

# Gluten Free in the School Setting

Suggestions for managing meals  
and other food-related activities

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# Overview

- Implications for overall dietary compliance
  - At least 1/3 child's meals/snacks
  - Other activities
- Goals for this presentation
  - Gluten Free Lunch Ideas
  - Getting Formal Accommodation for Your Child
  - Cafeteria Collaboration (my experience)

# Getting Creative with GF food

- Lunches and snacks
  - Deli rollups
  - Rice cakes, chips, GF pretzels
  - Fresh or dried fruit
  - Individually portioned food
  - Cracker sandwiches
  - GF puddings or canned fruit
  - Lunchables!!!
- Develop repertoire of complementary protein alternatives
- Naturally GF food on the school menu

# Getting Creative with GF food (cont'd)

## Parties and Other Activities

- Partner, collaborate!
- Stash of GF treats
- Work with teacher to get dates of birthdays and other special events
- Keep your contributions mainstream
- Measure your reception

# Formal Accommodation of the Gluten Free Diet

- What are the rules and regulations that cover your child's rights?
  - Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 protect those with disabilities that limit one or more major life activities.
  - Under these regulations, those with disabilities must be provided equal access to federally funded programs, such as the National School Lunch Program.

# USDA Resource

- Refer to guidance provided by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service:

“Accommodating Children with Special Dietary Needs  
in the School Nutrition Program”

[http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/guidance/special\\_dietary\\_needs.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/guidance/special_dietary_needs.pdf)

# Formal Accommodation of the Gluten Free Diet (cont'd)

- What is a process you can follow to implement this accommodation?
  - The determination that a disability exists must be made at an eligibility hearing and includes:
    - The nature of the disability
    - Why the disability prevents the child from eating regular food
    - The major life activity affected by the disability
    - Specific substitutions needed
  - This determination is made on a case-by-case basis and guidelines may vary from state to state, district by district
  - If a student is determined to be disabled, a 504 accommodation plan can be created.

# What is a 504 Plan?

A 504 plan outlines reasonable accommodations that are to be put into place so that a student with a defined disability will receive the same benefits as a student who is not disabled.

The plan can be completely customizable and can specify accommodations for the gluten free diet in different situations such as meals, snacks, special events, meals during field trips, rations for disaster preparedness, procedures for communication, accountability of those involved.

Find samples of forms at [www.americanceliac.org](http://www.americanceliac.org)

# The Ultimate Solution: A Gluten Free Menu in the Cafeteria

- Urban Setting
  - Barriers: insufficient funds and knowledge about celiac disease
  - Implementation of menu
    - Inservice to support team and kitchen staff
    - Menu review
    - Goal: follow USDA standard meal patterns
    - Contact with distributors and manufacturers
- Suburban/rural

# Conclusion

- Food eaten in school is a significant part of a child's daily intake
- Get creative, keep looking for new products
- Take advantage of naturally gluten free choices on the school menu
- Explore your local regulations concerning formal accommodation for your child
- Gather resources to help implementation