

Chapter 6

Healthy eating

Introduction

Serving nutritious meals and snacks to the infants, toddlers, preschoolers and school-age children in your care provides them with the nourishment and energy that they need to grow, learn and be healthy. The meals and snacks served in your centre are an important part of providing proper care.

Your choice of foods, plus a relaxed, happy atmosphere at the table will help children form healthy eating habits for life.

In this chapter, you'll find information on the following topics:

- Feeding breastmilk, formula or cow's milk
- Feeding solid foods to infants
- Feeding children meals and snacks
- Menu planning

Tips for success

- Your job is to provide healthy food choices. It is the child's job to decide whether to eat and how much to eat
- Planning menus helps to ensure all the Food Groups are offered. A planned menu also helps to create the shopping list and control supplies. The menu should take into consideration food allergies and restrictions
- Snacks can be nutritious and fun and should not contribute to tooth decay. Refer to the section on *Healthy snacking for healthy teeth* in Chapter 8
- When feeding infants (0-12 months), follow their parent's instructions. Feed each infant according to their appetite, not according to a pre-set amount of food

For more information on healthy eating and menu planning, visit York Region Community and Health Services, Nutrition Services at www.york.ca/nutrition or call 1-800-735-6625 ext. 4335. To speak to a Registered Dietitian, call EatRight Ontario at 1-877-510-5102 or visit www.eatrightontario.ca and click on the "send an email" link.

Feeding infants (birth to 12 months)

Healthy Beginnings is a series of booklets and fact sheets distributed by York Region Community and Health Services. They offer detailed guidelines for feeding infants. Some of these booklets and fact sheets are also available in different languages. You can find them at www.york.ca/nutrition or refer to Appendix 6.

Please note that this infant feeding section refers to babies up to the age of 12 months. Children in your centre who are 12 to 18 months of age should be fed following the guidelines in the *Feeding children (one year of age and older)* section of this chapter.

Food provided by parents

Obtain written instructions from parents concerning types of foods eaten, likes and dislikes, allergies, how their baby likes to be fed and if they can feed themselves. Review these details with each infant's parents to confirm their instructions. Remember to update the instructions with the parents regularly.

Make sure that the parents bring in fresh bottles of breastmilk, cow's milk or formula each day. Advise parents that the milk must be transported with an ice pack and stored at 4°C (40°F) or lower.

Label breastmilk, formula, cow's milk and food brought in by the parent with the child's name and the date it arrived.

Store all food and bottled breastmilk, milk or formula in the refrigerator immediately. All of these foods should be stored at 4°C (40°F) or lower.

Each child should only drink from their own bottle and bottles should not be shared between children. Sharing bottles means sharing germs.

Any leftover breastmilk, milk or formula provided by the parent should be discarded or returned to the parent at the end of each day if the parent wishes to see how much was not consumed.

When preparing formula, use exact amounts according to package directions.

Warming bottled breastmilk, formula or cow's milk

Some babies do not need their breastmilk or formula warmed up, so please follow the parent's instructions. For more information on breastfeeding refer to Appendix 6.

Do not warm breastmilk or formula in the microwave. This is not a safe practice. Microwaving can result in uneven temperatures that may cause scalding or burning of an infant's mouth.

The following are safe ways to warm formula:

- Place the bottle under running warm water or in a bowl of warm water
- Use an electric bottle warmer on a low setting

Test the temperature of the formula by gently shaking the bottle and then putting a few drops on the inside of your wrist. The formula should feel slightly warm, not hot.

Feeding from a bottle

When feeding babies a bottle, hold the baby and engage them; do not prop the bottle so that you can attend to another matter. Try to feed slowly; do not tilt the bottle too much. Follow the baby's signs of hunger and fullness and stop feeding when the baby indicates they are full (e.g., turning their head away, pushing bottle, fussing), regardless if they have finished the bottle or not.



Infant food

Bottled or jarred baby food:

When you are opening jarred baby food, make sure you hear the “pop” sound. If you do not hear that sound, the jar should be returned to the store because the food may be unsafe. If the top has a ‘peel off’ lid, ensure the seal is not broken before you open it.

To warm baby food from a jar, remove the amount you are planning on serving. Place the baby food in a dish and place that dish in a shallow pan of hot water (double boiler method) for a few minutes. Stir well and test the temperature on the inside of your wrist. The food should feel slightly warm, not hot.

If using a microwave, follow manufacturer's directions for warming the food. Always heat baby food in a microwave-safe dish, not in the jar. Stir well and test the temperature on the inside of your wrist. The food should feel slightly warm, not hot.

Date and store the food remaining in the jar in the refrigerator at 4°C (40°F) or lower. Throw out opened jars of baby food after two to three days.

Thawing frozen baby food:

If parents provide frozen homemade baby food, it is important to thaw it properly. Thaw frozen baby food in the refrigerator. Once thawed, heat the portions of food in a dish which has been placed in a shallow pan of warm water (double boiler method) for a few minutes. Stir well and test the temperature on the inside of your wrist. The food should feel slightly warm, not hot.

If using a microwave to thaw and heat homemade baby food, microwave in a microwave-safe dish using medium-low heat. Do not overheat. Stir well and test the temperature on the inside of your wrist. The food should feel slightly warm, not hot. Do not refreeze thawed food.

Feeding infants

Refer to Appendix 6 *Healthy Beginnings - Feeding your baby* booklet for the latest information on infant feeding. Use this booklet to help to form the routines in your centre as well as help you to work with the parents to achieve successful infant feeding.

Follow the baby's cues for feeding. You can tell if a baby is hungry if they are turning their head toward you with an open mouth or sucking on their hand vigorously. Crying is a late sign of hunger. Babies who are only drinking breastmilk or infant formula (under 6 months of age) are best fed on demand.

When feeding solids, feed each baby from their own dish, not directly from the jar or original container unless the whole amount will be eaten. The reason for this is that the spoon will carry saliva and germs back to the food, causing it to spoil. Always remove the amount of food you need, warm up that portion, and feed from a dish. Return the opened jar of food to the refrigerator immediately; store at 4°C (40°F) or lower.

Throw out uneaten portions of food which have been touched by the feeding spoon.

Feed infants according to their individual appetites. Never force babies to finish all the food or milk that you have prepared. If a baby refuses food, or turns their head away or pushes the spoon away, they are either already full or not hungry. Let the baby know that this is okay, and wait until the next meal or snack to offer them food again.

Serve baby food plain without adding sugar or salt.

Feed babies while they are sitting up, such as in a high chair. This will reduce the chances of the baby choking.

Around eight months of age, babies can gradually start eating some of the soft foods offered to older children. Start with offering mashed foods, then move on to minced and chopped foods. Offer small amounts of foods with more texture at each meal.

Encourage children over eight months old to feed themselves. Self-feeding will take time and can be messy, but it is a very important learning experience for children. Refer to Appendix 6 *Finger foods* for a list of food ideas to offer infants that will help them to self-feed.

Remember that your job as a caregiver is to provide nutritious foods; it is the child's job to choose whether or not to eat and to decide how much they will eat.

Do not put the baby's spoon in your mouth and then into the baby's mouth. If feeding more than one child, use separate spoons for each child. Sharing spoons means sharing germs.

Always watch babies while they are eating. Babies sometimes gag on a new food or new textures and this is normal. Babies gag to avoid choking, but this is not choking. Refer to the section *Choking Prevention* in this chapter and Appendix 6 *Choking prevention tips* for more information.

Do not give honey to a baby during the first year. Honey may contain *Clostridium botulinum* (a type of bacteria that causes food poisoning). Check food labels to make sure there is no honey in the foods you feed to babies.

Feeding routines

Each infant will have their own feeding routines. These will vary due to:

- A parent's instructions
- The infant's age and developmental stage
- The time of arrival and departure of each infant (e.g., early arrivals may not have had anything to drink, while others may have had a complete feeding)

Feeding children (one year of age and older)

Children learn their food preferences and eating habits; they are not born with them. You can have quite an influence on them and it is important that you provide them with nutritious meals and snacks, as well as expose them to a variety of foods prepared and served in different ways.

Don't force a child to eat. Keep in mind that each time a child sees a food on the table or sees someone else eating it, they are learning and will eventually get to the point that they will eat that food.

Young children eat best when you make mealtimes pleasant, positive and supportive. Sit down and eat with the children. Have a pleasant conversation and a good time together.

Serving sizes for children one year of age and older

There is a wide variation in portions of foods consumed by children. For example, a two-year-old may eat half a slice of bread, whereas a four-year-old is more likely to eat a whole slice.

Food Group	Ranges of serving size for children 1 to 5 years old	Range of serving size for children 6 years and older
Vegetables and Fruit	¼ - 1 whole fruit or 80 - 125 ml (1/3 - ½ cup)	1 whole fruit 125 ml (½ cup)
Grain Products	½ - 1 slice or 50 - 125 ml (¼ - ½ cup)	1 slice or 125 – 175 ml (½ - ¾ cup)
Milk and Alternatives	125 - 175 ml (½ - ¾ cup)	175 – 250 ml (¾ - 1 cup)
Meat and Alternatives	30 - 60 grams (1 - 2 ounces)	60 – 90 grams (2 - 3 ounces)

The serving size ranges in this chart are from the *Day Nurseries Act*. However, nutrition regulations under the *Day Nurseries Act* currently reference the 1977 version of *Canada's Food Guide* which makes the regulations under the *Day Nurseries Act* considerably out-of date.

For children aged two and over, refer to Appendix 6 *Canada's Food Guide* for serving size examples for each Food Group.

For additional information on feeding children one to three years of age, refer to Appendix 6 *Feeding your toddler*. This booklet is also available in other languages.

Total amount of food to offer

Ensure that each child aged one year of age or older who is in attendance for six hours or more, is provided with healthy food choices in the amounts shown below. Let children decide how much of the food they will eat of the food you offer.

Food Group	Total amount to offer a child one year of age older
Vegetables and Fruit	2 - 2½ whole fruits or 250 - 300 ml (1 - 1¼ cup)
Grain Products	1½ - 2½ slices or 175 - 450 ml (¾ - 1¾ cup)
Milk and Alternatives	250 - 375 ml (1 - 1½ cup)
Meat and Alternatives	60 - 90 grams (2 - 3 oz)

Amount of food to offer at meal time

The *Day Nurseries Act* requires that each child who is in attendance at meal time is provided a meal consisting of the following number of servings from the Food Groups:

Food Group	Number of servings to provide
Vegetables and Fruit	2 servings (e.g., cooked peas, green pepper rings, apple sauce)
Grain Products	1 serving (e.g., bread, cereal, pasta, rice)
Milk and Alternatives	1 serving (e.g., milk, chocolate milk, fortified soy beverage)
Meat and Alternatives	1 serving (e.g., beef, chicken, egg, kidney beans)

Between-meal snacks

Nutritious between-meal snacks help provide the calories and nutrients that children need to grow and stay healthy.

Snacks should include choices from at least **two Food Groups** from *Canada's Food Guide*. Refer to Appendix 6 *Canada's Food Guide*.

Leave two to three hours between scheduled snack and meal times so that children are hungry enough to eat when food is served.

Menu planning

Planning nutritious meals and snacks that offer variety can be a challenge. However, a well-planned menu simplifies shopping and food preparation and gives parents some assurance that their child is well looked after.

Involve child care staff who will be cooking, preparing, serving or shopping for food in developing the menu.

Celebrate cultural diversity by serving a variety of healthy foods from different cultures.

Finger foods that are easy to handle can be good foods for children.

Always have tap water available.

Vegetables and Fruit

- Offer dark green and orange vegetables and orange fruit more often
- Buy fresh local vegetables and fruit when in season
- Frozen and canned vegetables and fruit can be healthy and convenient options. Choose unsweetened frozen fruit or fruit packed in juice, not syrup. Canned vegetables usually contain added salt. Rinse and drain canned vegetables to lower the salt content or choose lower sodium versions
- Offer vegetables and fruit more often than juice. If you include juice on your menu, use 100 per cent pure juice. Fruit-flavoured drinks are mostly sugar and water with some added flavours, and do not provide the important nutrients children need to grow

Grain Products

- Make at least half of the grain products on your menu *whole grain* each day (e.g., barley, brown rice, whole grain whole wheat, whole oats)
- Choose cereals and crackers that have two grams of fibre or more per 30 gram serving

Milk and Alternatives

- Serve homogenized (3.25% M.F.) milk to children aged 12 to 24 months. Lower-fat milk, such as 2%, 1% or skim, does not have enough fat for the development of their brain and nervous system
- Serve 1% or 2% milk to children over two years of age
- Serve lower-fat milk alternatives (e.g., 20% M.F. cheese, 2% M.F. yogurt) to children over two years of age

Meat and Alternatives

- Serve meat alternatives such as beans, lentils and tofu more often
- Offer at least one serving of fish each week. Choose fish such as Salmon, Mackerel, Herring, Sardines, Trout, and Char, which are good sources of omega 3 fatty acids
- If deli meats, sausages or prepackaged meats are served, choose those lower in sodium and fat (i.e., no more than three grams of fat and no more than 480 mg of sodium per 75 grams)

Foods and beverages high in fat, sugar or salt

- Fats and oils are part of a healthy diet in small quantities. Choose healthy fats such as vegetable oil or soft margarine made with non-hydrogenated oil (two grams or less of saturated and trans fat combined, per serving)
- Avoid foods and beverages that are high in fat, salt or added sugar and low in nutrients (see chart below)
- **Note:** Young children under six years of age have relatively high needs for energy (calories) and you may need to include higher fat choices from the four food groups to help satisfy these needs. The *Food Guide* recommends that **nutritious foods** (e.g., cheese) not be restricted for young children because of their fat content

Foods and beverages not recommended for child care settings	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peanuts, nuts, nut and seed butters • Foods containing artificial trans fat (e.g., hydrogenated oils, partially hydrogenated oils, shortenings, hydrogenated hard margarines, frozen pizza, muffin mixes) • Soft drinks, sports drinks, energy drinks • Coffee and caffeinated tea-based drinks • Fruit-flavoured beverages that are not 100 per cent fruit juice • Ice cream treats and popsicles • Flavoured gelatins (e.g., Jello™) • Cakes, cupcakes and doughnuts • Toaster pastries • Chocolate or yogurt-covered granola bars or granola bars with candy, chocolate or marshmallows in them • Candy, chocolate and marshmallows 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full fat sour cream and cream cheese, table cream and coffee cream • Unpasteurized apple ciders and juices • Unpasteurized milk or milk alternatives • High fat, salty snacks (e.g., potato chips, nacho chips, cheese puffs) • Deep-fried foods (e.g., chicken nuggets, French fries, fish sticks, samosas, spring rolls) • Hot dogs, sausages and bacon (e.g., regular side bacon, turkey bacon, chicken bacon) • Cured meats (e.g., salami, pepperoni, bologna) • Cream, whipped cream, non-dairy whipped cream toppings and creamers • Instant noodle soups • Fruit flavoured candy, gummies, rolls or chews

The following items should only be used in small quantities:

- Jams, jellies, marmalades, syrup, fruit butters, light cream cheese
- Sauces, salsas, dips, gravy, condiments (e.g., pickles, relish, mustard)
- Soft margarine (with zero grams trans fat), vegetable oils, butter, salad dressings, mayonnaise

Food allergies, intolerances or restrictions

If you have children in your centre with food allergies, intolerances or restrictions, you will need to substitute the offending foods with foods that are in the same Food Group (e.g., serve fortified soy beverages to children two years and over who do not drink milk. Apple juice is not an acceptable substitute for milk). Refer to the sections *Anaphylaxis alert* and *Anaphylactic checklist for child care centres* in Chapter 5.

Steps to planning a cycle menu

A cycle menu is a series of menus planned for a period of time (e.g., four weeks). The menu is different for each day during the cycle. After you serve the four week menu, you have completed the first cycle. The menus are then repeated in the same order.

Use a menu planning form. Refer to Appendix 6 *One week menu planning form for child care*. The following steps will help you build a cycle menu:

1. First plan a menu for one day. Start with lunch
 - Select a meat or meat alternative (e.g., fish, eggs, tofu, lentils, chicken, beef). Note: cheese is not a meat alternative
 - Select a vegetable. Consider various forms and textures (e.g., raw, cooked, grated, chopped, mashed, sliced, cubed, sticks, wedges)
 - Select another vegetable or fruit
 - Select a grain product (e.g., bread, cereal, rice, pasta). Try interesting grains like brown rice, kasha, rye bread, whole wheat mini pitas and tortillas
 - Add milk or a milk alternative (e.g., fortified soy beverage, cheese, yogurt, milk pudding)

Note: Dessert is not a required component of a meal. If dessert is served, it must be a nutritious choice. Some dessert ideas are fruit crisp, fresh fruit, canned fruit, yogurt and pudding made with milk.

2. Then plan the two snacks for the first day. Each snack should include choices from **two Food Groups**
3. Then use the one day menu as a guide to build the other four days of the week. Simply substitute foods for other foods within the same food group to make a one week menu
4. Then develop four weekly menus. Make each of the days in the four weeks unique. Try not to repeat menu items in the four-week menu cycle

Plan to have a different menu for winter and summer, and if possible, spring and fall, using a four-week cycle. Make the most of the colours and variety of vegetables and fruit available in season.

Post menus for the current and following weeks in a prominent place for parents to see. Keep used menus, each marked with the date they were used, for at least 30 days after the last day for which it is applicable as per the *Day Nurseries Act*.

Menu planning checklist

Use this checklist as a guide for planning menus, and again when you are finished, to re-check the menus you have planned:

- There is a variety of food from the four Food Groups, day-to-day.
- We have included finger food or food which is easy to eat.
- We have chosen food that does not contribute to tooth decay. (Refer to the section on *Early childhood tooth decay* and *Healthy snacking for healthy teeth* in Chapter 8.)
- We have chosen food with different colours, shapes, flavours, temperatures and textures.
- We will be introducing new food, along with familiar foods the children already like.
- We have chosen food items and recipes that reflect the cultural preferences of the children.
- We have balanced higher-fat menu items with lower-fat menu items.
- If juice is on the menu, is it 100 per cent juice.
- We will be using vegetables and fruits that are in season.
- We have selected a variety of whole grain breads and cereals.
- We have adequate time and personnel to prepare the food.
- We are within our budget.

Sample four-week preschool menu

Week 1

	Monday Date: _____	Tuesday Date: _____	Wednesday Date: _____	Thursday Date: _____	Friday Date: _____
Snack	Pancakes served with applesauce Milk	Small whole grain carrot muffin Fruit cup Milk	Oatmeal Cantaloupe slices and blueberries Water	O-shaped oat cereal Milk Sliced apples	Whole wheat toast with margarine Scrambled egg Orange juice
Lunch or Supper	Whole wheat penne pasta with tomato sauce and meatballs Garden salad with dressing Yogurt Milk	Tuna (light) casserole made with green peas and cheese Peach crisp Milk	Macaroni and cheese Chick pea salad made with cucumber and green pepper Orange slices Milk	Hamburger with tomato and lettuce Corn Pineapple rings Milk	Pizzas (whole wheat English muffins, ham, tomato sauce and cheese) Cucumber slices Grapes cut in half/quarters Milk
Snack	Mozzarella cheese cubes Banana Water	Whole wheat mini pitas Hummus dip Carrot strips, sliced thinly Water	Graham crackers Banana smoothie (milk, banana, yogurt)	Raisin toast with margarine Yogurt Water	Chocolate pudding made with milk Clementine Water

Week 2

	Monday Date: _____	Tuesday Date: _____	Wednesday Date: _____	Thursday Date: _____	Friday Date: _____
Snack	Banana bread Milk	Grilled cheese sandwich on whole wheat bread Fruit cup Orange juice	O-shaped oat cereal Milk Apple slices	Whole wheat French toast with syrup Orange wedges Milk	Cinnamon raisin bagel, toasted Milk
Lunch or Supper	Baked beans Perogies Green beans Mango and apple slices Milk	Stir-fry chicken with carrots and broccoli Rice Plum and orange slices Milk	Egg salad sandwich on whole wheat bun Green peas Strawberries Milk	Bean and cheese burritos (whole wheat tortilla) Celery sticks thinly sliced with ranch dip Sliced peaches Milk	Chicken quesadillas Carrot sticks sliced thinly Sliced pears Milk
Snack	Tuna (light) salad on whole grain crackers Water	Whole wheat pita wedges Salsa Milk	Yogurt Cantaloupe and banana slices Water	Butterscotch pudding made with milk Grapes cut in half Water	Low sodium/fat turkey sandwich on whole wheat bread Sliced tomato Water

Week 3

	Monday Date: _____	Tuesday Date: _____	Wednesday Date: _____	Thursday Date: _____	Friday Date: _____
Snack	Small bran muffin Sliced peaches Water	Yogurt and granola (trans fat free) Water	Whole wheat toast and jam Milk	Corn bran cereal Milk Fruit cup	O-shaped oat cereal Grapes cut in half/quarters Milk
Lunch or Supper	Sliced ham Frozen corn Whole wheat toast with margarine Apple slices Milk	Salmon cakes or mini patties Brown rice Bok choy Fruit cup Milk	Lentils or dhal Rice Sweet potato Watermelon and apple slices Milk	Meat loaf Homemade mashed potatoes Cooked carrots Small bun Chocolate pudding made with milk Water	Homemade vegetable soup Frittata with cheese Whole wheat toast Apple slices Milk
Snack	O-shaped oat cereal Milk Kiwi slices	Grapes cut in half/quarter Chocolate milk	Yogurt Banana Water	Whole wheat bread sticks Yogurt Water	Edamame (soy beans) Whole wheat crackers Apple juice

Week 4

	Monday Date: _____	Tuesday Date: _____	Wednesday Date: _____	Thursday Date: _____	Friday Date: _____
Snack	Shredded wheat cereal Milk Banana	Whole wheat toast with margarine Hard cooked egg Milk	Small blueberry oatmeal muffin Milk	French toast with syrup Grapes cut in half/quarters Water	Whole wheat toasted English muffin Cheddar cheese Water
Lunch or Supper	Salmon salad sandwich on whole wheat bread Oven-baked French fries Apple slices sprinkled with cinnamon Milk	Spaghetti with tomato and meat sauce Zucchini sticks with ranch dressing dip Pear slices Milk	Low sodium/fat ham and cheese sandwich on rye bread Green and red pepper rings Apple crisp Milk	Homemade chicken fingers Brown rice Cooked broccoli Applesauce Milk	Homemade chili Tortilla or rice Cooked squash Strawberries and sliced bananas Milk
Snack	Bread sticks Strawberries Water	Yogurt Papaya and banana slices Water	Whole wheat pita wedges Hummus dip Orange slices Water	Whole grain crackers Cantaloupe Hot chocolate made with warm milk	Trail mix made with whole grain cereals and pretzels Orange wedges Milk

Nutrition guidelines for before and after school programs

Snacks and breakfasts should provide a variety of menu choices to help ensure that the children get the nutrients and energy that they need. They should also consist of foods that will promote good dental and overall health.

Tap water should always be available.

Healthy snacks

Each snack should include foods from at least **two Food Groups** from *Canada's Food Guide* with at least **one Food Guide Serving from the Vegetables and Fruit** Food Group.

- Vegetables and Fruit (e.g., 100 per cent juice, bananas, cantaloupe, carrots, green peppers) **and**
- Grain Products (e.g., whole grain breads and cereals, crackers, banana bread, pita) **and/or**
- Milk and Alternatives (e.g., milk, fortified soy beverage, yogurt) **and/or**
- Meat and Alternatives (e.g., hummus, egg, ham slices)

Examples of healthy snacks include:

- Orange, cheese strings, water
- Banana, chocolate milk
- Apple, O-shaped oat cereal, milk
- Fruit cup, whole wheat crackers, water
- Clementine, yogurt tubes, water

Snacks to avoid include:

- Sweet snacks such as candy, cookies and drinks with sugar
- Raisins and other dried fruit
- Salty snack foods such as potato chips

Refer to Appendix 6 *One week menu planning form for before and after school programs*.

Healthy breakfasts

Breakfast should include foods from at least **three Food Groups** from *Canada's Food Guide*.

- One *Food Guide* serving from Vegetables and Fruit
- One *Food Guide* serving from Milk and Alternatives
- One *Food Guide* serving from either Grain Products **and/or** Meat and Alternatives

Choking prevention

Always watch babies and young children while they are eating. They sometimes gag on a new food or new textures. This is normal. They gag to avoid choking, but this is not choking. Choking is when food gets stuck in the throat and stops air from getting into the lungs. Refer to Appendix 6 *Choking prevention tips* for more information.

Foods that can cause choking in babies and young children (3 years of age and younger)

- whole grapes, cherry or grape tomatoes, melon balls and olives
- fish with bones
- fruit with pits such as cherries
- fruit with tough skins
- hard pieces of raw fruit or vegetables such as carrots and apples
- raisins
- popcorn
- peanut butter or other nut butters on a spoon or spread thickly
- foods held together with toothpicks or skewers
- chunks of meat or cheese
- hard chips such as nacho chips
- whole nuts (alone or in foods)
- whole seeds (alone or in foods)
- wieners or hot dogs
- chewing gum
- hard cookies
- cough drops
- fruit leathers
- hard candies
- jujube-type candies
- mini jelly cup or jellied fruit

Tips for feeding safely

- Cut grapes, melon balls, grape/cherry tomatoes and olives in half
- Cut wieners lengthwise and then into **small** pieces
- Grate or cook carrots and other hard vegetables or fruit
- Spread peanut and nut butters **thinly** on toast or crackers
- Soak raisins in water to soften them
- Remove skins or pits from fruit and vegetables

Tips to prevent choking

- Watch babies and children while they are eating, even snacks
- Make sure babies and young children are sitting upright when eating, not walking, talking, laughing, running or lying down
- Make sure children chew their food well
- Give children time to eat slowly and carefully. Try not to hurry a child

Some of the information in Chapter 6 has been adapted from: Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services. (2008). *Student Nutrition Program: Nutrition Guidelines July 2008*. Queen's Printer for Ontario.