

Back-to-School Homework for Food Allergy Parents From FARE



For some parents, sending a child with life-threatening food allergies off to school can feel like an overwhelming task, especially if the child is entering a new school or attending for the first time. FARE has many resources on our website's ["Managing Food Allergies at School"](#) section, but there are a few key tasks for food allergy parents to complete before the school year starts.

Assignment #1: Get your paperwork in order

[Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan](#) should be on file for every student with food allergies. It outlines treatment recommended in case of an allergic reaction, includes emergency contact numbers and is signed by the student's physician.

Students with food allergies should also have a written management and prevention plan, such as an Individualized Health Care Plan (IHCP) and a 504 Plan, in place. A 504 Plan (named for Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973) is a plan that outlines the accommodations, aids or services that a student with a disability needs in order to use, and fully participate in, a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

Assignment #2: Make your shopping list

Along with new sneakers and a lunchbox, add medical identification jewelry to your Back-to-School shopping list. Wearing medical identification at all times can help give you peace of mind that you are prepared should a life-threatening reaction occur.

Assignment #3: Talk to your team

Putting a written management plan in place requires communication and coordination with many school staff members, such as administrators, school nurses, food service staff, and your allergist or other doctor. Teachers are key partners in keeping children with food allergies safe and included at school. Before the first day of school, contact the teacher and nurse to discuss the child's emergency care and management plans.

Assignment #4: Have a family meeting

Talking to your child and explaining or reinforcing some basic safety precautions can help them feel confident entering a new school year. While each child is different, you can focus on a few things they can do each day at school, such as:

- Knowing where their epinephrine is stored or carrying it with them at all times.
- Always wearing their medical identification bracelet.
- Only eating the food you have packed or approved as safe for them.
- Telling an adult immediately if they feel sick.

In addition to the information provided here, there is a wealth of information about how to successfully manage food allergies at school on FARE's website, including [national guidelines](#) from the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC), a [letter from FARE to school leaders](#), and information about [school access to epinephrine](#). If you have specific questions, please feel free to contact

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