August 14, 2016

*To: Teacher’s Name
CC: School Nurse*

*CC: School Principal*

*Re: Your Child’s Name*

Our daughter, *[insert name]*, is so excited to start preschool in your class at *[insert name of school]*. We have completed all the required forms and paperwork.  You will notice in the health forms that she has been diagnosed with Celiac Disease. In case you are not familiar with Celiac Disease, I want to provide you with some more detailed information.

**Celiac Disease is an autoimmune disease that is triggered by ingesting gluten, a protein found in wheat, barley (malt), rye and most oats (other forms of gluten: spelt, emmer, faro, triticale, kamut).** Our daughter is actually very healthy, but she must manage Celiac Disease with a strict adherence to a gluten-free diet. It is very important to her health that she remains gluten free, and she will experience severe gastrointestinal distress if she ingests gluten.

Since we are not familiar with the procedures for activities and snack time in your class, I am providing this information to you in order for our daughter to avoid any possible contact with gluten.

People following a gluten-free lifestyle have two primary concerns:
1) elimination of prohibited grains
2) cross-contamination

We will provide [insert child’s name] with a gluten-free lunch and snack everyday. She is aware of her condition and has been instructed not to trade snacks or eat any other food without first confirming with an adult that it is gluten-free. However, she is 3 years old, so it is difficult to say how well she understands our instructions.  She should also avoid any contact with other classmates’ snacks, or crumbs of snacks, that contain gluten. Please don’t misunderstand. We **do not** want her to eat by herself and feel isolated or left out. Rather, we want her to be included, make friends, and love learning. To that end, cross contamination would be largely eliminated by cleaning the tables with wet cleaning systems (Wet Ones or other gluten free wipes) and hand washing (*hand sanitizer is not sufficient*) of the students after snacks, lunch, and playing with classroom materials that contain gluten.

**Although gluten is primarily found in foods, it can also show up in surprising places in the classroom**…in glue, arts and craft materials, crumbs in the classroom. Of most concern to me is play dough, pasta, hay/straw, fingerpaints and paper maché, since they are products that almost always contain wheat and/or are likely to get under her fingernails.  Other products that may contain wheat are glue, paint, and ink. To be clear, our daughter does not get a reaction just from touching gluten, however if it gets on her hands and fingers it could be transferred to her mouth, so we need your help to keep our daughter healthy and safe at school. I would be happy to review the ingredients of any craft products in the classroom to determine if they do contain gluten. If they do, I will be happy to provide a suitable substitution.

**If our daughter does accidentally come into contact with gluten at school**, I ask that you immediately have her wash her hands thoroughly and call us. *[Insert your child’s most common symptoms following gluten ingestion, what you’d like the school to do and if you will need to come pick her up. In our case vomiting almost immediately follows, so we need to bring her home from school.]*

If you allow students to bring in birthday treats to share, I ask that we be made aware of it a day or two in advance. Cupcakes and cookies, unless made with special alternative flours, are not gluten-free. If notified in advance of what will be brought in, *[insert child’s name]* can bring a gluten-free alternative in order to celebrate with the other students. If it works for you, I can also provide you with a box of safe, gluten-free treats to store for *[insert child’s name]* in cases of surprise treat occasions.

We would like to meet with you before school starts to go through all of this in more detail and answer any questions you might have. Please feel free to call or email us anytime with any questions or concerns. We sincerely want to work with you to help in any way we can so that *[insert child’s name]* is healthy and happy at school.

Thank you,

*[insert parent’s name and telephone number]*