

Children's Circle Daycare Society Food Policy



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Introduction

Promoting children's health is an important aspect of quality childcare. Children's Circle Daycare Society provides all of our children's snacks and meals while they are in care. We recognize the important connection between a healthy diet and a child's ability to participate and learn effectively. The Board also recognizes Children's Circle Daycare Society's role, as part of the larger community, to promote family health, and where possible, sustainable agriculture and environmental restoration. Children's Circle Daycare Society recognizes that the sharing of food is a fundamental experience for all people; a primary way to nurture and celebrate our children in all their personal and cultural diversity, and an excellent bridge for building friendships and emotional competencies.

Breastfeeding

Children's Circle Daycare Society actively supports a family's right to breastfeed their children while in our care. Measures taken to enable breastfeeding include:

- Proper handling and storage of bottled breast milk.
- Providing a comfortable and discreet space for mothers to breastfeed at each centre.

Allergies

Food allergies are becoming more common among infants and young children. Allergic reactions can range from mild skin rashes to severe, life-threatening reactions with breathing difficulties. It is important to reduce the likelihood that these reactions will take place while the child is at childcare.

Procedures and Practices

The following procedures and practices will be followed with respect to allergies:

- No nuts or products containing nuts will be served at Children's Circle Daycare Society.

When children with food allergies register at Children's Circle Daycare Society, parents will be provided with the Food Allergy Action Plan to be filled out by the child's parent/guardian. (Attached in Appendix 1) This action plan must be filled out and returned to Children's Circle Daycare Society before the child begins our program.

Based on the child's Food Allergy Action Plan, caregivers will put into practice:

- Preventing exposure to specific food(s) that trigger an allergic reaction.
- Recognizing the symptoms of an allergic reaction.
- Treating an allergic reaction.

Parents and staff will:

- Ensure the childcare setting has the appropriate medication on site (if necessary).
- Ensure proper storage of medication.
- Ensure the proper equipment and training is in place to use while the child is in childcare.

Children's Circle Daycare Society will:

- Promptly take steps outlined in the Action Plan if a reaction occurs.
- Notify emergency medical personnel if warranted, or if epinephrine has been given.
- Notify parents of any allergic reaction or possible contact with food that may cause an allergic reaction.

An individual child's food allergies will be posted prominently in classrooms and/or wherever food is prepared (care will be given to confidentiality issues). A child's Allergy Action Plan and medication will be taken on field trips, including neighbourhood walks.

Communication with Families

The partnership and involvement of parents with Children's Circle Daycare Society is important to promote healthy eating. At Children's Circle Daycare Society, we will:

- Email and post monthly menus.
- When time permits, we will also engage in other communication activities.

Nutrition

Children's Circle Daycare Society follows the Canada Food Guide when planning monthly menus. Meal planning encompasses all food groups and will incorporate at least half the daily recommended serving based on age.

Vegetables and Fruit

Vegetables and fruit are a source of fibre, vitamins A and C, potassium, magnesium and some B vitamins. As such, they are served daily. Every effort is made to serve fresh vegetables, either raw or incorporated into daily cooking. Frozen vegetables are preferred to canned, and seasonal BC fruits and vegetables are preferred over imported fruits and vegetables.

Pesticides and Organic Foods

Children's Circle Daycare Society is aware of the issues of pesticides on fruits and vegetables. We minimize exposure to fruits and vegetables cited as containing the greatest amounts of residual pesticides and offer fruit and vegetable alternatives which share similar nutrient profiles (See Appendix 2 for details).

Grain Products

Grain products provide fibre, B vitamins and iron. Eighty percent of all grain products served at Children's Circle Daycare Society are made from whole grains and follow the guidelines listed below:

- Breakfast Cereals – Will contain "whole grains" as a first ingredient, at least 5 grams of fibre, no more than 6 grams of sugar (excluding sugar from dried fruit), and no more than 240 milligrams of sodium per serving.
- Sliced Bread – Will be made of 100% whole grains (whole rye, rye meal, whole spelt, and whole grain wheat including the germ indicate whole grain flours), with at least 2 grams of fibre and no more than 200 milligrams of sodium per slice.

- Crackers – Whenever possible, crackers will be made of 100% whole grains (whole rye, rye meal, oats, whole spelt, and whole grain wheat including the germ indicate whole grain flours), with 3 grams of fibre, and no more than 240 milligrams of sodium per serving.
- Pasta – Whole wheat or high fibre pasta will be served.

Milk and Alternatives

Milk and milk alternatives provide protein, vitamins A and D, calcium, phosphorous and magnesium. Whole milk will be served to children 2 years of age or younger, and skim milk to those children over the age of 2.

Meat and Alternatives

Meat and alternatives are a source of protein, iron, B vitamins, and zinc.

- Meat – Children’s Circle Daycare Society acknowledges that up to 30 or 40% of a child’s nutrition may be coming from our food program. In the event fish is served at Children’s Circle Daycare Society, we will follow the guidelines set forth by SeaChoice. (See Appendix 2 – Nutrition)
- Alternatives – Children’s Circle Daycare Society is committed to serving meat alternatives in the form of tofu, eggs, and legumes.

Liquids

Milk and/or water will be served at each meal. No other liquids will be served. Access to water will be constant, and older children, capable of serving themselves, will be equipped to do so with fresh water and cups provided at a height which provides accessibility. Children will be reminded often to drink.

Sugars

In an effort to avoid refined sugars, yogurt or fruit puree will replace maple flavoured syrups.

Banned and Avoided Foods

- All nuts and nut products, as well as processed foods which may contain nuts are banned from the premises of Children’s Circle Daycare Society (See Allergies on Page 2 above).
- Processed foods containing nitrates as additives, such as some sandwich meats, bacon, and hotdogs are avoided at Children’s Circle Daycare Society as there is controversy over their impacts on children’s health in certain doses. These items may still be served, but only rarely. This is based on a precautionary principle and we await further study on the subject.
- No trans fats or burned food will be served.

Education

Programming

As part of a well rounded approach to food and eating, Children's Circle Daycare Society will incorporate educational opportunities related to nutrition and healthy eating habits into our routines.

We will promote a healthy outlook on food and nutrition through the following strategies:

- Planting a garden, harvesting the vegetables, and incorporating the produce into meals.
- Supporting and encouraging children to help prepare the eating area, assist with serving the meal, and cleaning up when finished.
- Offering a variety of foods and allowing children to make some choices when appropriate.
- Promoting inclusive and respectful conversation around the meal table.
- Making a snack or meal together as a group.

Continuing Education

All cooking staff at Children's Circle Daycare Society are certified in Food Safe. We are committed to furthering the education of our Cooks and will assist in providing opportunities for continuing education.

Implementation of the Food Policy

Staff members will be given a copy of the policy. Parents will be informed via email as to any changes to the food policy. The policy will also be available on our website. Site managers will inform new staff and new families; as well as visitors as is appropriate.

Monitoring and Review

The policy will be reviewed annually by the Board of Directors, Managers and staff, and revised if necessary.

Appendix 2 – Nutrition

Foods with a Low Pesticide Occurrence

Asparagus	Kiwi
Avocados	Mangoes
Bananas	Onions
Broccoli	Papaya
Cauliflower	Pineapples
Corn	Sweet Peas

Foods with a High Pesticide Occurrence

<i>Fruit or Vegetable</i>	<i>Main Benefits</i>	<i>Healthy Alternatives</i>
Celery	Fibres, potassium, vitamin B6, vitamin C, molybdenum, and manganese Carotenoids	Carrots, broccoli, radishes, romaine lettuce
Peaches	Vitamins A and C	Watermelon, oranges, grapefruit
Apples	Fibre and vitamin C	Watermelon, bananas, tangerines
Cherries	High levels of Vitamin A and C, fibre and healthy, natural sugar	Oranges, blueberries, kiwi, blackberries, grapefruit
Spinach	Niacin, zinc, fibre, vitamins A and C	Broccoli, Brussels sprouts, asparagus
Bell Peppers	Contain many vitamins, hard to replace	Green peas, broccoli, romaine lettuce
Apricots	Vitamins A and C, potassium	Watermelon, oranges, tangerines
Cantaloupe (Mexican)	High concentration of dietary fibre, vitamin B6 and B3, potassium, as well as vitamins A and C	Local cantaloupe grown from May to December, watermelon
Green Beans	Good source of vitamin C and K, and potassium	Green peas, broccoli, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, asparagus

Other Foods with a High Pesticide Occurrence

Nectarines	Pears
Strawberries	Imported Grapes
Potatoes	Red Raspberries

Links

SeaChoice Seafood Sustainability
<http://www.seachoice.org/profile/redult?rating=1>

Canada's Food Guide Website
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>