



Food Size Guidelines:

Infants: $\frac{1}{4}$ in pieces



Toddlers/children under 2: $\frac{1}{2}$ in pieces



Tips to prevent choking:

Whole bread rolls and sandwiches must also be cut into small pieces for children under 3 years old. Young children cannot yet gauge how to make small bites, especially when talking, laughing, and eating with friends.

- Round items should be cut in half length wise, including berries
- Raw vegetables (like carrots) should be steamed or cooked
- Tube shaped foods should be cut in half lengthwise, then sliced into shorter strips no larger than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch.
- Avoid foods that are as wide around as a nickel
- Avoid foods that are not easily chewable, like gummy fruit candies or fruit strips
- Avoid mixing foods with different sizes and textures like casseroles or mashed potatoes with larger pieces of meat. Young children prefer foods separated and can better assess bites of food of similar size and texture.

Carefully assess any food related to parties or celebrations. Prepackaged snacks foods may not meet the serving size for older children. Chips coated in powdered cheese or seasonings may trigger an allergic reaction. The packaging of some snacks can be a choking hazard, like twist-off tops of applesauce or smoothies. All food must be served on a plate with a utensil.

Parents need to be pre-notified of any food served that is not part of the regular menu both for licensing and as safeguard against potential allergies.

WARNING:



Foods to avoid:

- Cheese cubes or blocks and meat in cubes larger than noted above
- Baked mozzarella sticks
- Dried fruit and fruit snacks
- Hard candy, including hard to chew candy like taffy (Starburst, Now & Later)
- Hard pretzels, pretzel and bagel chips
- Hot dogs, even at family events
- Marshmallows
- Popcorn
- Whole or tube-shaped foods (grapes, cherry tomatoes, raw carrots, hot dogs)
- Whole berries

Infants under a year-old should be served only what has been directed by the parent on the state or Discovery Point Infant Feeding Plan Form, even if the food is provided by the center.

All employees that prepare and serve food review these safety guidelines annually as well as State regulations for food service and preparation for your state and county.