

Dear St. Jerome ECC Families,

As we begin our school year, we wanted to take this opportunity to share with you information about sound nutrition and food safety practices as they relate to preschool age children. Our snack and lunch policies are outlined below. Parents will provide daily snacks and lunches (if applicable) for their children following the required guidelines.

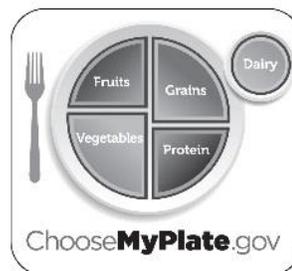
Due to the extreme nature of allergic reactions to peanuts, nuts, and products containing peanuts in some children, St. Jerome ECC is a 'nut-sensitive' environment, restricting peanuts, nuts, and or foods containing peanut products on St. Jerome ECC campus and at school sponsored events. These peanut allergies can be so severe that exposure to peanuts can result in an anaphylactic reaction. An allergic child can have a reaction not only from consuming peanuts, nuts, or peanut products, but also from simply smelling peanuts on someone's breath or touching peanut oil residue left on a counter top or other classroom surface.

Families are responsible for providing foods that are peanut, nut, and nut-product-free for their own child's lunch and/or snack. There are many acceptable food items that are peanut, nut, and nut-product-free in stores today. **The important thing to remember is to read the label of every food item you send to school with your child.**

We hope you will find the attached materials helpful as we work together with our ECC families in providing and promoting health and wellness for our children and families.

Sincerely in Christ,

Denise Roach, Administrator  
St. Jerome Early Childhood Center



## ST. JEROME ECC GUIDELINES FOR DAILY SNACK FOR ALL CHILDREN

The information below is shared with our families in an effort to work together for the safety and well-being of the children we serve. As a licensed, nationally accredited early childhood program, St. Jerome ECC is bound by specific requirements and guidelines with regards to foods served during our program. This applies to snacks provided by families for their own children as well as any snacks that might be provided by our center to the children in our care.

Our ECC families will provide daily snack for their child/ren as outlined below:

- All ECC children will bring a morning snack to school each day in their backpacks. Your child's classroom teacher will direct the children as to where to keep their snack upon their arrival to school. Snack may be sent into school in labeled bag/baggies or in a plastic container (labeled both top & bottom) with your child's name. Containers will be returned home each day in your child's backpack. Lunch boxes are not to be used for daily snack.
- Daily Snack Requirements: The snack provided **MUST** represent two food groups with the minimum portion size for your child's age. Juice must be 100% juice to count as a 'food group'. If you are not providing a drink on a certain day, water will be provided. (Two food groups must still be included.)
- St. Jerome ECC is a 'nut-sensitive' environment, restricting peanuts, nuts, and or foods containing nut products on St. Jerome ECC campus and at school sponsored events.
- Sippy cups are not permitted at school. Small cups will be on hand if a child needs a cup.
- Foods that are associated with young children choking incidents cannot be included in daily snacks for children younger than four years of age. Any food that is of similar shape and size of the trachea/windpipe, such as, but not limited to: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; chips, raw peas; and all hard pretzels; cheese cubes; chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.
- Foods cannot be refrigerated or heated at school. Parents must include a small ice pack in their child's 'snack sack' as appropriate. (Refer to Family Handbook for additional food safety recommendations.)
- Snacks provided must be within the expiration date noted on the package.
- Children with food allergies will have an individualized care plan in consultation with information provided by the child's family to be posted in that child's classroom.
- Any foods brought to school by families to be shared with other children (party treats, etc.) must be store bought, in the original package and not contain nuts (due to food allergies).
- All children and staff will follow appropriate handwashing procedures with regards to snack/meal time. (Refer to Family Handbook for proper hand-washing procedures.)
- Lunch (for those staying after 12:00) and our morning snack times are served two hours apart. Snacks and lunches should be sent in separate packaging (i.e. a labeled bag for snack and a labeled lunch box for lunch).
- Please see additional information outlined on the attached Extended Day Lunch Guidelines if your child/ren are staying after the morning program and will require a lunch.
- All families will indicate on the Child Enrollment Record all allergies and/or food related restrictions.
- St. Jerome will provide a healthy snack for those families who do not follow the above policies. A monetary fee will be charged to those families who are frequently out of compliance.

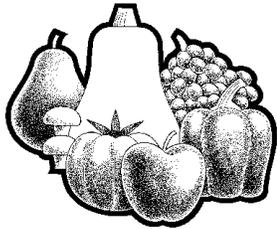
## **LUNCH GUIDELINES FOR THOSE STAYING FOR AFTERNOON CARE**

Extended Day is available for all St. Jerome ECC students. Children may stay from 12:15-3:00 or from 12:15-5:00 (12:00 for 2 year olds). The most important part of this portion of our day is LUNCH! Extended Day users bring their own lunch, and with that in mind, we would like to ensure that each child has a nutritious and safe meal. Your cooperation will help to ensure an appropriate and healthy experience for all! Thank you!

### Extended Day Lunch Guidelines:

- All foods/beverages brought from home are to be labeled with your child's name.
- Please label both the tops & bottoms of all reusable containers and ice packs.
- St. Jerome ECC is a 'nut-sensitive' environment, restricting peanuts, nuts, and or foods containing nut products on St. Jerome ECC campus and at school sponsored events.
- Foods not consumed by your child will be sent home in your child's lunch box that day.
- Licensing requires that some foods brought from home need to stay cold with non-toxic ice packs. Foods that need to stay cold include: meat and poultry sandwiches or salads; tuna and egg salads; milk, cheese and yogurt; opened cans of fruit or pudding; peeled or cut fruits and vegetables. Some foods that don't need to be kept cold include: cookies, crackers, commercially dried fruit, unopened cans of fruit or pudding, unopened juice boxes, and fruit filled pastries. (St. Jerome ECC does not refrigerate lunch boxes or heat food.)
- Foods brought from home are not shared with other children.
- Soda, candy and gum are not allowed in lunches. Those items will be returned home. (Candy in *Lunchables* will be returned home.)
- Children will be asked to eat half of their sandwich or other main dishes before eating other snack items.
- Foods that are associated with young children choking incidents cannot be included in daily snacks for children younger than four years of age. Any food that is of similar size to the trachea/windpipe, such as, but not limited to: hot dogs, whole or sliced into rounds; whole grapes; nuts; popcorn; chips, raw peas; and all hard pretzels; cheese cubes; chunks of raw carrots or meat larger than can be swallowed whole.
- Lunches should reflect foods representing the food groups and portions outlined in the attached information specific to your child's preschool age.
- Include only one drink in your child's lunch. Often children will 'drink' and then not eat. The ECC will provide additional water as needed. A drink can also be sent in with your child's snack, in their snack bag – separate from the lunch box. Sippy cups are not permitted at school. Small cups will be on hand if a child needs a cup.
- For children staying until 5:00, please pack a second PM snack following the guidelines on our daily snack page.

**Thank you for your assistance as we strive to provide  
a healthy and safe environment for all children in our care.**



# Daily Food Planning for Preschoolers

The pages attached are for your reference. The direct links to the pages can be found on our website. ( [www.stjeromeearlychildhoodcenter.org](http://www.stjeromeearlychildhoodcenter.org) )

- **Daily Food Checklist- Age and portion sizes for food groups.**
- **Food Safety Tips for Preschoolers**
- **My Plate Snack Tips for Parents**
- **‘Cut Back on Your Kid’s Sweet Treats’**

The USDA ‘Choose My Plate’ website has a wealth of information for families of young children. <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/health-and-nutrition-information>

The ‘My Plate’ website noted here has over 70 printable handouts on many nutritional and active living topics for all ages. Be sure to check it out! <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/printable-materials>

**Table: Calorie recommendations for preschoolers based on age and activity level.**

Boys				Girls			
Physical Activity	Less than 30 minutes a day	30 to 60 minutes a day	More than 60 minutes a day	Physical Activity	Less than 30 minutes a day	30 to 60 minutes a day	More than 60 minutes a day
Age				Age			
2	1000	1000	1000	2	1000	1000	1000
3	1200	1400	1400	3	1000	1200	1400
4	1200	1400	1600	4	1200	1400	1400
5	1200	1400	1600	5	1200	1400	1600