

Family Ties Healthy Food Guideline

Serving healthy food is important to us at Family Ties. Our mission is to inspire family and community to strive for a better quality of life. As much as possible this means a holistic approach, taking into account not only personal health, but the health of the local community, the health of systems and the planet. This holistic approach, coupled with our financial reality, will influence the food we purchase, cook and serve at Family Ties. As a member of Community Food Centres Canada~ Good Food Organizations, we trust and follow their guidelines working towards a healthy and fair food system. As a member of the TCSAGIM we also consider their recommendations regarding good, healthy food. Family Ties is also a member of the RCCQ, which promotes and advocates for the right to food for all Quebecers.

The purpose of the guideline is to inspire people not to force, preach or judge. That being said, Family Ties promotes small sustainable change over time, empowering families and community to make informed choices. The Healthy Food Guideline encourages nutritious and delicious food at our programs and services. We encourage participants to try new foods, to share with us their eating/cooking preferences, and to celebrate the joy of good healthy food. We recognize that on special occasions, to be determined at the discretion of the coordinator and the participants/members, treats may be served.

As a general rule we purchase food according to the following priority:

Food Purchased by Family Ties:

Seasonal, local, organic/fair trade/humanely raised, sustainably produced, and minimally processed.
Refer to the website, *Eat the Seasons* as a seasonal food guide.

Snacks and Meals served by Family Ties:

We serve delicious and nutritious snacks and meals at our programs.
We serve fruits and vegetables as much as possible
Water is the first beverage option
We serve more whole grains
We serve full fat dairy products within the early childhood programs
We follow the Healthier Eating Chart and the Healthy Eating Plate, as well as the Canada Food Guide

Collective Cooking:

The Healthier Eating Chart and Healthy Eating Plate are used as guidelines
We model healthy and delicious food choices with the recipes we teach
We build cooking skills and gradually change attitudes
We support peer mentoring and coaching
We encourage participants to join the community garden

AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE WE STAY AWAY FROM THE FOLLOWING:

- ⊘ Trans fats
- ⊘ High fructose corn syrup
- ⊘ Canned Goods
- ⊘ Refined sugars
- ⊘ Recipes requiring large amounts of sugar and salt, processed or packaged
- ⊘ goods (such as canned soups, gravies or sauces)
- ⊘ TBHQ (tertiary butylhydroquinone, a preservative)
- ⊘ Highly processed foods

DONATIONS:

We only use and redistribute food donations that are:

- ✓ Fresh
- ✓ Unopened
- ✓ Peanut free and tree nut
- ✓ Within the expiration date

FOOD SAFETY:

- ⚠ Food should not be eaten if the expiration date has passed. It should be discarded.
- ⚠ You can buy and eat foods after the "best before" date has passed. However, when this date has passed, the food may lose some of its freshness and flavour, or its texture may have changed. Some of its nutritional value, such as vitamin C content, may also be lost.
- ⚠ Remember that "best before" dates are not indicators of food safety, neither before nor after the date. They apply to unopened products only. Once opened, the shelf life of a food may change.
- ⚠ **Never** use your nose, eyes or taste buds to judge the safety of food. You cannot tell if a food may cause food borne illness by its look, smell or taste. And remember: "If in doubt, throw it out!"
- ⚠ Foods that are likely to spoil should be properly stored, and they should be eaten as quickly as possible. Harmful micro-organisms that lead to food borne illness can grow in foods, even if they do not appear to be spoiled.
- ⚠ Homemade food cannot be shared and redistributed for food safety and allergy reasons.
- ⚠ See Food Safety Policy for details
- ⚠ Family Ties staff follow MAPAQ food handling and safety guidelines

LEFT OVERS~WASTE

When the occasion arises that we have left-overs or that food may go to waste, we do one of the following depending upon the situation:

- Give it away to participants
- Freeze or transform to use in Collective kitchen
- Compost when possible





NUT ALLERGY

Because of severe nut allergies within our community we cannot serve or cook with nut products on the Family Ties premises.

Family Ties staff check with all participants for food intolerances, allergies and restrictions for health and safety.

DEFINITIONS:

- *Holistic*: This term refers to taking into account personal health and well-being as well as the health of the plant, the local economy, and the systems which support our society such as the health care system.
- *Organic* means crops grown without artificial pesticides, fertilizers, GMOs, irradiation, or sewage sludge, and animals raised without hormones or antibiotics.
- *Local* means foods grown or raised within a given radius that can range from a few to hundreds of miles (you have to ask).
- *Seasonal* refers to food plants eaten when they are ripe (and not preserved or transported from where they were grown).
- *Sustainable* means -- at least by some definitions -- that the nutrients removed from the soil by growing plants are replenished without artificial inputs.
- *Minimally processed* vegetables, grains and beans are prepared – commercially or at home – without large amounts of added fat, salt or sugar. That means flavoring your brown rice or whole-wheat couscous with delicious herbs rather than using sodium-laden mixes, and using vinegar, lemon juice, garlic and spices to flavor vegetables instead of high-fat or high-sodium sauces. Avoiding processed meats such as sausage and hot dogs is also good advice since consuming them on a regular basis increases risk of colon cancer. The bottom line is to choose plant foods such as whole grains, vegetables, fruit and beans more often and to look for those foods with little or no added fat, sugar and sodium.

Family Ties will utilize the Family Ties website to post the Healthy Food Guideline, Canada Food Guide and any other links and relevant nutrition information for the members and community.

<u>LINKS:</u>
http://thepod.cfccanada.ca/blog/introducing-cfccc-healthier-eating-charts
http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-eating-plate/
http://www.eattheseasons.com/