

Allergy Awareness in a Flash

CHECK IT
OUT!

Peanuts can cause some of the most severe and devastating allergic reactions in children, and the number of children allergic to peanuts is rising: about one percent of Americans under the age of 18 are allergic, and according to the *Journal of Allergy & Clinical Immunology*, the number doubled between 1997 and 2002.

Some precautions are obvious: for instance, a child who is allergic to peanuts clearly can't be served peanut butter. But how about birthday cake? Pizza? Chocolate candy? Keeping teachers, babysitters, relatives and other caring adults apprised of how to keep allergic kids safe can be a serious project for parents and caregivers.

Designed by the mom of two highly allergic kids, the **Beyond A Peanut** flashcard kit (Mind Flight, 2007; \$13.99) gives adults and kids a quick reference to answer the most-pressing question about any food served to an allergic child: Is this safe?

Cards are color-coded to indicate which foods are *usually* safe and which are *never* safe. The cards outline standard precautions simply and clearly for kids and caregivers, such as always reading ingredient labels, politely refusing offers of food that cannot be guaranteed safe, and checking for possible sources of cross-contamination. Large, colorful illustrations help kids easily understand the food or situation depicted in each card, and a glossary of terms and teaching tips help parents spread allergy awareness.

The creator suggests giving sets of cards to teachers, family members, church and synagogue members, and any other adults who frequently interact with an allergic child.

For more information, check out www.beyondapeanut.com.



– Dana Morgenstein