. Variety is important to help children learn and grow. A minimum four-week cycle is recommended. This requirement does not mean you may only serve dry cereal once every two weeks. It means you cannot serve corn flakes, apple juice, and milk on Monday, again on Wednesday and once again on Friday. You could serve cold cereal on all those days but you need to vary the kind of cereal and the type of juice or fruit you offer.

Different colors, textures, shapes, and flavors can interest a child in food. It is a good idea to serve both finger foods and non-finger foods at the same meal. You can also mix cooked foods and raw foods in the same meal or snack. This is a good way to add different temperatures and chewing textures.

You must date menus and mark any changes that you make on the menu. Any changes you make must be nutritionally equal. For example, if oranges were your vitamin C food for the day, you would not be able to substitute bananas for oranges because bananas are not a source of vitamin C. You would have to choose another fruit high in vitamin C for the day such as kiwi or melon.

Note: For the safety and protection of the children in your care you must maintain at least a three day supply of food and water for emergency purposes based on the number of children in your center.

WAC 170-295-4020 states clear guidelines for infant feeding requirements. You must work closely with the parent to develop a plan for each infant's feedings. Refer to the feeding chart in Section 5, Care of Young Children, for more information on infant feeding guidelines.

The following page gives you examples of portion sizes that are required for different age groups. You can refer to this guide when planning your menus. Your local public health consultant or nutritionist can give you additional assistance in planning your menus.

The sample daily menus on the following pages are offered as examples to help you meet the minimum nutritional requirements for the children in your care. Some children may need more food than is listed. It is important that children are provided enough food to be satisfied.



Some children may need more food than is listed. It is important that children are provided enough food to be satisfied.

Types of Meals	Portion Size		
	Age 1-3	Age 3-6	Age 6-12
BREAKFAST			
1. Fruit or Juice/Vegetable	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup
2. Grain: Bread	1/2 slice	1/2 slice	1 slice
Cereal, hot or cold	1/4 cup	1/3 cup	3/4 cup
Pancakes, Waffles, Tortillas	1 (3 inch diameter)	1 (3 inch diameter)	2 (3 inch diameter)
3. Dairy: Milk	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Yogurt	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Cheese slice	3/4 oz.	3/4 oz.	1 oz.
LUNCH/SUPPER/DINNER			
1. Meat: Beef, Poultry, Fish, Pork	1 oz.	1 1/2 oz.	2 oz.
Meat Alternates:			
Beans, cooked (pinto, white, red, etc.)	1/4 cup	3/8 cup	1/2 cup
Nuts, Seeds	1/2 cup	3/4 oz.	1 oz.
Tofu	2 oz.	3 oz.	4 oz.
Egg	1	1	2
Cheese, cottage cheese	1 oz. (1/4 cup)	1 1/2 oz. (1/2 cup)	2 oz. (3/4 cup)
2. Vegetable and/or Fruit			
Fruit (2 or more)	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Vegetable (2 or more)	1/4 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Vegetable and fruit (one of each)	1/8 cup of each	1/4 cup of each	1/3 cup
3. Grain: Bread	1/2 slice	1/2 slice	1 slice
Cooked pasta/rice/noodles	1/4 cup	1/4 cup	1/2 cup
Corn Tortilla (6" diameter)	1/2 tortilla	1/2 tortilla	1 tortilla
Flour Tortilla or pita bread	1/3 piece	1/3 piece	2/3 piece
4. Dairy Products: Milk	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Yogurt	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Cheese	3/4 oz.	3/4 oz.	1 oz.
SNACKS			
1. Meat: Beef, Poultry, Fish, Pork	1/2 oz.	1/2 oz.	1 oz.
Meat Alternates:			
Peanut Butter	1 Tbsp	1 Tbsp	2 Tbsp
Beans, cooked (pinto, white, red, etc.)	1/8 cup or 2 Tbsp	1/8 cup or 2 Tbsp	1/4 cup
Nuts, Seeds	1/4 oz.	1/4 oz.	1/2 oz.
Tofu	1 oz.	1.5 oz.	2 oz.
Egg	1/2	1/2	1
Cheese, Cottage Cheese	1/2 oz. (1/8 cup)	1/2 oz. (1/8 cup)	1 oz. (1/4 cup)
2. Vegetable and/or Fruit	1/2 cup total	1/2 cup total	3/4 cup total
3. Grain: Bread	1/2 slice	1/2 slice	1 slice
Crackers	2 large, 4 small	2 large, 4 small	4 large, 8 small
Tortilla's/Pita Bread	1/2 - 1/3	1/2 - 1/3	1 - 2/3
4. Dairy Products: Milk	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Yogurt	1/2 cup	1/2 cup	3/4 cup
Cheese slice	3/4 oz.	3/4 oz.	1 oz.

Sample Menus

We include a few sample menus to help you plan. Not all the ideas will work for your program. Because of the many different kinds of center programs and facilities it is important to plan menus to fit your own needs. The portion sizes listed below are for a 3-6 year old child.

BREAKFAST

Raisin toast (½ slice)

Orange wedge-Vitamin C (¼ medium orange)

Milk (½ cup)

Cereal (¾ cup) Cheerios (less than 9 grams of sugar)

Banana slices (½ small)

Milk (½ cup)

Bran Muffin (1 small)

Mixed Berries-Vitamin C (mashed for 0-1 year olds)

Yogurt (½ cup)

LUNCH

English muffin (½) pizza, tomato paste-Vitamin A, and Turkey Sausage (1½ oz)

Red Cabbage Coleslaw-Vitamin C (¼ cup)

Canned peaches-Vitamin A (¼ cup)

Milk (½ cup)

Tuna (1½ oz) casserole with rainbow noodles (mix of whole wheat, spinach, carrot) (¼ cup)

Steamed broccoli-Vitamin A (¼ cup)

Apple wedge (¼ cup)

Milk (½ cup)

Bean (¼ cup) and cheese (1 oz) quesadilla (½)

Shredded lettuce and tomato bites (¼ cup total)

Kiwi Fruit-Vitamin C (¼ medium)

Milk (½ cup)

Black eye peas or lentils (¾ cup) with rice (¼ cup)

Corn bread (2" square)

Cooked greens-Vitamin A (¼ cup)

Honeydew melon-Vitamin C (¼ cup)

Milk (½ cup)

Tofu (1 ½ oz.) almond stir fry w/broccoli and Chinese cabbage-Vitamin A and C (¼ cup)

over rice (¼ cup)

Pineapple pieces (¼ cup)

Milk (½ cup)

Examples of Snacks

- Applesauce, pumpkin bread, water
- Strawberry (Vitamin C) and banana fruit cup, graham crackers
- Melon slice (Vitamin C), yogurt (mix ½ plain with ½ peach)
- Bran muffin, peaches (Vitamin A), water
- Banana chunks, pretzels, water
- Orange wedge (Vitamin C), mozzarella cheese, water
- Pita bread or Pita chips, cucumber slices, hummus dip, water
- Carrot/broccoli sticks (Vitamin A and C), mozzarella cheese, water (Vegetable sticks should be steamed for younger children)
- Whole wheat toast, cheese slices, water
- Fruit smoothies, bread sticks
- Tortilla chips, beans, dip and salsa, water

Food Programs

You may apply to a government food program that reimburses some of your costs for providing nutritious meals to children. The USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) is an example of a food program that has nutritional requirements that are different from current WAC (for example tofu is not reimbursable by USDA). USDA standards are part of your USDA information packet if you are on the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program.

Family-style eating

A good way to teach children about manners, foods, and nutrition is for staff to eat at the table with the children. Family-style eating gives children control over how much they want to eat. Eating a meal or snack together should be a happy social time. Talk to the children about their day. You and your staff serve as positive role models for the young children in your care. When children pass food around the table and serve themselves they are learning to share and communicate with each other. It also enhances hand-eye coordination and balancing skills.

Note: Remember that average serving sizes are just that – average. Some children may want to eat smaller portions or they may leave food on their plates. Other children will eat larger portions or want seconds.

During meal times it is important that you:

- ◆ Have enough food available
- ◆ Offer it in a positive way
- ◆ Provide nutritious and well-balanced meals
- ◆ Eat with the children
- ◆ Involve children in setting the table and clearing away eating utensils when finished
- ◆ Minimize waiting time (have the food ready when the children are ready to eat)
- ◆ Offer foods twice to each child (be sure to let them know it is okay to pass)
- ◆ Give children enough time to enjoy eating meals and snacks, and
- ◆ Have serving bowls and utensils that are age-appropriate.

Evening care

Some centers are open 18 hours a day to care for children whose parents work during the night. Use your judgment to decide which meals and snacks to serve based on the times of day they are in your care. Some children in evening care may arrive at 2:30 pm and stay until 11:30 pm. These children will arrive in time for the mid-afternoon snack, will be there for late afternoon snack, and will also need dinner.

You can use the lunch menu for dinner if the children were not present for lunch. If cooking extra food for dinner, be sure to cool and refrigerate it immediately. Family-style meals are encouraged.

Evening care regulations require you to serve a bedtime snack but this may depend on the age of the child. A toddler may eat a late afternoon snack at 4:30 or 5:00 pm and dinner at 6:30 or 7:00 pm and may not be awake for a bedtime snack two hours later. Many older preschool and school-aged children will need a bedtime snack because they will still be awake at 9:00 pm.

Special dietary concerns

Some children need to eat special foods or to follow a special diet. This may be due to an allergy or chronic disease such as diabetes. Foods with special textures may be necessary because a child is developmentally delayed. The disability could make it hard for the child to chew or even swallow.

Establishing guidelines for managing a child's special dietary needs will help keep the child safe and ensure that the child's nutritional needs are met. The plan should outline how the child care staff, the child's parent and the child (when developmentally appropriate) will address the need.

Individual Health Plan

In the case of food allergies, an individual health plan needs to address child care, family, and the child's responsibilities.

Child Care Responsibilities

- ◆ Discuss with the child's parent the current management plan of the allergy. You need to know what foods to avoid, procedures for using the Epi-Pen (if indicated) or other medication, and what to do in case of an emergency. Parents and the child's health care provider will need to complete and sign a Food Allergy Emergency Plan outlining the specific allergy, signs and symptoms of a reaction, how to prevent a reaction and an emergency plan in case a reaction occurs.
- ◆ Develop a training protocol that will ensure all new staff and volunteers know how to manage the child's allergy while in care, including prevention strategies and emergency response methods.
- ◆ Make changes when needed to comply with the child's food allergy management plan.

Family Responsibilities

- ◆ Discuss with the provider any reactions the child experiences at home or any changes in the child's health.
- ◆ Complete all forms in an accurate and timely manner.
- ◆ Meet with child care staff to explain specific needs and demonstrate how to use the Epi-Pen.
- ◆ Obtain approval of the plan by the health care provider.

Child's Responsibilities (preschool age and older)

- ◆ Do not share foods with other children.
- ◆ Know which foods to avoid and ask the adults when uncertain.
- ◆ Tell an adult immediately if an allergic reaction is suspected.

Contact your DEL health specialist or your local public health consultant for help in formalizing a food allergy management plan or other special dietary needs. A Food Allergy Statement and a Food Allergy Emergency Plan are included on the following pages for your convenience. Both forms must be signed by a health care provider.



Make changes when needed to comply with the child's food allergy management plan.

Food Allergy/Intolerance Statement

Name of Child _____ Birth Date _____

Name of Parent/Guardian _____ Phone _____
 Day/Evening _____

(Please print)

List each food separately	Check the medical condition	List appropriate substitute food(s)
	Food Intolerance <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Food Allergy <input type="checkbox"/> *Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Food Intolerance <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Food Allergy <input type="checkbox"/> *Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Food Intolerance <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Food Allergy <input type="checkbox"/> *Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Food Intolerance <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Food Allergy <input type="checkbox"/> *Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	
	Food Intolerance <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Food Allergy <input type="checkbox"/> *Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	

*** For A Food Allergy, Complete Child Care Emergency Plan for Food Allergic Response**

Health Care Practitioner _____

Signature of Practitioner _____ Date _____

Mailing Address (Print or type) _____ Phone _____

Please return to the child care program at the address listed below: _____

Child Care Emergency Plan for Food Allergic Reactions

ALLERGY TO: _____

Child's Name: _____ Birth Date: _____

Asthma Yes* No *High Risk for severe reaction

Signs of an allergic reaction	
Systems:	Symptoms:
MOUTH	itching & swelling of the lips, tongue, or mouth
THROAT	itching and/or a sense of tightness in the throat, hoarseness and hacking cough
SKIN	hives, itchy rash, and/or swelling about the face or extremities
GUT	nausea, abdominal cramps, vomiting, and/or diarrhea
LUNG	shortness of breath, repetitive coughing, and/or wheezing
HEART	"thready" pulse, "passing-out"

The severity of symptoms can quickly change. All the above symptoms can potentially be life-threatening.

ACTION FOR MINOR REACTION

If symptom(s) are: _____

Administer: _____
medication/dose/route

Then call: Parent/Guardian and Doctor

If condition does not improve within 10 minutes, follow steps for Severe Reaction below:

ACTION FOR SEVERE REACTION

If symptom(s) are: _____

Administer: _____ **IMMEDIATELY!**
Medication/dose/route

Call: 911 (Never hesitate to call 911)

Call: Parent or Guardian

Call: Doctor

Parent/guardian _____ phone: _____ cell phone: _____

Parent/guardian _____ phone: _____ cell phone: _____

Doctor _____ phone # _____

Parent/guardian signature _____ Date: _____

Doctor's signature (Required) _____ Date: _____

When the parents provide the meals or a treat

Many parents value centers that prepare hot meals on site. However, some programs do not have enough space or adequate facilities to prepare full meals. These centers ask parents to provide sack lunches. You must give parents providing sack lunches written information for packing a lunch that meets all of the nutrition requirements. Your center also must provide sufficient refrigeration for the food. Parents need to know of any food or nutrition policies you may have, such as a “peanut-free” policy or “no desserts or sweets in lunches.” Your parent handbook, newsletters and bulletin boards are useful ways to share this information.

Even when parents send the food, you should keep food supplies on hand in order to:

- ◆ Supplement the lunch of a child who does not bring enough from home
- ◆ Add to or replace snacks a parent brings if the snack is not nutritionally equal to the posted planned menu, and/or
- ◆ Feed children who forgot their lunch that day.

The lunches you provide to children who forget theirs can be simple. You could provide a sandwich, carrot sticks, apple wedge, and milk or water.

Sometimes parents bring a treat to celebrate a birthday or a special event with all of the children. Be sure that parents know in advance your treat policy and any food allergies children may have.

Note: Snacks provided by parents must be limited to uncut fruits and vegetables or prepackaged food in the original manufacturer's container.

Sack lunch food safety

Sack lunches may often contain foods that need to be kept hot or cold in order to be safe to eat. It is best to refrigerate sack lunches to minimize the risk of potential hazards. If it is not possible to refrigerate all sack lunches you can keep a tray for each

classroom in the refrigerator. When parents arrive, ask them to take out items needing refrigeration, label them with their child's name, and place them on a refrigerator tray. At lunchtime, staff can give the items to children along with the rest of their sack lunches.

Remind parents of potentially hazardous foods requiring safe food handling, such as any meat or meat alternate, cut melons, cooked rice or potato, sprouts, cooked beans, milk, yogurt, and cheese.

Child care programs may want to have a policy that states clearly that they cannot re-heat cooked items sent in a sack lunch. It may be difficult for staff to heat up several lunches while caring for children.

Note: Do not let children trade their food brought from home at lunchtime. With the increasing rate of food allergies, this can be a health concern. Advise parents that sharing of food between children is not allowed at meal or snack time.



Sometimes parents bring a treat to celebrate a birthday or a special event with all of the children.

Social aspects of meal and snack times

In general, mealtimes should be pleasant activities in which conversation and independence are encouraged. Adults should interact with children during meals, providing models of good nutrition habits. Infants are held during bottle feedings to encourage warm, affectionate interactions between child and caregiver. Never prop a bottle for an infant or allow a child to walk around with one.

When children are developmentally capable of eating table foods and do not require a highchair, they are ready to eat at a child-size table and chairs with other children and adults. Eating utensils, bowls and plates should be small, durable, and made of hard plastic (with smooth edges). When using disposable tableware use hard paper or medium weight plastic. Children should be seated when eating to minimize the risk of choking and to help them focus on eating. [AAP, 2002]

Promoting Healthy Eating Habits

One of the best ways to teach good eating habits is to model them. What you say and do matters. Avoid making faces or making negative comments about the foods. Encourage children to eat by eating the same foods yourself and talking about them in objective and descriptive ways; it's red, round, crunchy, juicy, tastes like a peach, grows on a tree, etc.

Never force a child to eat a new food or to eat the foods offered, and never punish a child for not trying a new food or eating the foods offered. Caregivers need to help children stay in touch with their own internal cues that indicate when they feel full or hungry. As an adult, you can interfere with these regulators when children's feelings about eating are not respected.

Gently encourage children to try a taste of every food. Do not force or punish anyone for not trying. You might try fixing the same food in a different way. It also might help to change the combination of foods you serve. Sometimes it helps to wait a few

weeks and try again. Exposing children to a variety of foods increases the chance that over the course of time they will begin to try new foods and learn to accept and enjoy new flavors and textures. If children are given only what they want they may miss important opportunities to develop healthy eating habits. [Satter, 2000]

New foods can be introduced as part of your lesson plan or curriculum. Prepare different cultural foods as part of your on-going menu, i.e., tortillas, jicama, hummus, pita bread, and eggplant. Conduct taste-testing of foods to compare colors, shapes, textures and flavors. Use foods to exemplify colors found in nature and seasonal changes.

Encourage children to drink water. It should always be available and offered throughout the day.

Note: *The Golden Rule for Feeding Young Children:*

- *Adults are responsible for what and where children are fed and*
- *Children are responsible for how much and whether they eat the foods that are offered.*

Culture and Foods

When planning snacks and meals, keep in mind the different ethnic backgrounds of the children in your center. If you are unfamiliar with foods from the different cultures, ask the parents about the kinds of food they serve at home.

You can have parent potluck dinners where each family brings a favorite dish. Create a recipe book of these favorite foods.

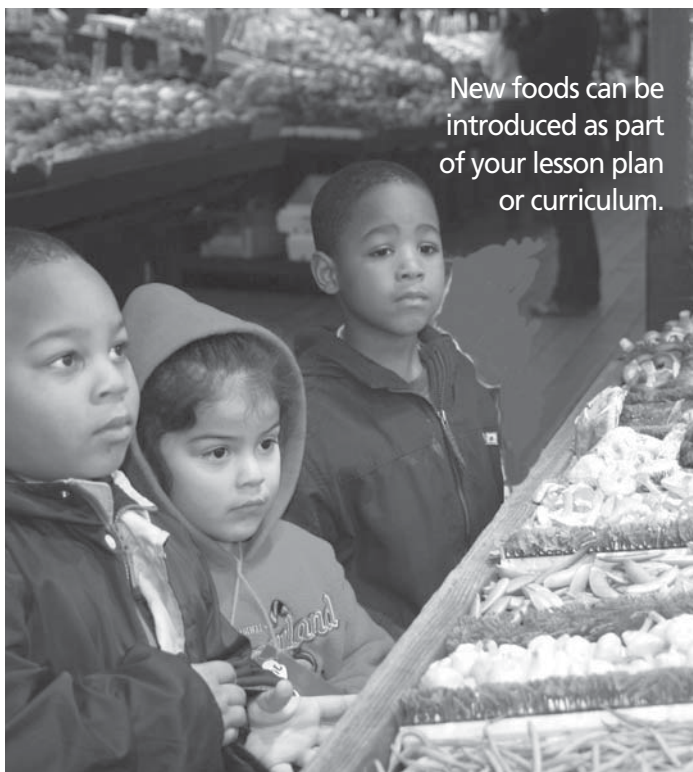
Invite parents to help prepare food. Always make sure that a staff person with a current food handler's card and knowledge about proper food handling helps prepare the food.

Prevent Choking

Young children can be at risk for choking on foods. Remember that:

- ◆ toddlers have limited control of their mouth muscles and lack the molars to grind up hard foods
- ◆ three- to four-year-olds lack chewing sophistication and are easily distracted while eating, and
- ◆ certain foods pose choking risks. Examples include nuts, seeds, whole grapes, hot dogs, hard candy, whole corn, popcorn, chips, tough meats and “sticky” foods such as peanut butter, processed cheese, marshmallows and fruit roll-ups.

Children can choke on any food and **MUST** be supervised while they are eating. Make sure children are seated to eat. Modify foods to be smaller or softer (dice melons into small pieces and steam broccoli and carrots). Discourage children from eating too fast or pocketing food. Remind parents of the hazards of feeding children in cars or on buses.



New foods can be introduced as part of your lesson plan or curriculum.

Kitchen and food service

WAC

WAC 170-295-3170

What are the food service standards I am required to meet?

You must maintain on site at least one person with a Washington State Department of Health food handler's permit to:

- Monitor and oversee food handling and service at the center, and
- Provide orientation and on going training as needed for all staff involved in food handling. Any one cooking full meals must have a food handler's permit.

WAC

Poor food preparation, handling, or storage can quickly result in food being contaminated with germs and may lead to illness if eaten. To prevent food from spreading illness you can do some very simple things. Food must be handled appropriately to ensure that the food will not cause a foodborne illness. Children are especially vulnerable to foodborne illnesses due to their smaller body size and their underdeveloped immune systems. It is critical that food safety be maintained in all areas of food storage and preparation.

Handwashing is the best way to prevent children and staff from getting a foodborne illness.

Note: Although the Washington State Department of Health has recently changed their requirement that cold food be stored at or below 41°F, it is still considered allowable to store food at 45°F. Since current WAC requires centers to keep cold food at or below 45°F, that temperature will be referred to throughout this guidebook. For best practice, however, keep cold foods at or below 41°F.

Procedures for food preparation and service

The following procedures will provide an overview on how to make the food in your center as safe as possible. For additional information, you can contact your DEL health specialist or licenser and obtain a copy of the Washington State Food and Beverage Service Worker's Manual from your local Health Department. These procedures for food preparation and service are to be used by cooks and other staff involved with food service.

Food Purchasing

- ◆ Check the use by, sell by or expiration date on foods before purchase.
- ◆ Meats and poultry must be inspected and passed for wholesomeness by federal or state inspectors.
- ◆ Keep packages of raw meat separate from other foods, particularly foods that are eaten fresh.
- ◆ Raw meat must be stored below other food in the refrigerator.
- ◆ Don't buy foods in poor condition. Make sure that refrigerated foods are cold to the touch and frozen food is rock-solid.
- ◆ Shop for meat, fish, poultry and cold food last. Take foods straight back to the center to the refrigerator; never leave food in a hot car.
- ◆ If using dry milk, it must be prepared in a clean container and refrigerated or used immediately.
- ◆ Do not use home-canned foods or food from dented, rusted, or bulging cans or cans without labels.

Food Storage

- ◆ Store all perishable foods at temperatures that will prevent spoilage (refrigerator temperature of 45°F or lower, freezer temperature of 10°F or lower).
- ◆ Place working thermometers in the warmest part of the refrigerator and freezer (near or in the door shelf) and check them daily.
- ◆ Set up refrigerators so that there is enough shelf space to allow for air circulation around shelves and refrigerator walls. This will help maintain proper food temperatures.

- ◆ Always examine food when it arrives to make sure it is not spoiled, dirty, or infested with insects.
- ◆ Store non-refrigerated foods in clean, rodent- and insect-proof, covered metal, glass, or hard plastic containers.
- ◆ Store containers of food above the floor (about 6") on racks or other clean slotted surfaces that permit air circulation.
- ◆ Keep store rooms clean, dry, and free from leaky plumbing or drainage problems. Repair all holes and cracks in storerooms to prevent insect and rodent infestation.
- ◆ Keep store rooms cool (about 60°F) to increase the food's shelf life.
- ◆ Store all food items separately from nonfood items.
- ◆ Use an inventory system: the first food stored is the first food used. This will ensure that stored food is rotated. Inspect food daily for spoilage.
- ◆ Pay close attention to the expiration dates, especially on foods that can spoil easily.
- ◆ All food that has been opened, or is not in its original package, must be stored in air-tight containers, labeled with the contents and the date it was opened. Also include the expiration date or freshness date that was on the original package.

Food Preparation and Handling

- ◆ Wash all raw fruits and vegetables before use. Wash tops of cans before opening.
- ◆ Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator or put quick-thaw foods in plastic bags under cold running water for immediate preparation. DO NOT thaw frozen foods by allowing them to stand at room temperature.
- ◆ Use a thermometer to check internal temperatures of the following foods to be sure they have been cooked evenly (refer to WAC 170-295-3190) and to a minimum internal temperature of:
 - Ground beef or pork sausage - 155°F
 - Pork - 150°F
 - Fish and seafood - 140°F
 - Poultry - 165°F
 - Stuffing - 165°F in a separate pan (do not cook stuffing inside poultry)

- Eggs - 140°F
- Beef (not ground) and lamb - 140°F
- ◆ Prepare these potentially hazardous foods as quickly as possible from chilled products, serve immediately, and refrigerate leftovers immediately:
 - Meat salads, poultry salads, egg salads, seafood salads, and potato salads
 - Cream-filled pastries, and
 - Other prepared foods containing milk, meat, poultry, fish, and/or eggs.
- ◆ Prevent the growth of bacteria by maintaining all potentially hazardous foods at temperatures lower than 45°F or higher than 140°F during transportation and while holding until served. Bacteria multiply most rapidly between 45°F and 140°F.
- ◆ Cover or completely wrap foods during transportation.
- ◆ Never re-use a spoon that has been used even once for tasting.
- ◆ Make sure each serving bowl has a spoon or other serving utensil.
- ◆ Reserve food for second serving times at safe temperatures in the kitchen.
- ◆ Any food that has been served to the children must be thrown away.
- ◆ Place foods to be stored for re-use in shallow pans and refrigerate or freeze immediately to bring temperature rapidly to 45°F or lower.
- ◆ Leftovers or prepared casseroles held in the refrigerator must be discarded after 2 days.
- ◆ Leftover foods should not be sent home with children or adults because of the hazards of bacterial growth during transport.
- ◆ Keep lunches (with perishable foods) brought from home in the refrigerator until lunch time.

Storage of Nonfood Supplies

- ◆ Store all cleaning supplies (including cleaning agents) and other poisonous materials in locked compartments or in compartments out of reach of children and separate from food, dishes, and utensils. They may not be stored above any areas where food is stored, prepared, or served.

- ◆ Store toxic materials (other than those needed for kitchen sanitation) in locked ventilated closets outside the kitchen area.
- ◆ Store insect and rodent poisons in locked compartments in an area apart from food or cleaning materials to avoid contamination or mistaken usage.
- ◆ Animal or insect bait should be boxed and stored separately and below food supplies to prevent possible contamination.
- ◆ Clearly label all containers of poisonous material as poison and include information on appropriate antidotes.

Cleaning and Care of Equipment

- ◆ Cracked and worn equipment or utensils may harbor bacteria. Throw them away. Avoid utensils with chipped or painted handles.
- ◆ Wash and sanitize dishes and food utensils using an approved method.
- ◆ Wash equipment frequently:
 - Clean range tops during food preparation as needed and on a daily basis
 - Clean ovens and overhead hoods at least weekly or more often when needed
 - Clean and sanitize the inside and outside of refrigerators weekly with a bleach solution (defrost when ice is ¼" thick), and
 - Clean and sanitize tables with the bleach solution before and after each meal.
- ◆ Set up a cleaning schedule to prevent contamination of food as follows:
 - Wet mop floors daily, scrub as needed
 - Clean and sanitize food preparation surfaces between preparation of different food items (e.g. meat and salad) and between different meats (e.g. pork and chicken)
 - Clean and sanitize cutting boards after cutting any single meat, fish, or poultry item (use only hard, non-toxic, non-wood boards that are free of cracks, crevices, and open seams)
 - Clean and sanitize can openers daily, and
 - Clean and sanitize utensils between uses on different food items.

- ◆ Special notes:
 - Air dry all food contact surfaces after cleaning and sanitizing
 - Do not use wiping cloths or sponges (use single use paper towels instead)
 - Make sure no food contact surfaces are made of cadmium, lead, zinc, granite enamelware, or other toxic materials
 - Do not use cyanide to polish or clean silver, and
 - Be sure that there are sufficient garbage cans to hold all garbage. These cans must have tight-fitting lids and be leak-proof. Line garbage cans with plastic liners and empty and clean the cans frequently. Keep the garbage area clean at all times. Hands-free garbage cans are recommended.



WAC

WAC 170-295-3180

What are approved food sources?

You must:

- Prepare or serve food that is not tampered with or spoiled and is obtained from an approved source including, but not limited to, a licensed caterer, a food service company or a grocery store. Food sources that are not approved include:
 - Leftover food previously served from outside your center
 - Home canned, frozen or prepared food unless it is for the person's own children
 - Donated food from restaurants or caterers that was previously served
 - Game meat that has not been inspected by the USDA, and
 - Donated meat, fish, poultry or milk that is not from a source inspected for sale.
- Prepare all food unless it is provided by a:
 - Licensed satellite kitchen, catering kitchen or other source licensed by the local health jurisdiction, or
 - Parent for individual children.
- Have a signed contract or agreement with any satellite kitchen or the catering service that you use. Your contract must include written proof that the caterer and the method of transporting the food are approved by the local health jurisdiction as meeting the requirements of the department of health, chapter 246-215 WAC.
- Have a written policy if you use a satellite kitchen that describes:
 - How food will be handled once it is on-site, and
 - What back-up system you will use if the food does not arrive, not enough food arrives, or the food cannot be served.

When meals are catered

Some centers may rely upon a catering service to provide food for meals and snacks. In this case special guidelines have been developed. The catering service must be approved and inspected by the local health authority to assure their foods are safely prepared and transported. Centers accepting catered foods must have a policy describing how food is handled once it arrives. The policy must include a back-up system in case food does not arrive, not enough food arrives, or food arrives that cannot be safely served.

A model policy for catered foods includes:

- ◆ A designated person who is responsible for accepting the food upon arrival
- ◆ How to properly check temperatures with a food thermometer at time of delivery
- ◆ How to record temperatures in a log that is signed by the person responsible for accepting delivery of the food, and
- ◆ What to do if food is not at proper temperature (below 140°F for hot food and above 45°F for cold food) upon arrival.

WAC

WAC 170-295-3190

How can we be sure that the food we serve is safe?

You must develop and implement a system to monitor the temperature of potentially hazardous foods during cooking, re-heating, cooling, storing, and hot and cold holding temperatures to be sure that:

- Food will be cooked to at least the minimum correct internal temperature:
 - Ground beef and pork sausage 155 degrees Fahrenheit
 - Pork 150 degrees Fahrenheit
 - Fish and seafood 140 degrees Fahrenheit
 - Poultry and stuffing 165 degrees Fahrenheit
 - Eggs 140 degrees Fahrenheit
 - Beef (not ground) and lamb 140 degrees Fahrenheit.

- Previously prepared food is reheated one time only to an internal temperature of 165 degrees Fahrenheit within sixty minutes
- Hot food is kept at a temperature of 140 degrees Fahrenheit or above until served
- Cold food is kept at a temperature of 45 degrees Fahrenheit or less
- Refrigerators have a thermometer in or near the door and are kept at 45 degrees Fahrenheit or less, and
- Freezers have a thermometer in or near the door and are kept at 10 degrees Fahrenheit or less.

You must develop a system to record the temperature of each perishable food once it arrives from a satellite kitchen or a catering service. The system must include keeping records on site for six months with the following information:

- The name and temperature of the food
- The date and time the temperature was checked, and
- The name and signature or recognized initials of the person who is checking and recording the food temperatures.

You may serve previously prepared food that has not been previously served if it was stored at the proper temperature for less than forty-eight hours after preparation. Leftover foods or open foods in the refrigerator must be labeled with the date that they were opened or cooked.

WAC

Sometimes when children seem to have the flu it is really a foodborne illness. Young children are more at risk when they get sick because they can dehydrate quickly from diarrhea and vomiting more easily than adults.


Cooking and storing foods at incorrect temperatures are major contributing factors to foodborne illnesses. Thorough cooking, consistent hot holding, proper cooling and cold storage and complete reheating of foods are all critical steps to prevent bacterial contamination in foods. Important numbers to remember for safe holding temperatures are:

- ◆ 45°F or cooler and
- ◆ 140°F or hotter.

The temperature range between 45°F and 140°F is called the “Danger Zone.” It is dangerous because at these temperatures bacteria will grow very rapidly in food. Bacteria will also grow quickly on potentially hazardous foods. These are foods that are moist and high in protein such as meats, dairy foods, and eggs. The warmer and moister the food, the faster bacteria can grow. That is why there is such a concern about foods sitting at room temperature or warmer.

To ensure hot foods are kept hot at 140°F or higher, it is very important to have a metal stem thermometer available in the kitchen to check the internal temperature of the food. Remember, potentially hazardous foods must be kept out of the danger zone. Metal stem thermometers should be cleaned and sanitized between uses to prevent the risk of cross contamination.

Licensing requires you to have at least one person with a Washington State Department of Health food handler’s card on-site. This is most often the person cooking full meals. Someone with a current food handler’s card (can be someone different than the person cooking full meals) is responsible for providing orientation and annual training for all staff who handle food. You must document this training and keep it in staff files.

 **Best Practice:** All staff preparing, handling, and serving food maintain a current food handler’s card. This includes all teachers and caregivers who serve children food and snacks.

WAC

WAC 170-295-3200

How do we safely store food?

You must store food:

- In the original containers or in clean, labeled containers that are airtight and off the floor
- In a manner that prevents contamination from other sources
- In an area separate from toxic materials such as cleaning supplies, paint, or pesticides
- That is not past the manufacturer’s expiration or freshness date
- In a refrigerator or freezer if cooking is required
- Raw meat, poultry or fish kept in the refrigerator must be stored below cooked or ready to eat foods
- Foods not requiring refrigeration must be kept at least six inches above the floor in a clean, dry, ventilated storeroom or other areas, and
- Dry bulk foods not in their original containers, in containers with tight fitting covers. Containers must be labeled and dated.

WAC

It is always best to prepare cooked foods right before mealtimes rather than to cook them ahead of time and reheat them. However, if storing leftovers for re-serving, you will need to cool the food down as quickly as possible to 45°F by using one the following procedures:

- ◆ Leave uncovered, and refrigerate solid food such as turkey or ham, cut up into small pieces
- ◆ Reduce level of food to 2 inches in the container, leave uncovered, and refrigerate foods that are thick but not solid, or
- ◆ Place containers of thin foods such as soup or broth into a sink filled with ice and water, stir often, and leave product in ice water.

Once the required cold holding temperature of 45°F or lower is reached, the container of food can then be covered, labeled with the preparation date and refrigerated. Food should be used within 48 hours.

In most cases, once food leaves the kitchen and is served, you cannot return it and serve it again. In order to avoid throwing milk out, measure it for each table and pour it into small containers.

WAC

WAC 170-295-3210**How do we safely thaw food?**

You must thaw food by using one of the following methods:

- In a refrigerator
- Under cool running water, in a pan placed in a sink with the stopper removed
- In a microwave, if the food is to be cooked immediately, or
- As part of the continuous cooking process.

WAC

Most cases of food poisoning happen when someone does not properly store or reheat cooked foods. Incorrect thawing can also create problems.

WAC

WAC 170-295-3220**What type of kitchen material and equipment are required?**

You need to have the following equipment to cook and serve meals without restrictions on the type of menus or foods that you can cook, serve or store:

- Kitchen walls, counter tops, floors, cabinets and shelves that are:
 - Maintained in good repair to include being properly sealed without chips or cracks
 - Moisture resistant, and
 - Maintained in a clean and sanitary condition.
- A range with a properly vented hood or exhaust fan, except when serving only snacks
- A refrigerator, freezer or a combination refrigerator with sufficient space for proper storage and cooling of food
- Handwashing facilities located in or adjacent to the food preparation area with hand washing procedures posted at each sink used for handwashing and followed by all persons who participate in food preparation.
- A method to clean and sanitize equipment using:
 - A two compartment sink and an automatic dishwasher capable of reaching a temperature of 140 degrees Fahrenheit, or

- The means to appropriately clean and sanitize dishes and utensils through the use of a three compartment sink method where sink one is used to wash, sink two is used to rinse, and sink three contains a sanitizing ingredient.
- You may use a microwave oven to reheat foods if the food is:
 - Rotated or stirred during heating
 - Covered to retain moisture, and
 - Held for two minutes prior to serving to allow the temperature to spread evenly throughout the food.

WAC

Cleaning dishes

You must clean and sanitize dishes after every use. If you use a dishwasher, the temperature must reach 140°F. This will kill germs. If your dishwasher has a “sani-cycle,” the final rinse water should heat to this temperature. You can check your owner’s manual to be sure. You can also contact your DEL health specialist or public health consultant for assistance.

If staff does dishes by hand, you will need to follow a three-step method to wash and sanitize the dishes. Human hands cannot take the 140°F water temperature so you must use bleach.

Three-Step Method to Clean and Sanitize

Scrape food from dishes into a garbage container.

Step 1: Wash dishes with hot soapy water.

Step 2: Rinse dishes with clean warm water.

Step 3: Submerge dishes in a bleach solution (1 teaspoon bleach per gallon of cool water) for two minutes.

Allow the dishes to air dry.

The best way to do the three-step method is with a three compartment sink. Remember WASH, RINSE, and SANITIZE. You must AIR DRY all dishes, utensils, tableware and pots and pans.

You should have two cutting boards. Use one cutting board for raw meats and poultry only. Use the other for fruits, vegetables, and cooked foods. This