

Managing Students with Severe Allergies

Powhatan County Public Schools

It is the goal of Powhatan County Public Schools to provide a safe and nurturing environment for students with severe allergies. Successful management of severe allergies at school requires that all individuals involved accept and carry out their defined roles. This plan will outline the responsibilities of the student with a severe allergy, the parents/guardians of the student with a severe allergy, and the school division.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

It cannot be stressed enough how very important parent involvement is regarding the care of their child with severe allergy. School personnel count on parent involvement when developing an Allergy Action Plan.

*Empower the student to manage his/her severe allergy, and ensure that the student has knowledge about: allergens, initial symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction, the importance of hand washing with soap and water before and after eating, various ways to avoid exposure to the allergen, being assertive and informing an adult when suspecting that an exposure has occurred, self-administering any prescribed medications.

*Complete and return Powhatan County Public Schools emergency card/information annually.

*Work together with the school nurse and the student's health care provider to develop a thorough Allergy Action Plan.

*Contact the following school personnel about the student's severe allergy: the student's teacher(s), student's school counselor, the Director of Food Services, the Director of Transportation, the student's coach (es), adults supervising the student on field trips and during before and after school activities, cafeteria manager, and bus driver.

*Provide the school with all non-expired daily and emergency medications prescribed by the student's health care provider-according to the school division's medication policy.

*Inquire as to where emergency medications will be kept while the student is in school.

*Keep the school administrator, school nurse, teacher and other staff members informed of any changes in the student's health status or medications-(types and dosages).

*Inform the school nurse if the student transfers to another school within the division.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL DIVISION

- *Be knowledgeable about applicable federal laws-ADA, IDEA, Section 504, and FERPA and any state laws or division policies that apply.
- *Review health records submitted by parents and physicians.
- *Include students with severe allergies in all school activities.
- *Maintain comprehensive Allergy Action Plans for students with severe allergies.
- *Encourage the training of all staff interacting with the student on a regular basis.
- *Coordinate with the school nurse to be sure that medications are appropriately stored.
- *Designate staff members that are properly trained to administer medications in accordance with state law and division policy.
- *Be prepared to respond to an allergic reaction and ensure that there is a staff member(s) available who are properly trained to administer medications during the school day regardless of time or location.
- *Review the division's Allergy Action Plan and medication policy with core teachers, parents/guardians, student (if age appropriate), and physician **after** a reaction has occurred.
- *Work with the division's transportation director to be certain that school bus driver training includes symptom awareness of severe allergy and what to do if a reaction occurs.
- *Ensure that all buses have communication devices in proper working order in case of emergency.
- *Enforce a "no eating" policy on buses with the exception of accommodating special needs and other health conditions.
- *Discuss field trips with the parent/guardian of the severely allergic student to decide appropriate strategies for managing severe allergy.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENT

- *Notify an adult immediately if stung, ingest food or medication allergen, or are exposed to latex. Practice allergen avoidance.
- *Do not trade food with others.

*Be proactive in the care and management of his/her severe allergy based on developmental level.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

* It is of utmost importance that the school community realizes that there are both students and staff in our schools that have been diagnosed with life threatening allergies.

*When bringing in food for snacks or parties-please check with your child's room mother and teacher, principal or assistant principal to see if there are students or staff in your child's classroom that have been diagnosed with life threatening allergy. In doing this- a safe food/snack choice can be made for the whole class to enjoy!

*When in the school building please practice good hand washing particularly after handling food of any kind and encourage others to do so as well.

REFERENCES

American School Food Service Association

National Association of Elementary School Principals

National Association of School Nurses

National School Boards Association

The Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Network

Managing Severe Allergies/June 2011/Chesterfield County Public Schools/Virginia Department of Health