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PRESCHOOL NUTRITION NEWS

UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
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FOOD SAFETY TIPS FOR PRESCHOOLERS

Keeping preschoolers safe is the number one priority for families and caregivers. As we all get busy, sometimes it is nice to have a reminder about keeping food safe for children, especially when they are headed to school. Building safe habits will be valuable throughout their lives. Share these simple tips with children, parents and families as a reminder to keep food safe and clean.

1. Develop a healthy habit for life. Encourage handwashing after using the bathroom, before and after eating, after playing with pets, or whenever hands are dirty. Preschoolers are less likely to get sick, if they wash their hands often.

2. Make handwashing fun! Sing “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” or the “Alphabet” song or count for 20 seconds each time to make sure your child is washing long enough. Have them pick out a favorite soap to keep them interested.

3. Send a safe, healthy lunch. Keep foods cold by adding a frozen juice box or small ice pack to an insulated lunch box. When using paper lunch bags, double bag to help maintain the temperature.



4. Keep hot lunches hot. Use an insulated thermos to keep foods like soup warm until lunchtime. Fill your thermos with boiling water and let stand for a few minutes. Then empty the water and fill with piping hot food.

5. Safe snacking. Many hands touching snacks can result in the spread of germs. Divide snacks up into small bags or buy single-serve packets. Rinse fruits and vegetables before slicing and serving them as snacks.

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More Resources

Visit our website:
<http://ceplacer.ucanr.edu>

You can email a UC CalFresh representative with any questions or information needs. Also, please feel free to share any tips or suggestions you might have with other teachers!

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FOOD SAFETY CONCERNS FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

Children under the age of five are at an increased risk for foodborne illness and related health complications because their immune systems are still developing. Young children with developing immune systems cannot fight off infections as well as adults can. Additionally, young children produce less stomach acid that kills harmful bacteria making it easier for them to get sick.

Foodborne illness or food poisoning can be particularly dangerous for young children because with food poisoning often comes diarrhea. Since children's bodies are small, they can quickly lose a lot of body fluid causing dehydration. Other symptoms of foodborne illness include nausea, vomiting, stomach pain and cramps, and fever and chills.

According to the [CDC](#), children younger than five have the highest incidence rates of any age group of [Campylobacter](#), [Cryptosporidium](#), [E.Coli 0157](#), [E. Coli non-0157](#), [Salmonella](#), [Shigella](#), and [Yersinia](#) infection.

Food safety is particularly important for young children and is tightly linked to the food safety behaviors of their parents and caregivers.



FOOD SAFETY TIPS FOR PRESCHOOLERS (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

6. Stay clean.

Young children can easily get sick because their immune systems are not fully developed. Keep food and surfaces clean. Wash surfaces before and after you prepare foods like fish, meat, eggs, and cheese.

7. Some foods are hard to swallow.

Avoid foods that are hard to swallow or cut them into small pieces, about 1/2 inch. Hard-to-swallow foods can include peanuts, popcorn, round slices of hot dog, hard candy, whole grapes, and cherry tomatoes.

8. Watch how they eat.

To prevent choking, have your preschoolers sit down when they eat. Avoid letting them run, walk, play, or lie down with food in their mouth.

9. Seafood for preschoolers.

Omega-3 fats in fish and shellfish have important health benefits for young children. But be aware of chemicals such as mercury. Choices that are often lower in mercury include salmon, sardines, tilapia, trout, pollock, and catfish.

FOOD SAFETY for Children Under 5

Learn the food safety steps that will keep young children under 5 safe from foodborne illness.



FOOD SAFETY FOR CHILDREN UNDER 5

SOLIDS - opened or freshly made	Refrigerator	Freezer
Strained fruits and vegetables	2 to 3 days	6 to 8 months
Strained meats and eggs	1 day	1 to 2 months
Meat/vegetable combinations	1 to 2 days	1 to 2 months
Homemade baby foods	1 to 2 days	1 to 2 months

WHY ARE CHILDREN UNDER 5 AT RISK?

Young children's immune systems are still developing.

Compared with other age groups, children under 5 years old have the highest incidence of several types of foodborne infections.

Did You Know ...

15% of children under 5 years old with *E. coli* O157 develop hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS)

6% of the general population with *E. coli* O157 develop HUS

HUS can cause damage to the liver, kidneys, and pancreas and can be fatal



HIGH-RISK FOODS FOR CHILDREN UNDER 5

Raw or undercooked
Foods including meat, poultry, and eggs

Unpasteurized
milk or juice

Raw or undercooked
oysters and seafood

REMEMBER

- CLEAN**: Wash hands and surfaces often.
- SEPARATE**: Keep raw meat and poultry separate from ready-to-eat foods.
- COOK**: Cook foods to the proper internal temperature.
- CHILL**: Get leftovers to the fridge within 2 hours of being cooked.



For more food safety tips, go to FoodSafety.gov

ADDITIONAL SOURCE: CDC

USDA IS AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY PROVIDER AND EMPLOYER

University of California Cooperative Extension

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Happy Healthy Me...Moving, Munching & Reading Around MyPlate for 4 to 6-Year-Olds
Combines stories and literacy with nutrition education for Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten.

Parent Workshops
Fun, interactive parent workshops are available. Please call for more information.

Go Glow Grow
A preschool curriculum that teaches about healthy foods and what they do for the body.

CINDY FAKE
County Director

KELLEY BRIAN, MPH
Youth, Families and Communities Advisor

MICHELE FISCH
UC CalFresh Nutrition Educator

The UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program targets schools and community programs with large numbers of children from food stamp households. Teachers, youth program leaders, and other extenders at the sites are trained to deliver a nutrition education program targeted to youth audiences. This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program -- SNAP.

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