



## **Meal Substitution Guidelines**

At ECOS Institute, we are pleased to help your child have a pleasant and healthy experience. If your child has special dietary needs (e.g., allergy to milk products, religious dietary preferences, dietary requirements for diabetics, or a medically prescribed diet), please follow these guidelines:

1. Six weeks ahead, notify the ECOS Institute site where your child will attend. Names and phone numbers are listed at the bottom of the page.
  - a. Discuss your child's special needs and determine if substitutions are necessary.
  - b. The program director or site nurse will send a menu if necessary.
2. Review the menu.
  - a. Identify the items your child cannot eat.
  - b. Plan substitutions, which you will provide.
  - c. Clearly indicate your substitutions on the menu.
3. Package substitutions. Use an ice chest to transport if necessary.

**The kitchen staff cannot prepare special meals for individuals.** All sites have microwaves and refrigerators. Our staff will be glad to serve your child the items you provide.

  - a. Food should be ready to eat (e.g., tuna, cottage cheese, crackers and cheese, cold cereal, can of juice, granola bars, or items that can be microwaved).
  - b. Please send only healthy foods and snacks (no candy or chips).
  - c. Clearly label food container(s) with your child's name.
  - d. Include the menu with your substitution instructions.
  - e. Please avoid products containing nuts due to the frequency of students with severe allergies.
4. Give food to your child's teacher to load on the bus with the school medications.
5. The site nurse will make sure your child has the correct food items at each meal.
6. Your items (ice chest, plastic containers, etc.) will be returned home with your child.

**Please contact the program director or site nurse if you have questions.**

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