

Mealtime Memo

for Child Care

Safety in Child Care

Think about your child care home or center. Is it licensed through the state, or have you received the proper endorsement to keep children in your home? Have you had trainings on food safety, classroom safety, or any of the other trainings that may be required by your state?

Safety is always a concern in child care settings. Most child care providers keep their homes or centers free from any known hazards that may cause an injury to a child. Safety includes but is not limited to the food you serve and a safe storage of any medication.

Safe Storage of Food

All child care providers, including supervisors, usually receive annual food safety training that consists of purchasing and receiving procedures, as well as how to store and cook food properly. Training should take place prior to the start of the school year, as well as during the school year when new staff are hired. Most child care staff are required to be trained when hired and on a yearly basis.

Keeping food safe is important because it helps to avoid foodborne illness among the children who eat it. Purchasing food correctly is an important step to properly storing and maintaining appropriate temperatures for food. Think about visiting vendors or grocery stores prior to choosing where to purchase food from. When making a visit, look around the facility to see how the food is stored.

- Is it clean?
- Are there rodent droppings?
- Is the storage in order?
- Is there a system of using first-in first-out?
- Are items being stored by expiration date?
- Is the warehouse orderly, or is it chaotic or unclean?
- How do the docks look?
- Would you consider it to be a clean area for receiving food for your family?



Once the food is in your home or center, ask yourself the same questions. Is your home or center clean and in order? How is your food stored in the refrigerator, freezer, or dry storage area? Do you have any food stored directly on the floor?

Safe Storage and Use of Medication

Do parents bring medication for you to give to their child? Can you say **yes** to all the items listed below? The medication:

- is allowed.
- log includes (but is not limited to) day, date, time given, dosage, route, and staff signature.
- is prescribed by a doctor.
- contains a label with the doctor's name, child's name, dosage, and time to give the medication.
- is stored properly.

Store all medication out of the reach of children in a locked cabinet.

Should you give over-the-counter medication? Does your licensing agency, Sponsor, or you, as a child care provider, have a written policy regarding giving over-the-counter medication? Ask your licensing agency and/or Sponsor before giving any over-the-counter medication.

Have on hand a written policy for medications that are prescribed by a physician. It should include how the medication will be kept, as well as who will administer it. If the medication is required to be in the refrigerator, have a lockable container to put it in so it does not become contaminated or contaminate any other items in the refrigerator. It is important to have all information, questions and/or procedures clear and answered before giving medication and before allowing a child to be under your care without the parent.

Providers should have a doctor's prescription for prescribed medication. Consider also having a parent to sign off for you to give prescribed medication as well.



Include the name of the medicine, dosage, time, and expiration date of the medication on the permission slip.

- When possible, have the same individual give prescribed medicine to the children.
- Any form that must be signed should always have the child's information on it, as well as the dosage and how often.
- All medication must be in the original container.
- If the medication requires refrigeration, keep it in a locked container that will keep food or other items out.
- The original medication label should state who, what, when, how much, and how often.
- Decide if your center will honor over-the-counter medication requests or only prescribed medication by a licensed healthcare professional.

All the policies for children in your care should be in writing. This ensures child safety and will also allow people that come to see your child care facility to review the policies and understand how your center operates as they make a choice for their child.

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Food
Safety

Medication
Safety



References

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