

FOOD SERVICE IN CHILD CARE FACILITIES

Nutrition and food safety play an important role in creating a safe and healthy child care setting. Interior Health is committed to assist facilities in creating environments and activities where children are supported to become healthy eaters.

Nutrition

Establishing healthy eating habits in young children is important because these habits form the basis for lifelong healthy eating. This is true whether it is you, as a care provider, or parents that are providing the food. Offer fresh healthy foods if your facility has the capacity and interest to supply meals or snacks; if not, provide parents with clear information on providing healthy and safe food.

Teaching children about healthy eating is best done by modeling healthy eating and offering hands-on opportunities to explore and taste food. Even if a facility does not provide meals or snacks, regular opportunities to explore and learn using food are still encouraged. The *Food Flair* manual, available on the Interior Health website, is full of exciting learning activities for young children and is a valuable resource for food and nutrition in licensed child care.

Food Safety

Food safety and quality are important considerations in the operation of a child care facility. Young children are more likely to get food borne illnesses than healthy adults.

- Good personal hygiene and food handling practices should be followed at all times in any facility.
- Choose food from approved food sources. Store, prepare and serve products using proper procedures, including good sanitation and hygiene practices.
- Ensure staff members receive the proper food safety training.

The *BC Food Premises Regulation* governs the approval and operation of food facilities. Those facilities licensed for nine or more children preparing food or offering food activities should review the list below and consult with an environmental health officer (EHO) regarding the requirements. An EHO will determine if your facility requires a permit to operate a food service establishment.

- Note - A variety of lower risk healthy foods may be offered without the need for an approval by an EHO, see Table 1.

Facilities who wish to apply for environmental health approval or permit can access additional resources on the Interior Health website.

TABLE I: NO FOOD PERMIT REQUIRED

EXEMPT FROM <i>BC FOOD PREMISES REGULATION</i> APPROVAL PROCESS
<p>Requirements: Child care licensees should ensure that proper care is taken in all food handling and sanitation to prevent causing a health hazard. Licensees must also promote healthy eating and nutritional habits.</p> <p>Recommended Training courses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FOODSAFE Level I certification• Caring About Food Safety online course
LOW RISK FOOD AND / OR MINIMAL PREPARATION
<p>Food examples:</p> <p>Commercially prepared products from approved sources. These may be dispensed from larger containers to individual dishes/cups for immediate service – no additional preparation.</p> <p>Most whole or sliced fresh fruits and vegetables ** (see exclusions below) may be prepared on site. (See Health File - Food Safety for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables)</p> <p>Canned fruit*</p> <p>Fruit sauces (e.g. applesauce)*</p> <p>Frozen fruit*</p> <p>Dried fruit (commercially prepared or prepared onsite)</p> <p>Fruit and vegetable 100% juice (pasteurized)*</p> <p>Milk*, soy beverages*</p> <p>Hard cheese*, cheese strings*, yogurt*</p> <p>Bread, buns, tortillas, muffins, pancakes</p> <p>Dry cereal, crackers</p> <p>Instant oatmeal individual packages*</p> <p>Nuts, seeds, and shelf stable nut butters* (does not require refrigeration after opening)</p> <p>Sandwiches made from nut butter/hard cheeses* and vegetables</p> <p>Hummus*, salsa dips* (dispense into small portions, as required)</p> <p>Prepared condiments*: (e.g. pasteurized honey**, jam, ketchup, mustard, butter, soft non-hydrogenated margarine, salad dressing, cream cheese, etc.)</p> <p>Other</p> <p>Heating of bottled milk* or infant formula*</p> <p>Catered foods from permitted premises.</p> <p>Baking on site of low hazard grain products (e.g. cookies, muffins, biscuits, bread, etc.). No cream fillings.</p>

*Commercially prepared only.

**Exclusions – these should not be served due to higher risk:

- cantaloupe or raw seed sprouts should not be served to children under age two.
- honey should not be served to children under one year of age.

TABLE 2

APPROVAL PROCESSES REQUIRED <i>Consult your local EHO for specific information</i>	
<p>Requirements: Completed application form, floor plan, and listing of foods offered. All licensees should orient and train staff regarding proper food handling and sanitation practices specific to their facility.</p>	
Column 1 INCREASING FOOD RISK	Column 2 HIGHER RISK FOOD AND/OR HIGHER RISK PROCESS
<p><i>These foods must be consumed as soon as they are prepared and leftovers discarded. Children must eat from individual plates/bowls, not directly from the serving tray or bowl. Do not send leftovers home with the children.</i></p>	<p>Additional Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Written Food Safety and Sanitation plans • Food Permit
<p>Education: Operator should have FOODSAFE Level I certification or equivalent</p>	<p>Education: Operator <u>must</u> have FOODSAFE Level I certification or equivalent</p>
<p>Food examples: Cooked apple sauce (prepared on site) Fresh squeezed vegetable or fruit juices Cooked fresh or frozen vegetables (no leftovers) Cooked grains, beans/lentils, plain single grains (from dry), including oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat couscous, quinoa, barley, bulgur, plain pasta (no leftovers) Baked fries prepared on-site from whole yams/potatoes (no leftovers) Hard boiled eggs (no cracks) Vegetable soup (no leftovers) Vegetarian pizza Hummus (from scratch) Fresh salsa (no cooking) Green salad (vegetables only) Dips made from yogurt/sour cream Fruits Smoothies</p>	<p>Food examples: All meat, poultry, and fish products Cooked eggs (except hard boiled) Cooked grains, including oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat couscous, quinoa, barley, bulgur, plain pasta, beans/lentils from dry or canned (leftovers permitted) Tofu Cooked vegetables, tomato sauce, baked fries (leftovers permitted) Mixed dishes with ingredients from this column (e.g. stews, casseroles, pasta dishes, chili) Soup (with leftovers) Sandwiches made from ingredients from this column Meat pizza Pasteurized soft cheeses (Camembert, Brie, feta) Cooked puddings and custards (served cold) Home canning can be a higher risk practice and is prohibited.</p>

Food Safety Resources:

Interior Health, Environmental Health and Community Care Facilities Licensing page
<http://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment>

Public Health Act, Food Premises Regulation
<http://www.bclaws.ca>

BC Centre for Disease Control:
<http://www.bccdc.ca>

- Food and Your Health page
- Writing Your Own Food Safety Plan (*when a food permit is required*)

BC Health Files:
<http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/>

- Food Safety in Child Care Facilities
- Food Safety for Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
- Foods to Avoid for People at Risk of Food-Borne Illness
- Ten Easy Steps to Make Food Safe

FOODSAFE
<http://www.FOODSAFE.ca/>

Caring About Food Safety
<http://www.health.gov.bc.ca>

Licensing and Nutrition Resources:

Interior Health, Child Care Facilities page
<http://www.interiorhealth.ca/YourEnvironment/ChildCareFacilities/Pages/default.aspx>

- Nutrition resources specific to child care and links to information about feeding young children
- Food Flair Manual

Food Flair training materials and activity cards
<http://decoda.ca>

School Meal and School Nutrition Program Handbook
<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca>

Health Canada Eating
<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca>

- Well with Canada's Food Guide
- Nutrition Label Reading – online tools and information

Dietitian Services at Health Link BC. Email or call a dietitian. Dial 8-1-1 toll free.
<http://www.healthlinkbc.ca>