



## Creative Kids Learning Early Centre

### Keeping Food Safe in Child Care Settings

Being Child care providers, we at CKELC as well as our parents know how quickly illness can spread among the children in a center. Food is a common way for illness to spread. Workers who have recently been ill can unknowingly contaminate the foods prepared and served to children. Contaminated food products brought into the kitchen can also be the cause of an outbreak.

Usually we think of food safety as a summertime concern, but foodborne illness can occur any time of the year. Food contaminated with harmful bacteria and viruses that cause illness spread quickly among children as they share toys, food, toilet facilities, mats, and come in contact with other articles handled by children who are sick or have recently been sick.

Bacteria, viruses, molds, and parasites may contaminate both raw and cooked food products. The good news is that most of the foods produced and sold in the United States are safe to eat. The United States Department of Agriculture, the Food and Drug Administration, and other government agencies establish regulations and monitoring systems to ensure a safe food supply.

Food products can be mishandled anywhere along the food production chain and contamination with harmful microorganisms can occur. Because microorganisms (organisms too small to be seen by the unaided eye) cannot be seen, all food products must be handled carefully. Some microorganisms cause food to spoil-smell and look bad. When food smells bad, we get the message and do not eat it. Unfortunately, many of the microorganisms (pathogens) that cause foodborne illness do not alter the smell or the appearance of food.

At CKELC, food safety is everyone's responsibility, not just the members of staff present with the children at mealtimes or the time of feeding. The teachers and other team members often come in contact with the food served to the children and should be familiar with safe food handling practices. The best way to protect children from possible foodborne illness is to establish **an HACCP (hazard analysis critical control points)** system and train all facility employees to implement the system.

#### **HACCP System**

1. Identify ingredients and products which might:
  - Have an effect on food safety.
  - Be consumed by special populations, such as infants or children.
  - Have a history as a source of harmful microorganisms.

- Identify critical control points-steps in food handling, preparation, and serving where loss of control would result in a risk to individuals eating the food.

HACCP systems are unique to each facility; however, HACCP systems originally designed for commercial food service operations can be adapted to the child care setting. For more information and assistance in applying the HACCP concept in our setting, contact the local public health department.

### Safe Food Handling Practices

The danger zone favouring bacterial growth is the temperature range of 40-140 degrees F. The length of time a food is allowed to remain in this critical temperature zone largely determines the rate and extent of bacterial growth that occurs.

TEMPERATURE CHART	
Event	Degree of Event
Boiling Point	212°
Dishwasher Rinse	180°
Serve Hot Food	140° - 180°
Minimum for Hot Foods	140°
Dry Storage	50° - 75°
Maximum for Cold Foods	40°
Freezer Temperature	0°

Source: HACCP Reference Guide. NRA Educational Foundation.

Characteristics of Common Foodborne Illnesses					
Illness	Cause	Onset	Symptoms	Spread	Foods Involved
Salmonellosis	Infection with Salmonella Species	12-24 hours	Nausea, diarrhea, 2-7 days	Eating contaminated food; contact with infected persons.	Meat, poultry, and egg products
Staphylococcus Poisoning	Toxin produced by certain strains of Staphylococcus	1-6 hours	Severe vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal cramping, 1-2 days	Food handlers who carry the bacteria on skin in pimples or cuts; who cough or sneeze on food.	Custard and cream-filled baked goods, ham, poultry, egg, potato salad, cream sauces, fillings

Cl perfringens Poisoning	Toxin released in the intestine	8-24 hours	Diarrhea, abdominal cramps, headache, 1 day	Eating contaminated food.	Meat, poultry, and other foods held at warm temperatures
Campylobacter Jejuni	Infection, even with low numbers	1 hour	Nausea, diarrhea, abdominal cramps, headache, 1-10 days	Contaminated drinking water, eating contaminated food, infected handlers, rodents, insects	Raw milk, eggs, raw beef, poultry, cake icing, water
E coli O157:H7	Strains of E coli	2-4 days	Hemorrhaging in the colon	Eating contaminated foods.	Ground beef, raw milk, chicken
Listeriosis	Infection with Listeria Monocytogenes	2-3 days - 3 weeks	Meningitis, 2-7 days	Eating contaminated foods.	Milk, vegetables, cheese, meat, seafood

### Safe Food Handling Practices Prevent Foodborne Illnesses

#### Preparation and Storage Rules

- Start with clean, wholesome food from reliable sources. Wash all raw fruits and vegetables before using.
- Hold frozen food at 0° F or lower during delivery and storage.
- Scrub and sanitize all cutting boards, knives, and electric slicers immediately after contact with raw or cooked meats, fish, or poultry.
- >Hold all potentially hazardous foods out of the danger zone, 40° - 140° F. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold.
- Reach an internal temperature of 165° to 170° F for foods to be held for serving. Maintain a minimum temperature of 140° F during the serving period.
- Re-pan in shallow containers any cooked food to be held at refrigerated temperatures. Refrigerate immediately. Center of the food should reach 40° F within 4 hours. To hasten cooling, space pans in the cooler to allow for adequate air circulation.
- Never serve questionable food. If in doubt throw it out.
- Avoid cross-contamination of foods during preparation, storage, and service.

**Staff/Employees:**

- Wash hands with soap and water. Hands must be washed when reporting to work, after handling raw poultry and meat, smoking, sneezing, and use of handkerchief, and after using the toilet.
- Keep all work surfaces clean and organized.
- Keep the work area clean and all spills wiped up immediately.
- Refrigerate promptly all unused foods.
- Use clean equipment in preparing, cooking, and serving food.
- Avoid touching food as much as possible. Use the proper utensils.
- Handle all utensils and serving equipment by handles and bases to avoid touching areas that will later come in contact with the food.
- Use a clean spoon to taste food.
- Keep fingernails trimmed and clean. Scrub nails with a nail brush after a visit to the toilet and after handling raw meat, poultry, and fish.
- Keep hair clean and use a hairnet or other restraint.
- Reassign employees with infected cuts or burns. These employees should not prepare food or handle equipment with will come in contact with food

## Introduction to HACCP

- HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point) is a system that helps food business operators look at how they handle food and introduces procedures to make sure the food produced is safe to eat.
- As part of routine inspections, the enforcement officer will check that the business has an appropriate HACCP-based food safety management system in place.