

## **Peanut/Tree Nut-Free School Policy**

Food allergies, unfortunately, are on the rise. Peanut and tree nut (pecans, walnuts, almonds, etc.) allergy is a serious condition that affects approximately three million Americans.

Peanut allergy is the most common cause of deaths from food allergy. Severe sufferers may experience potentially life-threatening anaphylactic shock in response to contact with or the ingestion of peanuts. Anaphylactic shock is an allergic reaction in which the release of histamine causes swelling, difficulty in breathing, heart failure, circulatory collapse, and sometimes death. The reactions can begin and proceed rapidly.

Strict avoidance of peanut and peanut-ingredient is the only way to prevent an allergic reaction. There is no cure for peanut allergy and no therapies that eliminate or reduce the severity of peanut allergy. Current treatments only address the symptoms of an allergic reaction once it has taken place.

In order to ensure that Sardis Weekday School provides a fun and safe environment for the increasing number of students who suffer from peanut/tree nut allergy, we have become a peanut and tree nut-free school.

Two very important factors were taken into consideration for making this decision:

- 1) Medical literature has documented that peanut/tree nut allergy poses a dangerous health risk;
- 2) A child could have a peanut/tree nut allergy but not be aware of it. He /she may not have been previously exposed to these products, or exhibited any prior signs or symptoms of an allergic reaction.

In view of the danger and risks associated with peanut allergy--Sardis Weekday School, along with all Sardis Presbyterian Church educational programs, will adhere to the following:

### **Hygiene**

- Clean/wash hands and mouth of your children prior to their entering school. For the child who suffers from nut allergy—touching or inhaling even the slightest trace of peanut residue may cause an allergic response.

### **Lunches**

- Send snack and lunch items that contain no peanuts, tree nuts, peanut butter, or nut butter.
- Some of the more popular food substitutions can include:
  1. Fresh fruit
  2. Fresh vegetables (cucumber slices, baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, etc)
  3. Luncheon meat sandwiches
  4. Cheese sandwiches or cheese and crackers
  5. Yogurt

6. Applesauce
7. Pudding cups
8. Graham crackers
9. Popcorn
10. Chips
11. Healthy sweets
12. Juice or water

### **Shared Items**

- Please review package labels to ensure that shared items, such as snacks, do not contain peanuts or tree nuts; nor that they are manufactured in a facility or near equipment that processes peanuts or tree nuts.
- Please provide shared food items in their original, unopened packaging.
- To prevent cross contamination from in-home utensils and surfaces, advance preparation, i.e. cutting or slicing, will be prepared in the weekday school by a staff member.

### **Birthdays/Special Celebrations**

- Consider sending non-food birthday or celebratory treats, such as a new or used book, game or activity to be shared in class. You may then consider donating that item to the classroom *or* giving an equivocal monetary gift to be used for classroom enhancement. This gift or contribution to the classroom could be given *in honor of* or in your child's name.

*Thank You for your cooperation*

Sources: National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Mayo Clinic.com. [peanutallergy.com](http://peanutallergy.com)

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