



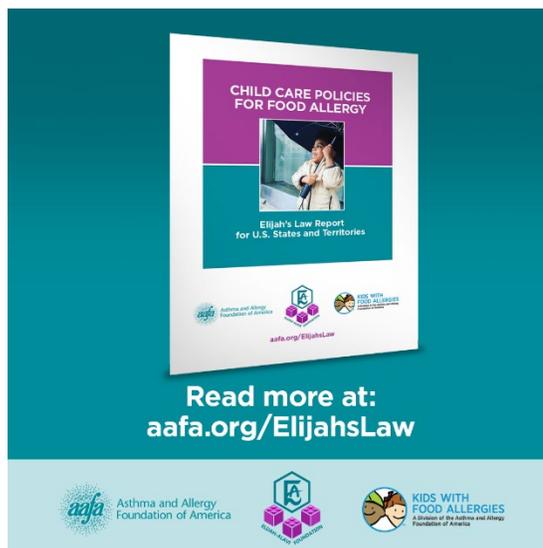
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New Report Finds Major Gaps in Child Care Policies for Food Allergy Nationwide

The report evaluates child care policies in U.S. states and territories and includes an advocacy toolkit to promote Elijah's Law to strengthen protections for young children.

WASHINGTON D.C., Feb. 25, 2022 — Today, the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America (AAFA) and the Elijah-Alavi Foundation (EAF) released "[Child Care Policies for Food Allergy: Elijah's Law Report for the U.S. States and Territories](#)." The report compares state-level child care licensing regulations against nine core policy standards that protect children with food allergy in a child care setting.

"Our report identified major gaps in child care regulations for food allergy," states Kenneth Mendez, AAFA's CEO and president. "To improve protections, the report also includes a toolkit to help advocates and legislators introduce and enact Elijah's Law in their states."



Elijah's Law is named in memory of Elijah Silvera. On Nov. 3, 2017, 3-year-old Elijah died after having a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) at his child care facility. Though the facility had documentation of Elijah's life-threatening milk allergy, asthma, and other allergies, the staff fed Elijah a grilled cheese sandwich. The child care did not follow emergency protocols to treat anaphylaxis.

Elijah's parents, Dina and Thomas Silvera, worked with their state legislators in New York to draft Elijah's Law following his tragic death. The legislation requires child care facilities take concrete steps to manage food allergies for children in their care. Such steps include developing emergency protocols, strategies for discussing food allergies with children and plans for preventing exposure to food allergy triggers.

Elijah's Law passed in New York on Sep. 12, 2019 and later in Illinois on Aug. 20, 2021. Similar bills have also been introduced in Pennsylvania, Virginia and California. Through the newly released "Child Care Policies for Food Allergy" report and toolkit, AAFA and EAF hope to accelerate efforts to introduce and pass Elijah's Law in other states and territories.

"Though we are proud of these successes so far, we know the work is not done," says Thomas Silvera, Elijah's father and co-founder of the Elijah-Alavi Foundation. "Across the country, too many children with food allergies still lack the necessary protections to grow and thrive in early child care."



“A change is a challenge, and a challenge is needed for change,” says Dina Hawthorne-Silvera, Elijah’s mother and co-founder of the Elijah-Alavi Foundation. “An action today can be the answer to the challenge needed for the change necessary to save a child’s life. We thank all of our partners for support and diligence in ensuring the safety of all children.”

“It shouldn't take a tragedy to effect change,” says Melanie Carver, AAFA’s Chief Mission Officer. “Food allergy and anaphylaxis policies and education should be available in every state and territory so young kids with food allergies can safely attend child care and school.”

To see how states and territories measure up to the recommended standards for managing food allergies in child care settings, visit aafa.org/ElijahsLaw.

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About AAFA

Founded in 1953, AAFA is the oldest and largest non-profit patient organization dedicated to saving lives and reducing the burden of disease for people with asthma, allergies and related conditions through research, education, advocacy and support. AAFA offers extensive support for individuals and families affected by asthma and allergic diseases, such as food allergies and atopic dermatitis (eczema). Through its online patient support communities, network of local chapters and affiliated support groups, AAFA empowers patients and their families by providing practical, evidence-based information and community programs and services. AAFA’s food allergy division, Kids With Food Allergies, offers the largest online support group for food allergies. AAFA is the only asthma and allergy patient advocacy group that is certified to meet the standards of excellence set by the National Health Council. For more information, visit aafa.org and kidswithfoodallergies.org.

About EAF

The [Elijah-Alavi Foundation](#) was founded to ensure that all infants and children with severe food allergies and asthma have safe spaces to learn and socialize in daycare centers and schools. We intend to achieve this mission by partnering with a network of organizations and professionals to provide the training, resources, and counsel for educators and school administrators to implement policies that reduce the risk of life-threatening allergic reactions in children. The most imperative aspect of such a partnership is the shared interests in the diverse communities we serve, as every demographic represented among them depends upon us for our commitment to public health and overall well-being.