

# Iowa Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) &



## Food Brought from Home Policy

Our organization does not allow food to be brought from home for children when due to personal preferences for the following reasons:

- We consider mealtime to be part of the educational experience we provide at the center.
- It is important for children to learn to eat a variety of nutritious foods at a young age.
- All children should eat the same foods to provide for a pleasant mealtime and minimize conflicts, unless there is a medical reason.
- We participate in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) which is regulated by the USDA and the meals we provide follow standards established by the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. We cannot assure food from home meets these standards.
- CACFP does not allow us to claim meals for reimbursement that include food brought from home to accommodate personal preferences.

We do not allow food to be brought to the child care center from home for children except in the limited circumstances listed below:

- You may bring food for your child when there is a valid medical reason. We will offer to provide the food if your child has a documented disability that affects their diet, but the family may provide the substitute food(s) if they wish.
- If your child has a special dietary need that is not considered a disability please discuss it with the director. The center may be able to provide the substitution.
- You may bring food items for the class on special occasions such as holiday celebrations or birthdays if coordinated with the teacher.
- The center accepts donations such as extra garden produce that can be served to all children.
- Foods obtained using benefits from the Women Infants and Children (WIC) Program cannot be accepted as a donation to the center, but you may provide WIC foods for your own infant.
- Parents of infants may provide breastmilk or formula for their infant. The center offers at least one type of iron-fortified infant formula that parents may accept or decline.

When allowed, follow these guidelines when providing food from home:

- Food must arrive at the center in an appropriate container or package.
- If purchased, the product must be in its original container.
- Keep food at proper temperatures before arrival.
- Ensure food is wholesome (acceptable for the child to consume with little or no preparation).
- Home canned foods cannot be accepted.

While we will make every effort to handle the food properly once it arrives at the center, we are not responsible for the safety of food brought from home since we cannot ensure food safety and sanitation guidelines were followed before it arrived at the center.