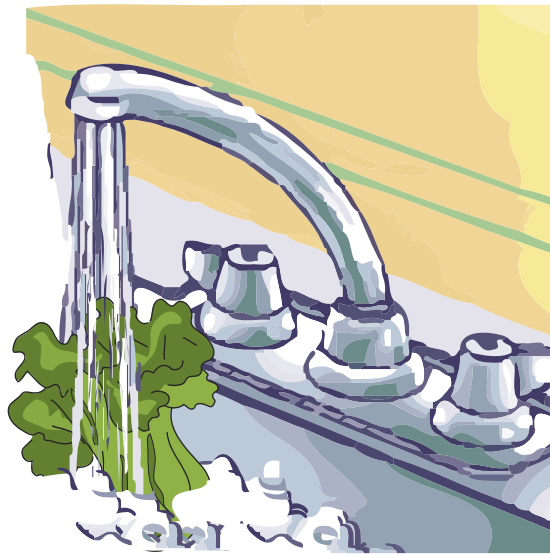# CARE Connection

Food Safety Family Materials

Ideas for Parents About Reducing Illness in the Home

Food safety is an important way to reduce illness.

Note to the child care provider: To meet the child's needs, you should work closely with the parents. This form letter will help you to explain the importance of safe food handling to the health of children.

Dear Family,

Each day we take steps to keep the children in child care healthy. Food safety is an important way to reduce illness.

We are teaching children how to be clean and safe with food. You may notice your child uses these steps at home.

- Washes hands before meals or preparing food.
- Uses serving utensils, not fingers, to serve foods.
- Knows not to touch another person's food.
- Sits down at the table to eat and drink to reduce the risk of choking.
- Chews small bites of food well; this makes it easy to swallow.

In child care we use proper food-handling habits to reduce the risk of foodborne illness. Purchasing wholesome foods with intact packaging prior to sell-by dates, and using proper food storage are two steps we take to reduce the risk of foodborne illness.

To prepare foods safely:

- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables in cool, running water. Use a vegetable brush to scrub surfaces that have been in soil, such as potato skins or cantaloupe rinds.
- Use special care when preparing raw meat and poultry. Store it on the bottom shelf of the refrigerator so juices cannot spill on other foods.
- Use separate cutting boards for raw meat and poultry and fresh fruits and vegetables. If you only have one cutting board, wash and disinfect it between uses for different foods—especially after preparing raw meat, chicken or fish.
- Use a food thermometer to make sure foods are cooked to the proper temperature.

To dispose of trash we

- use plastic bags or liners in the garbage can.
- empty the garbage regularly.

We care about the health of the children. We know when we work together with families we help keep children healthy.

Sincerely,

Your Child's Caregiver