

Dernancourt Kindergarten

Allergy Awareness Policy

Rationale:

At Dernancourt Kindergarten we promote a healthy and safe environment. We need to promote awareness amongst children and parents/caregivers about allergic reactions suffered by certain children after coming into contact with these products. The policy also aims to alert parents to the potential severity of ANAPHYLACTIC reactions and provide information on how parents can help prevent such reactions by being aware of which products to avoid.

Guidelines and Procedures:

Parent's responsibilities:

- The kindy must be informed of all allergies, if any, upon enrolment of a child.
- Parents and the medical practitioner of children with allergies must fill out a CARE PLAN and EMERGENCY PROCEDURE PLAN. Information on whether or not a child wears Medic Alert identification also needs to be provided.
- Parents/caregivers of an anaphylactic child must make sure the appropriate medication is made available to the Kindy to use in the event of an emergency.
- All medication eg. Anti-histamines, Epipens used for the treatment of anaphylaxis must have clear instructions on a pharmacy label and stored in the medical buddy behind the office door. Each child with an allergy or medical needs will have their own pouch easily identifiable as theirs. All staff must know the location of the buddy in the event of an emergency.
- Parents /caregivers must make arrangements with staff for medication to be taken on any excursions out of the centre.
- Any suspicions of allergies the parents/caregivers have noted must be further investigated by a qualified practitioner.
- The Kindy must be notified of any changes to a child's condition that may affect their existing care at the Centre.
- The anaphylactic child should be encouraged by his/her family (and Kindy staff) not to accept food from anyone other than their own family.
- All families will be asked not to send snacks containing nuts (or identified allergen) of any kind to Kindy.
- Parents will be requested not to send cakes or chocolates for birthdays. If a child wishes to share something, non- food items such as balloons or stickers are suitable.

Staff responsibilities:

- All children will be encouraged not to share food with each other and to sit down when eating.
- Kindy staff will supervise children (and including the anaphylactic child) whilst eating their snack. Support will be sought in the case of severe allergies for additional staff support.
- Children's lunches and snacks are to be monitored regularly by a staff member in order to assess potential risks and to educate the children on the necessity of eating 'nut free' food at kindy.

- In the event that a child brings a snack containing nuts, the snack will be placed in a safe place by staff and then given back to the parents at the end of the session. An alternate snack provided by the kindergarten will be offered in the event the child doesn't have other food.
- Kindy staff will ensure any activities provided for the Centre will be nut free (eg. cooking or seed play).
- Kindy staff will ensure that any soaps and sunscreens used at the Centre are free from "nut oil" (eg. do not contain peanut or nut oil). Parents are welcome to provide an alternate soap or sunscreen for their children.
- Kindergarten staff will remind parents/caregivers and children about the policy regularly (eg in newsletters).
- All staff will undergo required training in the use of EpiPens and managing anaphylaxis.
- Anaphylactic children need to be identified to any relief and volunteer workers and made aware of their action plans.

Information on Allergies

- Many children have allergies. If exposed, allergic reactions include hives, swollen eyes, wheezing and asthma symptoms. A few reactions however are life threatening. Some children are severely allergic to PEANUT BUTTER, even a tiny amount could be fatal within minutes.
- Children who have severe allergies to such food substances are exposed to a health risk not only when peanut products are consumed in their environment or shared with them, but from residue left on toys, play surfaces and other equipment (cross-contamination). These children are termed ANAPHYLACTIC ie suffer from ANAPHYLAXIS .
- What is ANAPHYLAXIS? (A big word for a big reaction)
- ANAPHYLAXIS (pronounced ana-f il-ax-is) is the most severe form of an allergic reaction that can result in death. An anaphylactic (or full body shock) can occur within seconds of exposure to an allergen or it may occur as a delayed reaction several hours after exposure. Anaphylaxis is a critical medical emergency that requires immediate treatment with adrenaline by injection to prevent permanent injury or loss of life. (Adrenaline opens up the airways and blood vessels in the body).

Safety first at Kindergarten

- One way to ensure the safety of these children whilst attending kindy is to become peanut and nut allergen aware and to develop an environment that will minimize the risk of exposure to nut allergens. In the event that accidental exposure may occur, the Kindy has an emergency response First Aid procedure in place.
- Avoidance of peanut/nut products is the cornerstone of management in preventing an anaphylactic reaction in a child suffering from a nut allergy, your assistance is vital due to these health risks. We ask for your understanding and cooperation by not sending any snacks with your child containing NUT PRODUCTS. It is just a matter of double checking food labels before putting snacks in your child's lunchbox.
- It is recommended that ALL NUTS should be avoided since most nuts are processed with peanuts and therefore cross contamination may occur. It is also possible to have an allergy to more than one kind of nut.

- ***The following is a list of foods commonly used in children's snacks/lunches which are at risk of causing allergy:***

Peanut butter/paste	Nutella and Hazelnut spreads	Breakfast cereal bars	Health foods and muesli bars	Eggs
Dips	Dunkaroos	Nougats	Satay flavoured rice crackers	Any nuts or products which may contain nuts

- **This policy will be reviewed and evaluated regularly by both staff and Governing Council and modified as required to ensure continued relevance to the centre.**

