

Infant Feeding

A Guide for Parents and Caregivers

As a new parent or caregiver, you probably receive a lot of advice about how to feed your baby. This booklet will give you some basic information about feeding that can help your baby get the best start in life.



Jennifer and Ellie from Elizabeth City.

MYTHS & FACTS

MYTH: In hot weather, babies need water in a bottle.

FACT: Formula or mother's milk provides all the liquid a baby needs.

MYTH: Cereal in a bottle will help my baby sleep longer.

FACT: Cereal in a bottle will not help your baby sleep, and it may upset his tummy. Do not feed cereal until your baby can eat it from a spoon.

MYTH: If I am too busy to feed my baby, I can prop the bottle.

FACT: Propping a bottle is not safe. A baby can choke.

Take a break from what you are doing and enjoy this special time with your baby.



Betsy and Chambers, left, with Colleen and Erika, all from Virginia Beach.

For more information or copies of materials visit www.cinchcoalition.org/breast-feeding

Should I schedule my baby's feedings?

It is best to feed your baby when he is hungry. It may be tempting to put your baby on a strict feeding schedule but you do not always eat at exactly the same time do you?



Crystal and Miranda from Chesapeake.

It is best to feed your baby in response to her changing appetite. Your baby may be more or less hungry at different times or on different days — just like you! It is best to feed according to your baby's changing appetite.

Doctors recommend that all babies be fed in response to their hunger cues, not on a strict schedule.

Advantages of cue-feeding include:

Babies tend to grow better, especially after 3–4 months of age.

Babies are calm for feedings, so they feed better.

Breastfeeding moms have an easier time making enough milk for their babies.

Babies learn to eat when they are hungry, which may help prevent obesity when they are older.

For more information or copies of materials visit www.cinchcoalition.org/breast-feeding

Our Child Care Center Supports Breastfeeding

In order to support families who are breastfeeding or who are considering breastfeeding, we strive to do the following:



Betsy and Chambers
from Virginia Beach.

- **Make a commitment** to the importance of breastfeeding, especially exclusive breastfeeding, and share this commitment with our staff and families.
- **Train all staff** in supporting the best infant and young child feeding.
- **Inform families** about the importance of breastfeeding.
- **Provide learning and play experiences** that normalize breastfeeding for children.
- Teach our families **to properly store and label their milk** for child care center use.
- **Provide a breastfeeding-friendly environment**, displaying posters about breastfeeding and welcoming mothers to breastfeed their babies at our center.
- **Support breastfeeding employees.**
- **Develop a feeding plan** that supports best infant feeding practices with each family.
- Contact and coordinate with local skilled breastfeeding support and **actively refer.**
- **Continually update** our information and learning about breastfeeding support.

For more information or copies of materials visit www.cinchcoalition.org/breast-feeding

This project has been adapted from
the Carolina Global Breastfeeding
Institute's Breastfeeding Friendly
Child Care Project
<http://cgbi.sph.unc.edu>

How do I know when my baby wants to eat?

Your baby may not be able to speak, but he still is able to tell you what he needs.



Zachary from
Chesapeake.

■ **When a baby is hungry**, she will open her mouth, stick out her tongue, and move her head from side-to-side. While sleeping, she may start to wriggle. If her hand is near her mouth, she may try to suck on it. **Crying is a late sign of hunger.**

■ **When a baby wants to have some quiet time**, she often will look away. She may have changes in her skin, her movements, or her breathing.

■ **When a baby wants to cuddle**, he will look at you. As he gets older, he will smile.

■ **When a baby is unhappy**, she will fuss and sometimes cry. All babies do this from time to time. You can never “spoil” your baby by comforting her. Responding to her cries will help her feel more secure and cry less often.

When you try to understand what your baby is “saying,” both of you will be happier and more confident!

For more information or copies of materials visit www.cinchcoalition.org/breast-feeding

Why should I care about Breastfeeding?

Even if you are not a breastfeeding mother, please consider learning more about breastfeeding.



Carly and Celia
from Portsmouth.

- **I work in child care**, and it is part of my job to care for breastfeeding babies. I want to have the training and information to take the very best care of all of the babies in my care.
- **I am an employer**, and I want to know all I can about supporting my employees, including breastfeeding mothers.
- **There is a mother in my life who is breastfeeding**, my sister or daughter or friend. I want to do all I can to support her choices about feeding her baby.
- **I may have another baby someday**. Although feeding formula is the right choice for our family right now, I would like to learn more about how I can give my next baby the very best start in life, and how breastfeeding can be a part of that.

If you would like to learn more,
ask your provider for our booklet —
“Breastfeeding: Making It Work.”

Copies also can be downloaded at our website:
cinchcoalition.org/breast-feeding