GUIDANCE FOR SCHOOL SNACK PROGRAMS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way snack programs operate in schools. Use this information to help you choose and serve food safely during the pandemic. For additional guidance, refer to the Government of Alberta school re-entry guidelines at alberta.ca/returntoschool.

Whether you are starting out or have been operating a snack program for a while, talk to your local public health inspector to find out what food safety requirements or permits may be required for your program. Find their contact information at ahs.ca/eph.

Offer foods from 1 or 2 groups for a healthy snack

**Vegetables and Fruits**
- whole fruit
- vegetables
- unsweetened applesauce or fruit cup in juice or water
- dried fruit

**Whole Grains**
- breads, bagel or pita
- crackers
- granola bar

**Protein Foods**
- milk or fortified soy beverage
- nut, seed or soy butter
- cheese
- yogurt

Examples:
- Whole fruit
- Banana and cheese string
- Nut butter and crackers
- Yogurt and granola bar

See *Snacks for Children* for more ideas

When possible, use individually pre-packaged food to minimize food handling. Foods that are in bulk or larger packages need to be portioned in an area that allows for COVID-19 control measures and food safe preparation.
GUIDANCE ON HOW TO SERVE FOOD SAFELY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Staff Hygiene

- Wash hands with soap and warm water frequently, including before and after disinfecting surfaces or handling food.
- Disinfect all high touch surfaces (e.g. fridge and cupboard handles, and taps) regularly with approved disinfectant.
- Avoid touching your face and personal items during food preparation, disinfection of surfaces, and dishwashing.

Staff & Volunteers

- Staff and volunteers are required to self-screen daily for symptoms prior to entering a school.
- In the food preparation area:
  - Limit to essential staff and volunteers while food is being prepared.
  - Ensure everyone maintains 2 meters distance from all others, at all times.
  - Masks are required whenever physical distancing cannot be maintained.

Serving Food

- Designate a staff member/volunteer to serve food items to seated students in order to limit congregation of students and line-ups.
- If line-ups are necessary, provide floor markings to encourage 2 meters physical distancing.
- Use appropriate serving utensils to serve food items (e.g. use tongs to serve whole fruit).

For self-service or 'grab and go' Items:

- Food and drinks need to be individually portioned on plates, cups, or in bags.
- Space food and drink items apart to reduce students touching multiple items.
- Provide floor marking in line-ups to encourage 2 meters physical distancing.
- Designate a staff member/volunteer to assist younger students with opening packages if needed.

Spaces for Eating

- Ensure students wash or sanitize their hands before and after eating.
- Regularly sanitize tables and chairs.
- Spread out tables and chairs and encourage students to eat with their cohort, while physically distancing.

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