



Keeping Schools Safe for Students with Food Allergies

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Why is a food allergy policy guide needed?

- Increased presence of students with food allergy
- All students need to be safe and ready to learn
- Emergencies are inevitable
- Need for credible information and policy guidance for education officials related to food allergy and anaphylaxis
- Proactive approach rather than reactive



What does policy do?

- Establishes accountability
 - School Board governs through policy
- Serves as communications tool
 - Process as important as product
- Guides actions
 - Budget
 - Staffing
 - Professional development
 - Protocols



Key elements of comprehensive food allergy policy

- Emergency response plan
- Communication and confidentiality
- Identification of students with allergies
 - Health services
 - Individual written management plans
 - Medication protocols
- Healthy and safe school environment
- Staff professional development
- Allergy awareness education for students and parents
- Monitoring and evaluation



Food Allergy Awareness

- School health staff promote school awareness
- Teachers learn to modify class projects to be allergen free
- Enforce “no food-sharing” policy
- Enforce “no eating” policy in certain areas
- Encourages use of commercially-prepared foods that contain FDA ingredient label to identify allergens
- Hand-washing education –when, how, where



CDC/DASH activities on food allergy

- Multidisciplinary guidance on food allergy management in schools
 - NSBA policy guide & Food Allergy/Safety "101" packet
 - FAAN guidance for parents and caregivers
 - Convened expert panel (jointly with USDA)
 - NASN to develop tools for school health services staff
 - Other tools in planning stages



Examples of Input from Expert Panel

- Content gaps
 - Bullying prevention and response
 - Differentiate age/developmental needs of students
 - Differentiate food allergy from food sensitivity
 - Emergency plan AND management plan
- Challenges
 - Lack of school nurses
 - Varied state laws on delegation
 - Confidentiality



What do you think?

- Peanut ban?
- Students with food allergies sit at separate table?
- Students carry their own medications, e.g., Epinephrine, Benadryl?



One size does not fit all – Policy needs to protect and be flexible

- Local conditions and capacities vary
- Student needs and wants vary
- State laws vary
- Accommodations can vary



Developing food allergy policy offers opportunities

- Foster communication among family, student, health care provider and school
- Integrate into “all hazards” plan for schools
- Establish multi-disciplinary approach to planning and implementation, i.e., Coordinated School Health model



For more information

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