

CHILDREN'S CELEBRATIONS AT THE CENTRE

Some parents have expressed concerns about food and gifts given to children at parties at the Centre. The Children's Centre believes that parents are free to provide for children's parties as they wish, however, the Centre does not contribute any food for such occasions except for fairy bread (wholemeal bread) as a special treat at afternoon tea time in All Day Care. Since it is parents who provide for these parties, which are very much enjoyed by children, it is important that parents indicate their intentions to staff so that appropriate preparation can be undertaken. As required under the Food Act (1984), it is the parent/s responsibility to sign a Statement of Appropriate Food Handling Practices form, upon arrival at the Centre with food prepared at home. By completing this form you are stating that the food you have brought into the Centre for other children to consume, meets the stated food safety requirements. Non-compliance with this will mean that the food product/s will not be handled by Centre Personnel or served to children.

Parents who choose to provide for their child's party/celebration should be mindful that the Centre takes part in the Start Right Eat Right Scheme which promotes health, nutrition and well being in all young children. The Centre focuses on the occasion, not the treat or cake, so making them enjoyable and special experiences for **all** children.

Non-food items, for example party hats and whistles etc will be encouraged at these times of celebrations, as one strategy to help reduce the risk of an allergic reaction. In particular children at risk of anaphylaxis reactions will be closely supervised on special occasions such as excursions, incursions, days of celebration or family days. This is to ensure there is no sharing of food or cross contamination of food items that are allergens to children at risk.

When a celebration is to take place within an individual section involving special food being offered to children – the other parents within the section will be provided with a list of food types and the ingredients. Parents then must sign their consent for their child to consume the special food. If consent is not signed off, the food will not be offered to that child. It is therefore important for the parents providing the celebration food to communicate with staff within the section on the food items that are going to be offered. Alternatives will be offered to children with allergies as arranged with their parents/guardians.

If parents choose to bring balloons to the Centre for celebrations they must bring them **inflated**. Centre Personnel are permitted to use balloons within individual Sections for children's play and/or decoration as long as they are **inflated**. If inflated balloons are present in the playroom and within reach of children, staff are to ensure that children playing with balloons are supervised at all times. If a balloon bursts pieces need to be picked up immediately and disposed of.

However, when children with latex allergies have been identified staff will ensure the environment is free of party balloons and Centre families will be advised in writing of this update.

NOTE:

Centre personnel have been advised that additional items brought in for parties, for example lolly bags, will be held by staff until the end of the day, and then handed to each child's parent on departure from the Centre.

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