

Food Allergy, Nut-Safety & Classroom Celebration Policy

Updated October 9, 2026

Peanut & Tree-Nut Safety

Because life-threatening food allergies affect members of our school community, Catholic Academy of Stamford maintains a peanut- and tree-nut-free campus.

All foods brought onto school premises—including daily lunches, individual snacks, and foods intended for classroom sharing—must be free of peanuts, tree nuts, and ingredients derived from peanuts or tree nuts.

Classroom Celebrations & Events

Food may be shared during approved school-sponsored classroom celebrations and events, including designated holiday celebrations. **Food is not permitted for individual student birthdays or other individual student milestones.**

Catholic Academy of Stamford is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, and healthy environment for our students. As we permit food at select classroom celebrations and school events, we are introducing simple guidelines for foods shared with students to support their safety, well-being, and learning environment.

Family Responsibility:

1. Parents/guardians must receive approval from the classroom teacher before bringing food into school for CAS celebrations or school events where food is permitted
2. Families are asked to select shared classroom foods (foods offered to the entire class) from the **CAS Approved Celebration & Event Food Guide**. If an item is not included on the guide, it must meet the school's peanut- and tree-nut requirements and receive prior approval from the Head of School. Please note that due to research that synthetic/artificial food colors and dyes can have a negative health effect on some children, CAS discourages shared classroom food options with these ingredients.
3. Parents/guardians who do not want their child to receive a shared classroom food will notify the classroom teacher by email or written note at least 24 hours before the scheduled celebration or event.
4. Parents/guardians of children with known food allergies or sensitivities are encouraged to provide an alternative for their child to enjoy during special events. All alternative snacks need to follow the school's peanut- and tree-nut-free policy and cannot be shared with other children. Please note that due to research that synthetic/artificial food colors and dyes can have a negative health effect on some children, CAS discourages any snack options with these ingredients.

An Important Note for Families

These new guidelines apply only to shared classroom foods brought to school to be shared or distributed during school-sponsored celebrations and events. They do not change or dictate the lunches or individual snacks families choose to pack for their own children, provided those foods continue to comply with the school's peanut- and tree-nut-free policy.

The **CAS Approved Celebration & Event Food Guide** was developed in consultation with a Board Certified Health Practitioner and informed by published research on children's health and well-being. The guide is intended to provide families with simple, consistent choices for foods shared during school celebrations while supporting student well-being and an environment conducive to learning.

Families with questions about the guide or who would like help identifying an appropriate option for a classroom event are welcome to reach out for additional resources or individual support.

Additional Research & Resources:

- McCann et al., *The Lancet* (2007) — randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled study examining artificial food colors/additives and hyperactivity in children.
- Nigg et al., *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* (2012) — meta-analysis examining synthetic food colors and ADHD-related symptoms.
- Sonuga-Barke et al., *American Journal of Psychiatry* (2013) — systematic review and meta-analysis of randomized controlled trials involving artificial food colors.
- California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) (2021) — comprehensive scientific assessment of potential neurobehavioral effects of synthetic food dyes in children.