Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery
COOK FOR KIDS
TIP Sheet and Meal Restrictions

*Not only do you provide nutritious, yummy meals for the children
at the Nursery, you serve the Child Care Provider staff and
the child care volunteers and your team too.*

*Relying on you for these meals allowed us to
save more than $80,000
in food costs alone in our last fiscal year.*

Meal Grid
- New entrée rotation for each day of the week. Different meal grid for January-June and July-December. Please review these meal grids before planning your meal.

Cooking Guidelines
- **All food must be purchased already prepared or cooked on site**. Due to licensing regulations, food cannot be cooked at home and brought into the Nursery.

Team Members
- **Please no volunteers under the age of 12 years old.** Teams with teenage volunteers need to have at least one volunteer over the age of 21 years old.

Choking Hazards-
The foods below pose a **choking hazard to children under age 4**. Small, round, firm foods that can slip easily down the throat, those that are stringy or sticky, and those that swell when moist are the most dangerous. You should not serve them to kids in this age group unless you're able to prepare them in a way that lessens their potential to cause choking. Some common-sense advice:

- **APPLES**   Always chop apples and other firm fruits into manageable, bite-size pieces, or cook until soft in texture.

- **CARROTS**   Raw carrots should be finely shredded, or cooked thoroughly until mushy to the touch.

- **CELERY**   Its stringy quality makes celery hard for young kids to chew and swallow properly. With a peeler, remove the stringy outside layer of the celery stick, and cut it up before serving.

- **GRAPES**   Cut grapes into quarters before giving them to the children (if they have seeds, remove them). Similarly, cherries should be pitted and chopped before serving.

- **HARD CANDY** Small sucking candies are dangerous because kids tend to bite them and may accidentally swallow them whole, blocking their airway.

- **HOT DOGS**   One of the most common foods to choke children, hot dogs must be cut up to become safer to eat. Slice length-wise and then chop into irregularly shaped, bite-size pieces.

Choking Hazards (con't)

- ♦ **NUTS**   Peanuts (like hot dogs) are a leading cause of childhood choking. But all nuts pose a threat because of their size and shape and therefore should be avoided.

- ♦ **PEANUT BUTTER** The safest way to prepare peanut butter is to spread a very thin layer on a slice of bread and serve with a beverage. Children under 4 should never eat large clumps of peanut butter from a spoon or a finger.

- ♦ **POPCORN**   Its size, shape, and sharp, irregular edges make popcorn a prime choking food.

- ♦ **RAISINS**   Don't give raisins to kids under age 2. Two to 4-year olds should be served only plump, moist raisins or ones that have been cooked in foods like pudding or bread.

Meal Restrictions

- ♦ **Products containing honey and high fructose corn syrup should not be served to children less than 12 months** (i.e. Apple sauce-unless it is all natural no sugar added, graham crackers, pancake syrup, and jellies).
- ♦ We do not serve children under **12 months** the following:
    - ♦ **Meats:** because of digestive issues and chewing ability, (including fish, and shell fish).
    - ♦ **Egg Whites:** Some infants may have an allergy to the protein in the egg whites. Not serving the whites to children under 1year allows the infant's immune system to develop and reduces the possibility of an allergic reaction.
    - ♦ **Berries** (Strawberries, uncooked blueberries, raspberries, blackberries)
    - ♦ **Citrus Fruits**   (oranges, pineapple, grapefruit, kiwi, lemons and limes)
    - ♦ **Dried fruits**
    - ♦ **Nuts and Seeds** (Peanuts, Pecans, Walnuts, and sunflower seeds)
    - ♦ **Chips and Pretzels**
    - ♦ **Popcorn**
    - ♦ **Marshmallows**
    - ♦ **Raw Carrots and Celery**
    - ♦ **Apple Pieces**
    - ♦ **Candy, Fruit Snacks, Chocolate, and Gum**
- ♦ **Peanut Butter should not be served to children less than 1 year of age**