

## **Food Allergy Policy**

### **Barrie Policy for students with severe, life threatening food allergies, requiring an epi-pen.**

Food allergies are a serious medical condition affecting up to 15 million people in the United States, including 1 in 13 children (foodallergy.org). Allergic reactions to food can affect the skin, gastrointestinal, respiratory tract and in serious cases, the cardiovascular system. Food reactions range from mild to severe, including anaphylaxis, a potentially life threatening condition. The most common food allergens are peanuts, tree nuts, milk, egg, wheat, soy, fish and shellfish, however any food is can trigger a food allergy.

Health and safety are top priority at Barrie, and we take food allergies seriously. We train our staff how to recognize and respond to food allergies, anaphylaxis how to use epi-pens in the event of an anaphylactic emergency. In addition, all teachers are trained in basic-first aid and CPR. Our policy regarding food allergies is to maximize safety for the students with allergies while minimizing social exclusion.

Barrie's programs are "nut and allergy aware". We do not exclude nuts or other foods packed in individual lunches that is not intended for sharing. However, as a general rule, we ask parents not to provide nut containing products in food items provided to the classroom in birthday treats, celebrations and events, in efforts to minimize exposure to those with known and unknown nut allergies.

#### Seating

Children with food allergies sit at a table designated in the classroom by teachers and staff, that is "allergy free". The child may sit with other children that are not eating the foods to which the child has an allergy. For example, a child eating a peanut butter and jelly sandwich will not be placed with the child who has the peanut allergy. The children eating the ham sandwich may sit at the allergy table next to the child with the peanut allergy. This allows for social inclusion while minimizing allergen exposure to the child with food allergies.

Children will be encouraged to rotate to foster inclusion of the child with allergies, given they are not eating foods that may be considered "unsafe" for the child with allergies.

#### Parties and Treats

As a policy, we do not support the children with food allergies to eat any processed or baked foods brought in by other families, such as crackers, birthday treats, cupcakes, etc. We are unable to guarantee the safety of these prepared/processed foods as many are "produced in a facility with nuts, egg, wheat, etc...."

This does not include fresh fruits and vegetables (unless there is a child with food allergies to these foods). We encourage families to provide treats such as cupcakes, crackers, etc., that are considered allergy safe foods for the child with food allergies. Allergen free crackers, treats and cupcakes can be stored in a designated peanut free pantry or freezer, and can be distributed as needed. Parents are welcome to attend birthday events and monitor the children eating cupcakes, treats, and processed foods brought in by others. However, without parental supervision, the child with allergies is required to eat the snacks and treats provided by the parents to best ensure safety. *No exceptions will be made to this policy.*

### Food preparation

Food preparation is part of the curriculum at Barrie School, and teachers will prepare foods that are considered safe for all students in the classroom. Teachers will not introduce foods that contain a student's allergen to the food prep area.

### School Celebrations

During school celebrations, we encourage collaboration between the teacher and the families to have classroom prepared meals that are inclusive and considered safe for all students. Typically, parents are in attendance during potlucks and special events, such as International Day, and can serve as the monitor of food allergens for their own child. However, if a parent is not in attendance for special events, the child with the food allergy must eat foods that are prepared at home.

### Pizza Day and Snack

Each family will be notified at the start of the school year or camp season regarding pizza days and Barrie-organized snacks, and can opt in or opt out of these foods. Barrie makes every effort possible to provide healthy, allergen free snacks to the Toddler and Primary children (elementary children can bring their own snack).

### Other

A child who has a documented food allergy who has out grown the allergy must provide a written clearance from a medical provider if it is considered safe to eat certain foods again. For example, a child with a history of a milk allergy must provide a doctor-signed document stating it is safe for the child to ingest dairy products.

Our policy regarding food allergies is for documented, severe, life threatening allergies/anaphylaxis. There will be no accommodations for food preferences or intolerances. It is the parent's responsibility to provide all preferred foods.

It is top priority for Barrie to keep all children safe while ensuring inclusiveness. Thank you for working with us to ensure these goals.