

CACFP ESSENTIALS SERIES

Infant Feeding Essentials: Part 3

# How to Feed Infants Solid Foods



Health and Nutrition Services  
Arizona Department of Education







# Disclaimer

This training was developed by the Arizona Department of Education (ADE) Health and Nutrition Services Division (HNS). The content in this training is intended for professionals operating one or more USDA Child Nutrition Programs in Arizona under the direction of ADE. The information in this training is subject to change. Attendees are encouraged to access professional development materials directly from the training library to prevent use of outdated content.



# Intended Audience

This training is intended for **organizations operating the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)**.



This training is required for all new organizations who will be applying to participate in the CACFP and are licensed for infant care.

# Objectives

**At the end of this training, attendees should be able to:**

- review infant developmental readiness for solid foods;
- discuss creditable infant foods;
- understand infant feeding skills and modifying food textures; and
- learn the requirements and best practices for feeding infants solid foods.

## TRAINING HOURS

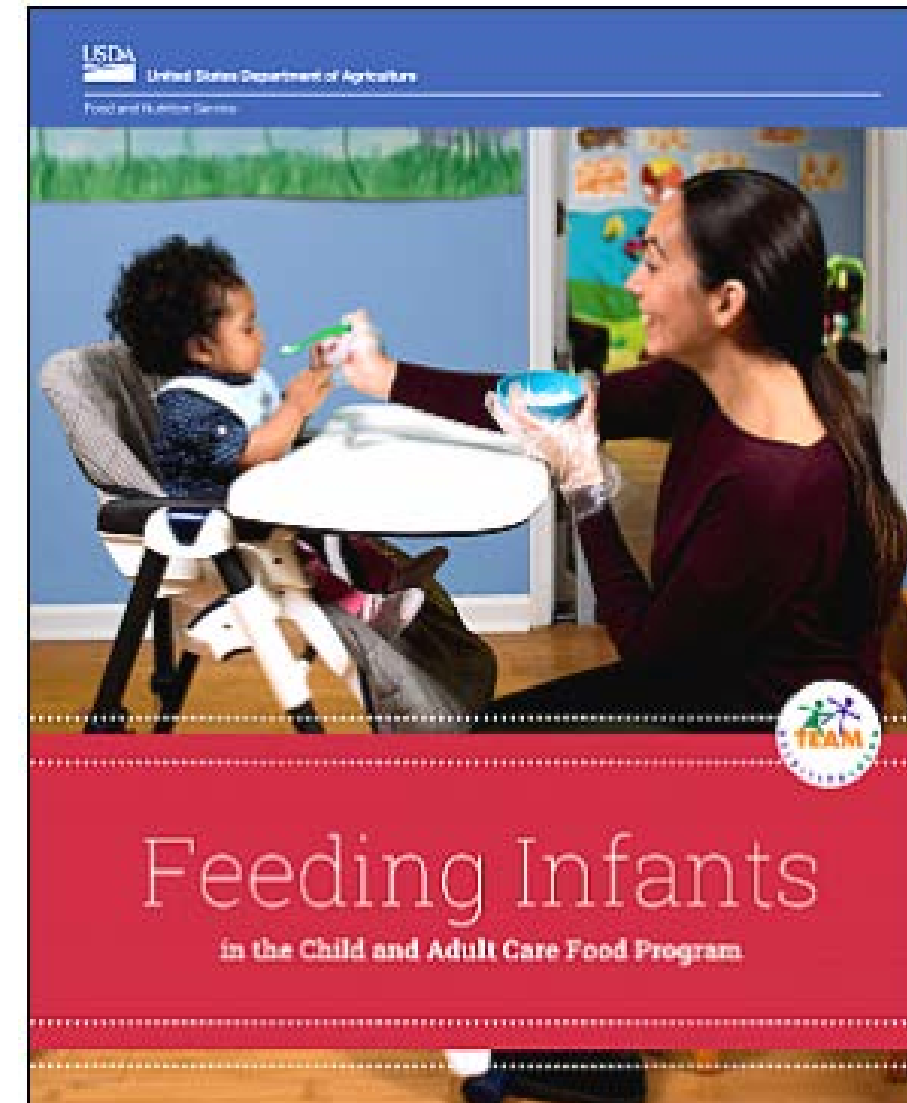
Information to include when documenting this training for Continuing Education and Training Credit:

**Training Title:** How to Feed Infants Solid Foods

**Hours of Instruction:** 1 Hour

*This training counts toward Empower Program training requirements. It is listed on the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry. If you want this training to appear on your Registry transcript, please provide your ID in the completion survey.*





The instruction within this how-to guide is based on guidance from USDA's *Feeding Infants in the Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program* guide, 2021.

It is recommended to review this guide in addition to reviewing this course for complete guidance on how to offer meals that are reimbursable in the CACFP, hunger and fullness cues, developmental readiness, and more!

[Click here](#) to access the guide.



# Quiz Time



Throughout this guide, there will be comprehension quiz questions to test your knowledge and help you apply what you're learning. Be sure to review these quiz questions and answers available within the guide.

The question mark icon below will indicate a comprehension quiz question.





# Table of Contents

|                                                                    |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>Section 1: Developmental Readiness for Solid Foods</b>          | <b>7-19</b>  |
| <b>Section 2: Creditable Infant Foods</b>                          | <b>20-41</b> |
| <b>Section 3: Infant Feeding Skills and Modifying Food Texture</b> | <b>42-62</b> |



# Developmental Readiness for Solid Foods



SECTION 1



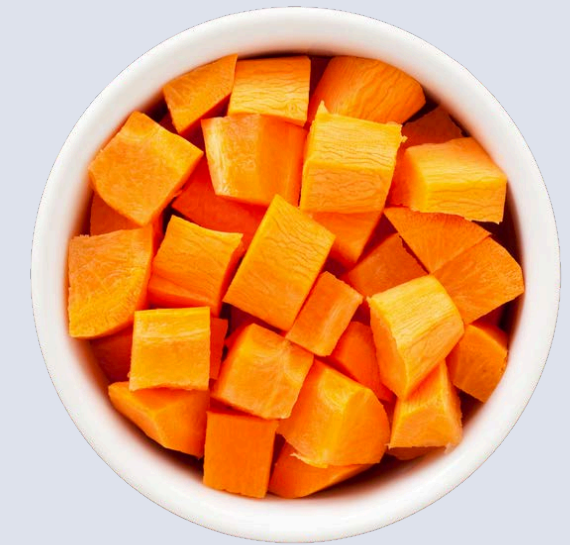
# What are Solid Foods?

## SOLID FOOD TEXTURES

- “Solid foods” are anything other than breastmilk or formula.
- Easy to digest and safe for an infant to eat once he or she is developmentally ready, usually around 6 months of age. Solid foods are also known as complementary foods.
- As a childcare provider, you can start offering solid foods to infants after the parents have told you they are developmentally ready and are eating solid foods at home.
- Feeding infants the right foods at the right time helps them get the nutrition needed for good health. Infants will grow to enjoy many types and textures (smooth, lumpy, and so on) of food during his or her first year.



Pureed



Finely Chopped



Mashed



Ground



# Developmental Readiness

## HOW TO TELL A BABY IS READY TO EAT SOLID FOODS

Most babies do not have the muscle control and coordination to eat solid foods until they are around 6 months of age. They are not developmentally ready until they have this muscle control and coordination. When a baby is developmentally ready to eat solid foods, he or she

- can sit in a highchair and hold his or her head up.
- moves his or her tongue to help swallow the food.
- opens his or her mouth when foods come towards him or her.

These feeding skills are needed for the baby to eat solid foods. The CACFP infant meal pattern allows for solid foods starting around 6 months of age. The term “around” is used because not all babies are developmentally ready for solid foods at exactly 6 months of age. Some babies may be ready for solid foods at 5 months, others at 6½ months.

A medical statement from the baby’s health care provider is not required if parents choose to start their baby on solid foods or delay the start of solid foods.



# Importance of Solid Foods

## **STARTING SOLID FOODS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:**

- As babies get bigger, they need more calories and nutrients that can come from solid foods.
- Offering foods gives babies a chance to try different foods so they will like them at an early age and will continue to eat them as they get older. Starting solid foods when an infant is ready gives the infant an opportunity to get used to many flavors and textures, getting them ready for 1 year of age, when food will most likely be their primary source of nutrition.



# Risks of Early Introduction

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

At your childcare site, you can share with parents that feeding a baby solid food before he or she is developmentally ready may increase the chance that the baby:

- will choke on the food
- drink less breastmilk or infant formula than is needed to grow
- may become overweight or obese later in life.

Feeding solid foods before a baby is ready, including adding cereal to the baby's bottle, does not help the baby sleep through the night or make the baby eat fewer times a day. If parents report fussiness and/or sleeping problems as a reason for wanting to start solid foods early, encourage them to discuss their concerns with their baby's health care provider. Sometimes ideas for other ways to calm or soothe a crying baby can be helpful. Crying does not always mean that the baby is hungry. Encourage parents to talk about solid foods with the baby's health care provider.



# Risks of Delayed Introduction

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

There are also risks of delayed introduction. Delaying the introduction of solid foods beyond when babies are developmentally ready may prevent them from eating the variety and amounts of food they need. This may increase the risk that babies will:

- not get the nutrition they need, especially iron and zinc.
- not grow normally.
- reject foods when they are given at a later age.
- have delayed speech and motor development.

Delaying solid foods may not reduce the risk of developing food allergies. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, 6 to 8 months of age is considered an important time for introducing solid foods to babies.



# Communicating with Parents

## **SERVING MINIMUM REQUIRED AMOUNTS**

All CACFP Organizations must communicate with parents about how to feed an infant while in care, including solid food readiness. Talk with each baby's parent or caregiver about developmental readiness to start eating solid foods. Childcare sites can start serving solid foods once the parent tells you the baby is developmentally ready and eating solid foods at home.

Suppose a baby is not developmentally ready, but parents think the baby should start solid foods. In that case, childcare staff may share that when the baby is in childcare, they are not yet showing signs of readiness for solids, such as holding their head up, sitting on their own without support, or not interested in foods when offered or close by.

It is a licensing requirement and CACFP best practice to document individual foods on the solid foods form. Documenting your communication with parents is important to ensure correct foods are provided to each infant and is also valuable for the staff in the infant classroom to reference when needed.



# DHS Solid Food Introduction Form

## BREASTMILK AND IRON-FORTIFIED FORMULA

Facilities licensed by AZDHS must use this form to document infant feeding instructions.

These infant feeding instructions include a food list for parents to report foods introduced at home with the date they were introduced.

INFANT FEEDING INSTRUCTIONS

|                                                                                                                                          |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|------|-------|--------|
| Child's name:                                                                                                                            |                                         | Date of birth:                                                   |        |      |       |        |
| Feeding                                                                                                                                  |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Breastmilk, Type of Milk, or Formula:                                                                                                    |                                         | Bottle: Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> |        |      |       |        |
| If child is receiving breastmilk and supply of pumped milk runs out, what do you want staff to do?                                       |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Allergies                                                                                                                                |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No                                                                                                              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes – Explain: |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Does child have any problems with feedings, such as choking or spitting up? <input type="checkbox"/> No                                  |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes – Explain:                                                                                                  |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Foods                                                                                                                                    |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Introduced: See Attached List on page 2.                                                                                                 |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Consistency: <input type="checkbox"/> Puree <input type="checkbox"/> Junior <input type="checkbox"/> Table                               |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Food Likes:                                                                                                                              | Food Dislikes:                          |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
|                                                                                                                                          |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Method of Feeding:                                                                                                                       |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Utensils used: <input type="checkbox"/> Cup <input type="checkbox"/> Fork <input type="checkbox"/> Spoon <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Explain:                                                                                                                                 |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
|                                                                                                                                          |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Feeding Schedules and Updates:                                                                                                           |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Date                                                                                                                                     | Time                                    | Foods                                                            | Amount | Time | Foods | Amount |
|                                                                                                                                          |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
|                                                                                                                                          |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
|                                                                                                                                          |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
|                                                                                                                                          |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Comments:                                                                                                                                |                                         |                                                                  |        |      |       |        |
| Date:                                                                                                                                    |                                         | Parent's signature:                                              |        |      |       |        |

Update as new foods are introduced or changes occur.  
Post in kitchen and activity area.  
All feeding instructions must be retained for 12 months (centers).

G:\Forms\CDC\Infant Feeding Instructions.docx (7/18)Page 1 of 2



# How to Feed Solid Foods

## STEPS TO SAFELY FEED INFANTS SOLID FOODS

-  **Wash your hands and the infant's hands.**  
After looking for signs of hunger, wash yours and infant's hands.
-  **Place the infant in an age-appropriate feeding chair**  
Place the infant in a feeding chair with a bib.
-  **Move baby food into a small bowl.**  
Spoon baby food from the jar or container and put it in a small bowl.
-  **Feed the Infant.**  
Look for hunger and fullness cues throughout the feeding. When the infant is developmentally ready, childcare providers can let infants try feeding themselves with a spoon. Monitor the infant during eating for any signs of choking or allergic reactions.
-  **Record what was offered.**  
Record what was offered on the Infant Point of Service Meal Count Form.



# Quiz Time

Baby Emily still needs help holding her head up. She does not seem interested when food is around her. Emily's mom wants to start feeding her solid foods, but you do not think Emily is ready. What can you do?





# Quiz Time

Baby Emily still needs help holding her head up. She does not seem interested when food is around her. Emily's mom wants to start feeding her solid foods, but you do not think Emily is ready. What can you do?

**Have a conversation with Emily's mom about signs of readiness for solid foods. This communication tool, "Is your baby ready for solid foods?" is available in the Feeding Infants in the Child and Adult Care Food Program guide to help infant teachers have this conversation with parents.**





# Quiz Time

True or False? Infants are always ready for solid food at exactly 6 months of age.

**A** True

**B** False



# Quiz Time

True or False? Infants are always ready for solid food at exactly 6 months of age.

**A** True

**B** False

**Babies are developmentally ready for solid foods when they can:**

- **Sit in a high chair with good head control.**
- **Open his or her mouth when food is near.**
- **Reach for food.**
- **Use his or her tongue to move food from spoon into his or her mouth.**

**You can start offering a baby solid foods when his or her parents tell you the baby is developmentally ready and is eating solid foods at home. This is usually around 6 months of age. Talking with the baby's parents is key to knowing when to start feeding solid foods and if a baby has any food allergies or intolerances.**





# Creditable Infant Foods

## SECTION 2





# Reimbursable Infant Meals and Snacks

## FOOD COMPONENTS

- Each meal and snack in the infant meal pattern comprises food components: breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula, meat and meat alternates, vegetables and fruits, and grains.
- A meal or snack is reimbursable as long as all required food components are offered to the baby during the day.
  - Babies do not need to eat the entire meal offered for the meal to be reimbursable.
- Creditable foods may be counted towards meeting the CACFP infant meal pattern requirements for a reimbursable meal or snack.
  - Creditable foods include iron-fortified infant cereals, meats, fish, beans, peas, eggs, yogurt, cheese, fruit, and vegetables.
  - At snack, creditable options include breads and crackers, and ready-to-eat cereals.



# Reimbursable Infant Meals and Snacks

## CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM

Notice that solid food items aren’t listed for the 0-5 month section because foods are not required then. They are only included for infants 6-11 months of age. The foods listed are the options childcare providers have for each meal.

The amounts of solid foods in the infant meal pattern are provided as a range, such as 0–2 tablespoons. This provides the flexibility to offer solid foods based on a baby’s developmental readiness.

- You might offer a baby less than 1 tablespoon of a food if a baby just started eating solid foods. Once the baby has tried and accepted a certain food, you would then offer, him or her, the full 2 tablespoons of the solid food.

| Infant Meal Pattern for CACFP<br>Child and Adult Care Food Program                                                                  |                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Infants 0-5 Months Meal Pattern<br>Breastmilk or Iron-Fortified Infant Formula                                                      |                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Meal                                                                                                                                | Required Component                    | Minimum Serving Size                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Additional Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Breakfast, Lunch, Supper, and Snacks                                                                                                | Breastmilk/Formula                    | 4-6 fluid ounces (oz) breastmilk or formula                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Formula must be iron-fortified.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Infants 6 through 11 Months Meal Pattern<br>Breastmilk or Formula + Solid Foods Based on Developmental Readiness                    |                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Meal                                                                                                                                | Required Component                    | Minimum Serving Size                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Additional Information                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Breakfast, Lunch, Supper                                                                                                            | Breastmilk/Formula                    | 6-8 fluid oz breastmilk or formula                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Formula must be iron-fortified.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                     | Infant Cereal or Meat/Meat Alternate* | 0-½ oz equivalent (oz eq) infant cereal; or 0-4 tablespoons meat, fish, poultry, whole egg, cooked dry beans, cooked dry peas; or 0-2 oz cheese; or 0-4 oz (volume) cottage cheese; or 0-4 oz or ½ cup yogurt; or a combination of the above | Infant cereal must be iron-fortified. Through 9/30/25, yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces. By 10/1/25, yogurt must contain no more than 12 grams of added sugars per 6 ounces.                                                                        |
|                                                                                                                                     | Fruit and/or Vegetable*               | 0-2 tablespoons vegetable or fruit, or a combination of both                                                                                                                                                                                 | Fruit or vegetable juice cannot be served.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Snacks                                                                                                                              | Breastmilk/Formula                    | 2-4 fluid oz breastmilk or formula                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Formula must be iron-fortified.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|                                                                                                                                     | Enriched or Whole Grain*              | 0-½ oz eq bread; or 0-¼ oz eq crackers; or 0-½ oz eq infant cereal; or 0-¼ oz eq ready-to-eat breakfast cereal                                                                                                                               | All grains served must be enriched, fortified, or whole grain-rich. Infant cereal must be iron-fortified. Through 9/30/25, breakfast cereals must contain no more than 6 grams of total sugars per dry oz. By 10/1/25, they must contain no more than 6 grams of added sugars per dry oz. |
|                                                                                                                                     | Fruit and/or Vegetable*               | 0-2 tablespoons vegetable or fruit, or a combination of both                                                                                                                                                                                 | Fruit or vegetable juice cannot be served.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| *A serving of these components is required when an infant is developmentally ready to accept it.                                    |                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| October 2024   Health and Nutrition Services   Arizona Department of Education   This institution is an equal opportunity provider. |                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |

CACFP Infant Meal Pattern Chart



# Reimbursable Infant Meals and Snacks

**Infants are ready for solid foods around 6 months of age. This means you will have infants aged 6-11 months of age in 3 possible scenarios:**



## **No Solids Yet**

**Parents:** Indicates to hold off on solids.

**Childcare site:** Does not offer solids.



## **Initial Introduction to Solids**

**Parents:** Share the few solids baby has started accepting.

**Childcare site:** Offers only the few foods (in quantities accepted at home).



## **Established Eating Pattern**

**Parents:** Share the infant is accepting many foods within each component.

**Childcare site:** Offers all required components at every meal and snack.



# Infant Point of Service Meal Count Sheet

## CEREAL AND WATER

Since each infant is unique, you will not have a standardized menu for all infants in your care. Rather, you will meet their needs by serving unique foods in textures appropriate for each infant. The specific foods served are recorded on the infant point of service meal count form. To mark that you have fed breastmilk and/or formula, you can use a checkmark next to the baby’s full name. When an infant is offered solids – the solids must be listed on the form within the columns.

- If an infant is ready before 6 months, there's a box for extra (because foods aren’t required yet)
- If an infant is ready between 6-11 months – you will give creditable foods that meet the meal pattern for each meal or snack - and write each food in the boxes.



**Infant Point of Service Meal Count Sheet**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed by: \_\_\_\_\_

**Form Instructions:**

- Write the date at the top of the page. Write the names of all infants in care (by age group).
- Breastmilk/Formula Column:** Use a ✓ when served by staff or mother nurses on site.
- Foods + Extras Column:** Write the name of the fruit/vegetable, meat/meat alternate, or bread/grain served.
- Parent-Provided Components:** If components are brought from home at parent/guardian request, indicate PP on form.

**Claiming Instructions:**

- Identify creditable meals to be claimed for reimbursement:
  - Maximum 2 meals/1 snack, or 2 snacks/1 meal per infant daily.
  - Only when breastmilk/iron-fortified infant formula at minimum is provided.
  - Only when infants 6 months and older with an established eating pattern have been served solids.
  - Only when 1 component or less has been brought from home/parent-provided (PP).
- Record total number of infant meals/snacks to be claimed for reimbursement on the bottom line labeled 'Claiming Totals'.
- Claiming totals are transferred to the Infant Meal Count Summary Sheet.

**Acronyms:** BM = Breastmilk   IFC = Infant Cereal   RTE = Ready to Eat Breakfast Cereal   PP = Parent Provided

| Names<br>0-5 months | Breakfast     |                                      | AM Snack      |                                      | Lunch         |                                      | PM Snack      |                                      | Supper        |                                      |
|---------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------------|
|                     | BM or Formula | Extras if early readiness<br>Specify | BM or Formula | Extras if early readiness<br>Specify | BM or Formula | Extras if early readiness<br>Specify | BM or Formula | Extras if early readiness<br>Specify | BM or Formula | Extras if early readiness<br>Specify |
|                     | ✓             |                                      | ✓             |                                      | ✓             |                                      | ✓             |                                      | ✓             |                                      |
|                     |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |
|                     |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |
|                     |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |
|                     |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |
|                     |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |               |                                      |

| Names<br>6-11 months | BM or Formula | IFC or Meat/Meat Alt | Fruit and/or Veg | BM or Formula | Grain   | Fruit and/or veg | BM or Formula | IFC or Meat/Meat Alt | Fruit and/or veg | BM or Formula | Grain   | Fruit and/or veg | BM or Formula | IFC or Meat/Meat Alt | Fruit and/or veg |
|----------------------|---------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------|---------|------------------|---------------|----------------------|------------------|---------------|---------|------------------|---------------|----------------------|------------------|
|                      | ✓             | Specify              | Specify          | ✓             | Specify | Specify          | ✓             | Specify              | Specify          | ✓             | Specify | Specify          | ✓             | Specify              | Specify          |
| Example: Suzy        | ✓             | PP: IFC              | Pear             | ✓             | Bread   | Peas             | ✓             | Beef/Cheese          | Squash           | ✓             | RTE     | Banana           | ✓             | Yogurt               | Melon            |
|                      |               |                      |                  |               |         |                  |               |                      |                  |               |         |                  |               |                      |                  |
|                      |               |                      |                  |               |         |                  |               |                      |                  |               |         |                  |               |                      |                  |
|                      |               |                      |                  |               |         |                  |               |                      |                  |               |         |                  |               |                      |                  |
|                      |               |                      |                  |               |         |                  |               |                      |                  |               |         |                  |               |                      |                  |
|                      |               |                      |                  |               |         |                  |               |                      |                  |               |         |                  |               |                      |                  |

Claiming Totals:  
Not to exceed 2 meals + 1 snack or 2 snacks + 1 meal per infant daily.

Breakfast: \_\_\_\_\_ AM Snack: \_\_\_\_\_ Lunch: \_\_\_\_\_ PM Snack: \_\_\_\_\_ Supper: \_\_\_\_\_

August 2023 | Health and Nutrition Services | Arizona Department of Education | This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

# Infant Point of Service Meal Count Sheet

## EXAMPLE: INITIAL INTRODUCTION TO SOLIDS

| Names<br>6-11 months | Breakfast        |                            |                     | AM Snack         |         |                        | Lunch            |                            |                        | PM Snack         |         |                     | Supper           |                            |                     |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------|------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
|                      | BM or<br>Formula | IFC or<br>Meat/Meat<br>Alt | Fruit and/or<br>Veg | BM or<br>Formula | Grain   | Fruit<br>and/or<br>veg | BM or<br>Formula | IFC or<br>Meat/Meat<br>Alt | Fruit<br>and/or<br>veg | BM or<br>Formula | Grain   | Fruit<br>and/or veg | BM or<br>Formula | IFC or<br>Meat/Meat<br>Alt | Fruit<br>and/or veg |
|                      | ✓                | Specify                    | Specify             | ✓                | Specify | Specify                | ✓                | Specify                    | Specify                | ✓                | Specify | Specify             | ✓                | Specify                    | Specify             |
| Example: Suzy        | ✓                | PP: IFC                    | Pear                | ✓                | Bread   | Peas                   | ✓                | Beef/Cheese                | Squash                 | ✓                | RTE     | Banana              | ✓                | Yogurt                     | Melon               |
| JADE SINGER          | ✓                |                            |                     | ✓                | IFC     |                        | ✓                |                            |                        |                  |         |                     |                  |                            |                     |
|                      |                  |                            |                     |                  |         |                        |                  |                            |                        |                  |         |                     |                  |                            |                     |
| TIM LARSON           | ✓                | IFC                        |                     | ✓                |         | APPLE                  | ✓                | IFC                        |                        |                  |         |                     |                  |                            |                     |
|                      |                  |                            |                     |                  |         |                        |                  |                            |                        |                  |         |                     |                  |                            |                     |
|                      |                  |                            |                     |                  |         |                        |                  |                            |                        |                  |         |                     |                  |                            |                     |

- Jade's parent has shared with the childcare site that she is accepting Infant Cereal (IFC) once a day. So, in childcare, she is provided only IFC and only once a day. All three meals shown here are reimbursable.
- Tim's parent has shared that he has started accepting IFC twice a day and recently also is accepting apple puree once a day. In childcare, that is what is served and all three of Tim's meals are also reimbursable.



# Infant Point of Service Meal Count Sheet

## EXAMPLE: ESTABLISHED EATING PATTERN

| Names<br>6-11 months | Breakfast        |                            |                     | AM Snack         |         |                        | Lunch            |                            |                        | PM Snack         |         |                     | Supper           |                            |                     |
|----------------------|------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|------------------|---------|------------------------|------------------|----------------------------|------------------------|------------------|---------|---------------------|------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
|                      | BM or<br>Formula | IFC or<br>Meat/Meat<br>Alt | Fruit and/or<br>Veg | BM or<br>Formula | Grain   | Fruit<br>and/or<br>veg | BM or<br>Formula | IFC or<br>Meat/Meat<br>Alt | Fruit<br>and/or<br>veg | BM or<br>Formula | Grain   | Fruit<br>and/or veg | BM or<br>Formula | IFC or<br>Meat/Meat<br>Alt | Fruit<br>and/or veg |
|                      | ✓                | Specify                    | Specify             | ✓                | Specify | Specify                | ✓                | Specify                    | Specify                | ✓                | Specify | Specify             | ✓                | Specify                    | Specify             |
| Example: Suzy        | ✓                | PP: IFC                    | Pear                | ✓                | Bread   | Peas                   | ✓                | Beef/Cheese                | Squash                 | ✓                | RTE     | Banana              | ✓                | Yogurt                     | Melon               |
| JADE SINGER          | ✓                | IFC                        | SQUASH              | ✓                | IFC     |                        | ✓                | CHEESE                     | BERRIES                |                  |         |                     |                  |                            |                     |
|                      |                  |                            |                     |                  |         |                        |                  |                            |                        |                  |         |                     |                  |                            |                     |
| TIM LARSON           | ✓                | EGG                        | PEAR                | ✓                | CRACKER | APPLE                  | ✓                | YOGURT                     | BERRIES                |                  |         |                     |                  |                            |                     |
|                      |                  |                            |                     |                  |         |                        |                  |                            |                        |                  |         |                     |                  |                            |                     |
|                      |                  |                            |                     |                  |         |                        |                  |                            |                        |                  |         |                     |                  |                            |                     |

- Looking at the point of service meal count form, Tim was provided breastmilk or formula and a creditable food from each solid food component – so all 3 meals and snacks are reimbursable.
- Jade, who also has an established eating pattern wasn't provided a veg or fruit at AM Snack. AM Snack is not reimbursable in the CACFP.
  - If this situation occurs, ADE recommends checking in with the infant teacher about why an infant with an established eating pattern wasn't provided all required solids and to have ongoing discussions to ensure babies are provided what they need!

# Vegetables and Fruits

## **CREDITABLE FOOD ITEMS**

- Vegetables and fruits contain important nutrients and fiber. All vegetables and fruits can be offered to infants! Fruit and vegetable juices, including 100% juice, are not creditable in the infant meal pattern.
- To avoid choking, childcare sites should:
  - Cook and prepare vegetables and fruits to the appropriate texture for the baby's feeding skills.
  - Remove all pits, seeds, skins, and peels before serving the food.
  - Cut vegetables and fruits into thin slices or small pieces (no larger than ½ inch).



# Meat and Meat Alternates

## **CREDITABLE FOOD ITEMS**

- Meats and Poultry (beef, pork, lamb, veal, chicken, and turkey)
- Fin Fish
- Shellfish
- Whole Eggs (yolk and egg white)
- Beans and Peas (Including canned)
- Cheese (Cheese food, cheese spread, and cheese product are not creditable)
- Cottage Cheese
- Yogurt (must meet sugar limit)
  - To be creditable, the yogurt must contain no more than 23 grams of sugar per 6 ounces of yogurt.
  - Homemade yogurts are not creditable.

# Grains

## CREDITABLE FOOD ITEMS

### Breakfast, Lunch, Supper or Snack

- Iron-fortified infant cereal
  - Although IFC can be served at all meals and snacks, bread crackers and cereals are part of the snack meal pattern only. If you serve them at a meal, it must be in addition to the other required components, not instead of.

### Snack Only

- Breads
- Crackers
- Ready-to-eat cereals
  - Iron-fortified and must meet the sugar limit (6 grams per dry ounce)



# Grains

## **IRON-FORTIFIED INFANT CEREAL**

- Both single and mixed-grain cereals are creditable.
  - Offer single grain first, then mixed grain.
- Infant cereal must be iron-fortified.
  - Look for “iron-fortified” on the package
  - Look at the ingredients list for:
    - Iron
    - Ferric Fumarate
    - Electrolytic Iron
    - Iron (Electrolytic)

# Parent Provided Food Component

**Parents can provide one creditable food component to count towards a reimbursable meal. For the meal or snack to be reimbursable, the childcare provider must offer the baby all of the other food components**

-  **Parents:** Breastmilk or creditable iron-fortified infant formula  
**You:** All other solid food components
  
-  **Parents:** One creditable solid food component  
**You:** Creditable iron-fortified infant formula **AND** all other solid food components

Please note that centers must not initiate a parent provided food component – it is only at the request of the parent.



# Quiz Time

True or False: If an infant has an established eating pattern, accepting foods from all components, then a creditable food from each required component must be served at every meal and snack.

**A** True.

**B** False



# Quiz Time

True or False: If an infant has an established eating pattern, accepting foods from all components, then a creditable food from each required component must be served at every meal and snack.

**A True.**

**B False**

**Once an infant is accepting foods from every component, they must be offered at every meal or snack in order to be claimed for reimbursement. And as a reminder, the CACFP meal pattern is based on foods offered, not foods consumed – so how much the infant chooses to eat does not affect reimbursement.**





# Quiz Time

A parent wants to bring food from home for her infant. For the CACFP child care site to be able to claim a meal or snack for reimbursement, the parent can provide up to how many components?

- A** 1 creditable food component
- B** 2 creditable food component
- C** 3 creditable food component
- D** 4 creditable food component



# Quiz Time

A parent wants to bring food from home for her infant. For the CACFP child care site to be able to claim a meal or snack for reimbursement, the parent can provide up to how many components?

**A 1 creditable food component**

**B 2 creditable food component**

**C 3 creditable food component**

**D 4 creditable food component**

**Remember, child care sites must not initiate a parent provided food component – it is only at the request of the parent.**





# Quiz Time

Yes or No: A parent asks you to start serving solid foods to their 5-month-old baby at your childcare site but you know the infant meal pattern age groups are 0 through 5 months and 6 through 11 months. If you serve the baby solid foods at 5 months, can you still claim reimbursement for his meals and snacks?

**A** Yes

**B** No



# Quiz Time

Yes or No: A parent asks you to start serving solid foods to their 5-month-old baby at your childcare site but you know the infant meal pattern age groups are 0 through 5 months and 6 through 11 months. If you serve the baby solid foods at 5 months, can you still claim reimbursement for his meals and snacks?

**A** Yes

**B** No

**Yes, you can! Although the infant meal pattern for 0-5 month olds does not require solids, if they are developmentally ready for solids, foods can be provided.**





# Quiz Time

Yes or No: You notice that an infant in your care is developmentally ready for solid foods, and the parents agree. The parents tell you that they have fed their infant eggs at home so you offer the infant finely chopped whole eggs (yolk and egg white) at childcare. The infant takes one bite at lunch. Can you claim the eggs as part of a reimbursable lunch?

**A** Yes

**B** No



# Quiz Time

Yes or No: You notice that an infant in your care is developmentally ready for solid foods, and the parents agree. The parents tell you that they have fed their infant eggs at home so you offer the infant finely chopped whole eggs (yolk and egg white) at childcare. The infant takes one bite at lunch. Can you claim the eggs as part of a reimbursable lunch?

**A** Yes

**B** No

**Yes, you can! The infant meal pattern sets requirements for what is offered, not what is consumed by the infant.**





# Quiz Time

Which foods are creditable in the infant meal pattern and can be offered to infants around 6 through 11 months?

- A** Peach cobbler baby food dessert
- B** Pureed carrots
- C** Finely chopped baked chicken
- D** Granola bar



# Quiz Time

Which foods are creditable in the infant meal pattern and can be offered to infants around 6 through 11 months?

**A** Peach cobbler baby food dessert

**B** Pureed carrots

**C** Finely chopped baked chicken

**D** Granola bar

**Peach cobbler baby food dessert and granola bars are not creditable because they are considered grain-based desserts – which cannot be served to infants or children in the CACFP!**





# Infant Feeding Skills and Modifying Food Texture

SECTION 3





# Establishing Healthy Eating Habits

## **TASTE PREFERENCES AND HABITS**

Taste preferences and eating habits are formed early in a child's life, making your childcare site an important part of children's experiences with food. During the first year of life, infants' mouths change from being able only to suck and swallow breastmilk or infant formula to being able to chew solid foods. Babies also go from relying on you to feeding them to learning how to feed themselves.

As babies continue to grow, they can eat different kinds of foods. Feeding babies the right foods at the right times helps them enjoy new tastes and textures, get the nutrition they need, and avoid choking.

All babies develop at their own rate. The foods that are fed to a baby at different times during their first year are based on the baby's developmental readiness. Readiness for solid food is related to how well the baby can control his or her muscles. Although age and size are often related to developmental readiness, these should not be used as the only factors in deciding what and how to feed a baby.

# What is a Feeding Skill?

## **BABY DEVELOPMENT**

Babies are born with feeding skills that allow them to drink breast milk or infant formula. As babies age, they develop new skills to help them feed themselves with your supervision. Offering babies different textures of food as they get older helps them learn or strengthen different feeding skills.

Feeding skills include when a baby can:

- Suck/swallow
- Move food from spoon to back of mouth and swallow
- Pick up pieces of foods with hands
- Pick up pieces of food with fingers



# What is a Feeding Skill?

## WHAT DO THEY LOOK LIKE?

Feeding skills indicate that an infant may be ready to try new food textures.



**The Palmer Grasp** is when an infant uses his or her whole hand to pick up larger pieces of food or objects. An infant may be ready to try strips of bread or crackers.



**The Pincer grasp** is when an infant begins to use his or her thumb and index finger to pick up smaller pieces of food or objects. An infant may be ready to try ready-to-eat cereals, such as whole grain cereal O's.

# Feeding Skills and Food Texture

## **INTRODUCING DIFFERENT TEXTURES OF FOOD**

Foods fed to a baby are based on the baby's developmental readiness and feeding skills. Readiness for solid food is related to how well the baby can control his or her muscles and digest certain foods. A baby's feeding skills are a good clue of what food textures the baby may be ready to eat.

- After introducing purees, babies should progress to new textures, from a puree with soft lumps to thicker mashed foods to soft, chopped solid foods. It is important to continue introducing new textures so that babies continually build the chewing and feeding skills that will eventually allow them to eat table foods. This also helps the baby get used to the feel of different textures of foods in his or her mouth.
- At around 8 to 12 months, babies develop the skill to use their hands and fingers to feed themselves small, soft pieces of food.



# Preparing Baby Food

## AT THE CHILD CARE SITE

**Thaw only the breastmilk needed for one feeding to prevent or reduce waste.**

- You can prepare foods for infants at your childcare site or purchase prepared foods from a vendor.  
There are many great reasons to prepare your baby foods.
  - You may be able to offer locally grown and seasonal foods
  - It may be less expensive or easier for your childcare site
  - You may be able to offer a greater variety of foods to the infants in your care.
- To prepare baby food, you may need:
  - Blender to puree foods
  - Fine mesh strainer to alter food texture
  - Baby food grinder to strain soft food pieces
  - Simple fork and knife to mash or finely chop foods.

# Preparing Baby Food

## **MODIFY TEXTURE TO PREVENT CHOKING**

It's important to continually introduce new food textures, as the infant is developmentally ready, to build the infant's skills while reducing the risk of choking. Some foods are harder for infants to eat and present a choking hazard. To prevent choking:

- Cook or steam foods until soft enough to pierce with a fork easily.
- Modify the texture by pureeing, mashing, grinding, or finely chopping.
- Cut foods into thin slices or small pieces (no larger than ½ inch).
- Do not feed foods or pieces of food that are the size or shape of a small marble. Foods this size can be swallowed whole and could get caught in a baby's throat. Cut round foods into short strips (lengthwise) rather than round pieces. Cut grapes and cherry tomatoes into quarters. Remove pits, seeds, and tough skins or peels from ripe fruit and cut into small pieces.
- Avoid serving small, sticky, or hard foods that are difficult to chew or are easy to swallow whole.
  - For example, chunks of nut or seed butters are sticky and pose a choking risk. Nut and seed butters are also not creditable towards a reimbursable meal under the infant meal pattern.



# Purchasing Baby Food

## **STORE-BOUGHT BABY FOOD**

Many different store-bought baby foods are creditable. If purchasing baby food, look at the “use by” date and ingredients and make sure the container is vacuum sealed and not dented, leaking, or bulging.

When looking at ingredients - Water, broth, and vitamins (such as ascorbic acid) can be additional ingredients in creditable infant food. These ingredients are added to make the food the right consistency for infants. As a best practice, avoid choosing baby foods that have added salt, fat, and sugars, like fruit juice concentrates or syrups – because they are less healthy for infants.

# Quiz Time

Which food texture is best?





# Quiz Time

Which food texture is best?



**Breastmilk or iron-fortified infant formula.**



# Quiz Time

Which food texture is best?





# Quiz Time

Which food texture is best?



**Pureed, soft cooked foods such as pureed carrots or sweet potatoes match this feeding skill!**



# Quiz Time

Which food texture is best?





# Quiz Time

Which food texture is best?



**Thin slices or small pieces (no larger than ½ inch) of bread are a good food texture to provide.**



# Quiz Time

All of the following finger foods are creditable in the CACFP infant meal pattern and can be prepared the right way to avoid choking, except which one?

- A** Small strips of bread
- B** Finely chopped strawberries
- C** Chunks of peanut butter
- D** Finely chopped whole eggs (yolk and egg white)





# Quiz Time

All of the following finger foods are creditable in the CACFP infant meal pattern and can be prepared the right way to avoid choking, except which one?

**A** Small strips of bread

**B** Finely chopped strawberries

**C** Chunks of peanut butter

**D** Finely chopped whole eggs (yolk and egg white)

**Peanut butter and other nut butters or seed butters are not creditable in a reimbursable infant meal. Chunks of nut or seed butters pose a choking risk for infants. Peanut butter or other nut butters can get stuck to the roof of the mouth making it difficult to swallow.**



# Quiz Time

Which is a best practice for preparing baby foods? Choose all that apply.

- A** Modify the texture by pureeing, mashing, grinding, or finely chopping.
- B** Cut round foods into short strips (lengthwise) rather than round pieces.
- C** Remove pits, seeds, skins, and tough peels from fruits and vegetables.
- D** All of the above.





# Quiz Time

Which is a best practice for preparing baby foods? Choose all that apply.

- A** Modify the texture by pureeing, mashing, grinding, or finely chopping.
- B** Cut round foods into short strips (lengthwise) rather than round pieces.
- C** Remove pits, seeds, skins, and tough peels from fruits and vegetables.
- D** All of the above.



# Quiz Time

To prepare foods that can be easily chewed by an infant, cut soft foods into thin slices, strips, or small pieces no larger than \_\_\_\_\_

- A** 1/2 inch
- B** 2/3 inch
- C** 3/4 inch
- D** 1 inch



# Quiz Time

To prepare foods that can be easily chewed by an infant, cut soft foods into thin slices, strips, or small pieces no larger than \_\_\_\_\_

**A** 1/2 inch

**B** 2/3 inch

**C** 3/4 inch

**D** 1 inch





# Infant Feeding Compliance in Arizona

## INFANT FEEDING REQUIREMENTS

1. You can claim only when the meal pattern has been met. This means:
  - a. Only when breastmilk and/or iron-fortified formula, at minimum, has been provided;
  - b. Only when all components or all but 1 component are center-provided and,
  - c. Only when creditable foods (that the infant is developmentally ready for) have been provided.
    - i. *Flexibility during initial introduction but required with established eating patterns*
2. Purchase at least one iron-fortified infant formula, iron-fortified cereal, and all other foods required to meet the meal pattern.
3. Feed infants on-demand (no set schedule, honor hunger/satiety).
4. **Document:** [Infant Point of Service Meal Count Sheet](#) and **Document:** [Participant Menu Modifications Form](#) for alternate formula requests.
5. Safe handling, preparation, and storage of formula, breastmilk, and foods.
6. Communicate with parents regarding solid food readiness.



# CONTACT US

If you have a question or require additional assistance, please contact your assigned specialist or contact HNS.



602-542-8700



[HelpDesk](#)



[www.azed.gov/hns](http://www.azed.gov/hns)







# Congratulations

---

**You have completed the training: How to Feed Infants Solid Foods**

## **ADHS Empower Program**

This training counts toward Empower Program training requirements.

## **Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry**

This training is listed on the Arizona Early Childhood Workforce Registry. If you want this training to appear on your registry transcript, please provide your Workforce Registry ID when completing the survey.



# Certificate

---

## Requesting a training certificate

Please click the button to complete a brief survey about this online training. Once the survey is complete, you will be able to print your certificate of completion from Survey Monkey.



## Training Title:

**Online Course: How to Feed Infants Solid Foods**

**Length: 1 hour**

---

Please note, attendees must document the amount of training hours indicated on the training despite the amount of time it takes to complete it.







In accordance with federal civil rights law and USDA civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its agencies, offices, employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, family/parental status, income derived from a public assistance program, political beliefs, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity, in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA (not all bases apply to all programs). Remedies and complaint filing deadlines vary by program or incident.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotape, American Sign Language, etc.) should contact the state or local agency that administers the program or contact USDA through the Telecommunications Relay Service at 711 (voice and TTY). Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program discrimination complaint, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, [AD-3027](#), found online at [How to File a Program Discrimination Complaint](#) and at any USDA office or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

1. **Mail:** U.S. Department of Agriculture, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Mail Stop 9410, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
2. **Fax:** (202) 690-7442; or
3. **Email:** [program.intake@usda.gov](mailto:program.intake@usda.gov).

*USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.*