



Nutrition for Early Learning and Child Care

Food Coming from Home

Is the food coming from home in lunches and/or snacks a concern at your facility? How do you address this issue with families? See below for ideas to help you work together with families and support them in sending nutritious food for their children.

1) Remember the “Roles at Mealtimes”

- By asking families to send food for lunches and/or snacks, you are giving them the role of deciding what food to provide.
- You can support them in making decisions about what to send, but the decision is ultimately up to them.
- All foods sent from home should be made available to the children to eat, in any order they choose.

2) Share information with families and include them in facility activities

- Share handouts or include information in a newsletter or on a bulletin board, with suggestions for lunches and snacks (for examples see visit our website: www.gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/foodinchildcare/).
- Share recipes with families that you have tried with the children, and ask families to share their recipes with you.
- Offer an information event for families.
- Invite families in at mealtimes to eat with staff and children.
- Involve families in projects, such as donating seeds for gardening or sending in family photos which illustrate their culture and food customs.

3) Be sensitive and realistic

- Remember families are usually doing the best they can. It is important to be considerate about circumstances and the realities of parenting.
- Things may not change and that’s okay. Keep in mind you are likely offering healthy snacks throughout the day, thereby providing children with lots of nourishment to help them grow and develop.