



**Bowen
Children's
Centre**

Bowen Children's Centre Society
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Nutrition Policy

Purpose

The purpose of the Nutrition Policy is to recognize that a range of healthy foods benefit children's growing bodies, and to establish procedures that will assist both BCC staff and families to support this philosophy. The policy is also designed to ensure the safety of children with food allergies.

Policy

Learning about good nutrition should be integrated into the BCC's programs in a way that's fun and age appropriate. The staff at BCC will not tell children what to eat or when to eat it (e.g. staff will not require a child to set aside a brownie until they have eaten their sandwich) because this can create the concept of 'good' food vs. 'bad food', which can, in time, lead to disordered eating.

Research has shown that given freedom within a broad range of healthy food choices, children will ultimately select a balanced diet and regulate the quantity of food they eat. Adult interference, however well-intentioned, can disrupt children's natural mechanisms and do more harm than good.

Childrens' diets are best considered not on a per-meal, or even a per-day basis, but rather over the course of several days. It does not matter if the lunch that a child brings to the BCC isn't particularly varied; other foods that the child eats outside the BCC may well contribute to an overall balance of which BCC staff members will likely be unaware.

The BCC staff recognize that different families have differing attitudes towards food as well as varying budgets, and will encourage healthy nutrition for children without appearing to pass judgement on parents' choices.

However, the BCC asks parents to provide healthy choices for their children and to avoid sending foods with high sugar or salt content. Parents should also avoid sending children to the BCC with foods that may cause choking, such as popcorn, uncut grapes or hotdogs and hard candy.

Procedures

1. Quality and quantity of food

- a. Children will be allowed to select the food items they want to eat from the assortment their parent(s)/legal guardian(s) have provided and the order in which they eat it.
- b. Items that are not be finished in one sitting will be re-packaged/wrapped to save for the next time the child sits down to eat.
- c. When talking to the children about their snacks and lunch, BCC staff will not criticize the food choices childrens' parent(s)/legal guardian(s) have made for them.
- d. If a BCC staff member has a concern about the quality or quantity of food a child brings, they will discuss it with the other program coordinators, who will tactfully address the matter with the child's parent(s)/legal guardians(s) if necessary. The Executive Director should always be informed of these situations.

2. Allergies

- a. The Executive Director will be informed of all allergies and a list will be posted in the programs the child attends as well as in the kitchen area for the program involved.

- b. When there is a life-threatening allergy, a child care treatment plan will be filled out by BCC staff detailing all the necessary steps to prevent an incident and families will be informed of the plan.
- c. To ensure the safety of children with life threatening nut and fish allergies, the Daycare, Preschool and Infant-Toddler program are nut and fish free facilities.
- d. When there is a child who has a severe allergy to foods other than nuts or fish, BCC staff will make best efforts to prohibit the allergen at the BCC. This may include informing other families not to send the allergen in their childrens' lunches or asking the child's family to make snacks that accommodate the child (e.g. If a child cannot eat wheat, the child's family may be asked to provide wheat free treats for celebrations).
- e. At the Preschool, all special helper snacks should be in the original containers with listed ingredients, or if home baking, a list of all ingredients should be given to the teachers.
- f. If group snacks are provided, foods will be served that are as inclusive as possible.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Although the BCC strives to ensure safety around allergies and cross-contamination of food, the BCC cannot maintain an absolute guarantee that allergens will not cross paths with children both inside and out of the centre.

Related BCC policies	This policy approved on:
	May 26 2020