



# Reducing Risk

## Minimising choking hazards

The following foods are commonly considered 'high risk' for these age groups:

### 6-12 months

- Whole kernel corn
- Whole grapes and grape/cherry tomatoes
- Pieces of hard, raw fruits and veggies
- Whole pieces of canned fruit
- Uncut berries, cherries, melon balls
- Uncooked dry fruit (eg. sultanas)
- Chunks of meat
- Fish with bones
- Chunks of cheese/string cheese
- Hot dogs, meat sticks, sausages
- Cookies/granola bars
- Chips and pretzels
- Crackers/bread with seeds or nuts
- Marshmallows and lollies
- Popcorn

### 12-24 months

- Raw carrot
- Whole grapes and cherry tomatoes
- Large pieces of raw fruits and veggies
- Popcorn
- Chips / corn chips
- Whole nuts or seeds
- Tough meat
- Hot dogs and sausages
- Chunks of cheese

### Under 4

- Raw carrot,
- Celery sticks,
- Chunks of apple,
- Sausages and frankfurts,
- Stringy meats such as chicken and steak,
- Popcorn,
- Whole grapes or grape/cherry tomatoes,
- Corn chips or other similar foods,

**We encourage families to please avoid packing these if possible. If you wish to include them in your child's lunchbox, please use the following risk reduction strategies. Our educators will also follow these steps when preparing meals or snacks with, or for, the children.**

### Hard fruits and vegetables, such as:

- Apple
- Celery
- Carrot
- Pear



These foods can be grated or julienned, or par boiled so they are softer, or mashed. Apples can be thinly sliced or 'spiralized' for children 18 months and older.

### Meats, such as:

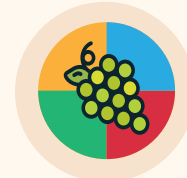
- Chicken
- Sausages
- Beef
- Hot dogs



These foods can be cut into small pieces or minced. Please ensure skins are removed from processed meats (eg sausages).

### Small round food, such as:

- Grapes
- Cherry/grape tomatoes
- Cherries



These should ideally be sliced in quarters, or in half lengthways if the food is too small to quarter.

### Getting 'in shape'...

Please avoid 'cubing' foods (eg. cheese, watermelon) or creating 'rounds' (eg. sliced bananas). Soft fruit (eg. watermelon) can be prepared as 'sticks' (long, thin pieces) or served whole (eg. bananas) so children can take small bites. If preparing for sharing, banana rounds can be cut into semi-circles.



## Better safe than sorry!

If a food can't be modified to minimise risk, it should be avoided. Please do not provide:

- Marshmallows
- Chips
- Popcorn
- Nuts
- Fish with bones
- Lollies



## Seating & supervision!

To further reduce the risk of choking, children must be seated while eating, and educators will closely supervise mealtimes and snacks.

This guidance is drawn from professional sources, including those listed below:

[https://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact\\_sheets/Safety\\_Choking\\_suffocation\\_strangulation/#:~:text=These%20include%20nuts%2C%20raw%20carrots,firm%20is%20a%20choking%20hazard.](https://www.rch.org.au/kidsinfo/fact_sheets/Safety_Choking_suffocation_strangulation/#:~:text=These%20include%20nuts%2C%20raw%20carrots,firm%20is%20a%20choking%20hazard.)

<https://kidseatincolor.com/top-choking-hazards-for-toddlers-and-babies-how-to-prevent-choking/>

<https://kidsafesa.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Choking-0619-Online.pdf>

<https://www.accc.gov.au/system/files/choke-check.pdf>

We recommend that parents connect directly with these resources to provide further detail and updates.

We always encourage feedback from families in relation to our protocols and/or links to other resources.

Please email or speak to your centre Director if you have any input.

