

Food Service

Meals and good nutrition are an important part of your child's day both at home and at Head Start. A food service company that delivers to us daily provides our meals. **To protect our children who have very serious food allergies, children are not allowed to bring food from home.** For children who attend a morning session, we provide breakfast and lunch; children who attend an afternoon session receive lunch and a snack.

All of our meals meet USDA nutritional requirements for pre-school children. We do not serve any pork products, foods that contain peanuts or nuts, or hot dogs. If your child has a physician diagnosed allergy to a food, the Health Coordinator must be contacted at (410) 313-6582; milk alternatives (soy, rice, etc.) can be provided at no cost to the parent if we have a note from the child's physician.

Your child will bring a menu home each week which details meals that will be served the next week. We understand that many young children are "picky" eaters so no child is forced to eat; however, teachers do encourage the children to try a bite of each food at every meal. (If your child does not eat certain foods for religious reasons, the teacher will not encourage the child to eat that food.) Quite often children will enjoy a food that they usually refuse at home when all of the other children at the table are eating it! All meals are served family style and the children are taught to set the table, serve themselves, pass food, and clean-up as part of the mealtime experience. Teachers closely monitor each child's eating habits and will contact you if there are any concerns.

Because we have several children who have life-threatening allergies to nuts or peanuts, we must request that you not send treats (for birthdays, holidays, etc.) to school that contain nuts. Many times we can be unaware of products that contain nuts; in fact, regular M&Ms have peanuts listed on their ingredient label even though most people would assume that plain M&Ms are nut-free. **Before you send anything to school to be shared with your child's classmates, please read the label to make sure the food does not contain nuts or peanuts;** all treats must be store-bought and come in a package with an ingredient label so that teachers can also check to make sure that no nut product is served to any child in the classroom.

If you have any questions about the meal service, please feel free to contact the Health Coordinator at (410) 313-6582.

