

## Children's allergies

**Exploring new foods with children can be a great way of broadening their tastes but make sure you are aware of any children's allergy concerns**

Almost 1 in 12 young children suffer from a food allergy and they seem to be getting more and more common (Allergy UK). Having allergies can be very stressful for the child and parents (and for staff who are managing allergies in the setting). Think about how you offer emotional as well as practical support to families and staff/colleagues.

- Ensure all staff are aware of individual children's allergies and treatments plans and that emergency medication/treatment is accessible to staff who may need to use it. Provide training for staff who may need to use emergency allergy medication/treatment
- Review the 14 allergens in a staff meeting to develop/refresh staff knowledge
- Develop good communication with parents so you have the most up-to-date information about a child's allergies and review treatment plans together regularly
- Ask parents for ideas and alternative foods they use at home and discuss activities involving food and special occasions with parents in advance. If you find good alternatives/products, then share them with parents too
- Try to ensure when providing alternative foods that, where possible, they look the same as other children's foods so they do not always feel 'different' to their friends
- Be vigilant when accepting food packaging donations for junk modelling and remove any that may be linked to food allergens
- Ensure allergen advice is available in each room for all staff to view. Develop systems to identify food allergens for staff e.g. using a coloured plate system
- Be vigilant during the weaning process and ensure staff can identify the signs of an allergy
- Discuss food allergen management during supervisions and support staff with any areas they may need further support with.



Our paediatric first aid accreditation, Millie's Mark, is for nursery staff and childminders. On completion, you will receive the quality mark that acknowledges your nursery or setting has all members of staff trained in first aid and their knowledge and skills are fully embedded. This provides parents with reassurance that childcare settings know what to do in a paediatric first aid situation such as an allergic reaction.