

Tucson Waldorf School  
2010-2011 Academic Year

To: Tucson Waldorf School Community  
From: FIG (the Food Issues Group)  
Date: August, 2010  
Subject: Campus Food Safety Issues

The Tucson Waldorf School's Food Issues Group (FIG) is intended to be an information resource for everyone in our community (teachers, school staff, parents, and students) on the topic of food consumption and storage at our school, specifically regarding issues related to food allergies.

It is our task to develop guidelines to promote the health and safety of all school community members. At the beginning of each school year, a memorandum is distributed to provide information for the coming academic year, as the guidelines change depending on the different members of the school community and their evolving needs.

This year, children with very serious, *life-threatening* allergies to the following are present in the school community:

Peanuts  
All tree nuts (includes coconut)  
Sesame (seeds, paste [tahini], etc.)  
Gelatin  
Pork

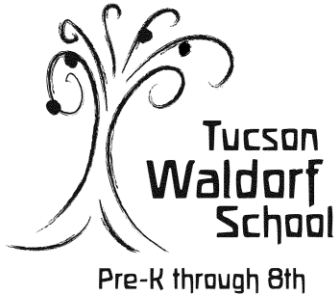
Your awareness of these allergies is necessary to maximize the safety of our school environment.

This year, **the entire Presidio campus has been designated a peanut free zone**; nothing containing peanuts will be permitted in snacks or lunches. **At the River Bend campus, we ask that you limit, as much as possible, foods from the list above** (with the exception of pork) in your child's/children's snacks and lunches. There will be an allergen-free table (as in years past) in the eating area. Please see below for important information about school guidelines and what you can do to help.

#### **What you can do:**

- 1) **If your child is the Early Childhood classes or Grades 1-3**, do not send anything containing peanuts (in any form) for snack or lunch. Any items that do come to school will be sent home unopened, with a reminder notice.
- 2) **If your child is in Grades 4-8**, attending school at the River Bend campus, limit allergens in your child's snack and lunch to the greatest extent possible. We recognize that this may be easy and straightforward for some but challenging for others. What is threatening to one child may be a nutritious favorite for a child who likes only several foods. We want to promote the health and safety of *all* of the children. Please do not hesitate to ask questions (of your child's teacher, the school administrator, or the FIG) if you have them. **We do ask that you be especially careful to eliminate allergens in a form that is crumbly, messy, or easily dispersed and in which they may be disguised (e.g., baked goods, pistachio nuts or trail mix).**

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For example, this year:

- Try substituting sunflower butter for peanut butter and other nut butters.
  - Choose a plain or wheat bagel rather than one with sesame seeds or nuts.
  - Choose breads/rolls and other baked goods without sesame seeds or nuts (flax seeds, poppy seeds, sunflower seeds, caraway seeds, and pumpkin seeds *are all okay*).
  - Choose brands of yogurt, sour cream, and margarine without gelatin.
  - Choose bean dip without tahini (sesame paste, which is a common ingredient in hummus).
- 3) Talk with your children about this issue, informing them of its serious nature and reminding them to wash carefully (as always), in particular on days when they have eaten foods containing allergens (either at your breakfast table or during the school day).
- 4) Also new this year: **all foods prepared for campus events, such as festivals and potlucks, must come labeled with a list of ingredients.** Besides the life-threatening allergies noted above, many community members are dealing with lesser yet still very serious food intolerances and sensitivities. If possible, avoid using known allergens in food prepared for campus events. Also, label the food with your name in case there are any questions about ingredients.
- 5) The kitchen at the Presidio Campus will be nut free at all times.

Additional steps that the Tucson Waldorf School takes in addressing this issue include:

- 1) Informing teachers, staff, and parent volunteers who directly interact with students about food safety issues (food-allergic children, cleaning procedures, etc.) and training them in emergency procedures.
- 2) Promoting a clean campus environment where the eating area(s) are cleaned before and after each snack and lunch, the children are taught to be careful with their food, and all who eat on campus wash thoroughly after each snack and meal.
- 3) Developing specific policies for the classes of students with these allergies.

This information is intended to provide a safe, healthy environment for all of the children in our school community, and to engage the entire community in this process. Thank you for your time and your willingness to help. If you have further questions, please contact a member of the Food Issues Group: Margery Bates, Linda Braun, Nicole Williams, and David Crown. Talk to us or leave us a message in the office.