

Consider the following Food Policy points depending on the provision of food at your OSHC setting.

<p><b>When meals are brought from home</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measures should be taken to remove highly allergenic foods where transfer from one child to another is likely (such as whole eggs or egg containing foods and peanut products)</li> <li>• If there is a child at risk of anaphylaxis at your OSHC centre it is recommended that parents of all children should not send meals containing the allergen involved e.g. nut products</li> <li>• It is realised that it is not possible to eliminate all food products such as milk products in bread or margarine from the foods brought into OSHC settings</li> <li>• In some circumstances it may be appropriate that a highly allergic child does not sit at tables where the food to which they are allergic to is being served</li> </ul>
<p><b>When meal preparation is undertaken at OSHC settings</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For severely allergic children the best option may be to bring meals prepared from home</li> <li>• If it is decided to provide meals prepared at the OSHC setting to a child at risk then the meal prepared for all children should <u>not</u> contain the ingredients for which the child is at risk (such as nut, egg or milk products)</li> <li>• Meals prepared at OSHC settings that use ingredients showing "May contain traces of nuts" on the label should <u>not</u> be given to nut allergic children</li> <li>• Food removal from OSHC settings should only occur following recommendation by a relevant medical specialist and provision of documentation to support this recommendation</li> </ul>

## Food Policy Measures Specific to OSHC Aged Children

Risk minimisation with regard to particular foods is recommended, however the implementation of blanket food bans or attempts to prohibit the entry of specific food substances into schools are not recommended.

Issues considered in *not* recommending blanket food bans include:

- The practicalities of such measures
- The issue that for OSHC aged children, an essential step is to develop strategies for avoidance in the wider community as well as school
- The lack of evidence of the effectiveness of such measures
- Some guidelines state that such a policy should be “considered” for specific foodstuffs such as peanut rather than recommended generally
- Food bans at schools are not recommended by allergy consumer organisations
- The risk of complacency about avoidance strategies if a food is banned

For settings where there are children with severe allergies to nuts (e.g. peanuts and tree nuts) a risk minimisation policy needs to be implemented. This involves the removal of items with the relevant nut as an ingredient but does not apply to those foods labelled “may contain traces of nuts”.

Risk minimisation in OSHC settings may also include asking parents of classmates not to send peanut butter on sandwiches if a class member in the early primary years (4-7 year olds) has a peanut allergy. This is due to the higher risk of person to person contact in younger children.

Bullying or provoking food allergic children with food to which they are allergic should be recognised as a risk factor and addressed by anti-bullying policies.

## General Food Policy Measures

- There should be no trading or sharing of food, food utensils and food containers
- It is ideal that children with severe food allergies should only eat lunches and snacks that have been prepared at home
- Bottles, other drinks and lunch boxes provided by the parents for their children should be clearly labelled with the name of the child for whom they are intended
- The use of food in crafts, cooking classes and science experiments may need to be restricted depending on the allergies of particular children
- Food preparation personnel should be instructed about measures necessary to prevent cross contamination during the handling, preparation and serving of food.
  - Examples would include careful cleaning of food preparation areas after use and cleaning of utensils when preparing allergenic foods
- The risk of life threatening anaphylaxis from casual skin contact, even with highly allergenic foods such as peanuts appears very low. On occasions casual skin contact will provoke urticaria reactions (hives). Hygiene measures such as hand washing and bench-top cleaning are considered appropriate
- Food removal from OSHC settings should only occur following recommendation by a relevant medical specialist and the provision of documentation to support this recommendation

**For further information please visit the ASCIA website - [www.allergy.org.au](http://www.allergy.org.au) or phone (07) 3257 4393 or email [info@naql.org](mailto:info@naql.org)**