

# Standard 1

## Infant Feeding (0-6 Months)

**Support and encourage breastfeeding efforts. Help parents recognize and respond to baby's hunger and fullness cues.**

### Why is this Standard important?

As a home visitor, an important thing you can do for babies is support their parents' decisions about infant feeding, especially in the mother's breastfeeding (nursing) efforts. Breast milk is the ideal food for infants to both nourish them and protect them from obesity and illness, including ear infections, upper and lower respiratory infections, diarrhea and others. Exclusive breastfeeding is ideal nutrition and enough to support optimal growth and development in the first six months of life.

Helping parents recognize their baby's hunger and fullness cues promotes a positive feeding relationship that will be part of the foundation of healthy eating throughout life. Responding to baby's cues can also decrease crying, decrease stress and lets baby know that his needs will be met.

### Understanding Baby's Cues

Welcoming a new baby into a family is an exciting and special time. Understanding baby's cues can help parents and caregivers lessen stress, confusion and exhaustion in meeting their baby's needs. Although newborn babies are still learning to control their bodies, they give cues (noises and movements) to communicate when they need to eat, play, learn or rest.

There are two types of cues that are especially important when feeding babies: hunger and fullness (satiety) cues. Encourage parents and caregivers to recognize and respond to these cues by feeding when baby shows signs of hunger and ending a feeding when baby shows signs of fullness. Following baby's lead will help set the stage for healthy eating habits through life.

Share the following with parents and caregivers to help recognize when baby is hungry or full:

| Hunger Cues  | Fullness Cues   |
|--|---|
| When baby is hungry, he may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Keep his hands near his mouth</li><li>• Bend his arms and legs</li><li>• Make sucking noises</li><li>• Pucker his lips</li><li>• Search for the nipple (root)</li></ul> | When baby is full, he may: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Suck slower or stop sucking</li><li>• Relax his hands and arms</li><li>• Turn away from the nipple</li><li>• Push away</li><li>• Fall asleep</li></ul> |

## Positive Feeding Relationship

Parents and caregivers can also help babies have positive feeding experiences by making the feeding environment relaxed and calm in these ways:

- Designate a comfortable place in the home for feeding and act calm and relaxed during the feeding.
- Have patience and take time to communicate with and learn about their baby during feeding.
- Show their baby lots of love, attention and cuddling while feeding.

## Help Support and Encourage Breastfeeding Efforts:

### Discuss Concerns and Ask Questions

New mothers can have many different questions, concerns and fears about breastfeeding. She may not know anyone who has had long-term success with breastfeeding, or where to go for support. As a home visitor, you have a unique opportunity to offer support and guidance during this time.

### Embarrassment

Women may feel embarrassed about the idea of breastfeeding in front of family, friends or in public. She may also be worried that breastfeeding means she won't be able to leave the house for months.

Validate her concerns and reassure her that breastfeeding can be done discreetly at home or in public.

### Milk Production/Perceived Low Milk Supply

Milk production is a common concern for new mothers. Unlike a baby bottle, women are unable to visually see how much milk their baby is getting from the breast. She may feel like her baby is eating too frequently and worry that he isn't getting enough milk. Explain to her:

- Babies feed frequently—this is normal and healthy
- The more baby feeds, the more milk mom will make

If mothers have questions about breastfeeding, refer them to the  
**Arizona Department of Health Services Breastfeeding Hotline**  
**(available 24/7): 1-800-833-4642**

Someone is always available to answer questions.  
English and Spanish languages are spoken.

## Formula Feeding Basics

The decision to breastfeed is a personal choice and some mothers may need or choose to formula feed their baby for a variety of reasons. Families that formula feed may have questions about preparing infant formula and how much to expect their baby to eat. Share the following information to support building healthy feeding practices:

### Formula Preparation:

| Type of Infant Formula             | Basic Preparation   | Example: preparing 4 ounces of infant formula  |
|------------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Ready-to-Feed</b>               | Pour the amount of formula for one feeding into a clean bottle. Do not add any other liquids or water.                          | Pour 4 ounces of ready-to-feed formula into a clean bottle.                                      |
| <b>Standard Liquid Concentrate</b> | Pour the needed amount of formula into a clean bottle using ounce markings to measure formula and add an equal amount of water. | Pour 2 ounces of liquid concentrate formula into a clean bottle and add 2 ounces of water.       |
| <b>Powdered</b>                    | For each 2 ounces of water added to a clean bottle, add 1 level scoop of powdered formula.                                      | Pour 4 ounces of water into a clean bottle and carefully add 2 level scoops of powdered formula. |

**Note:** Be aware that powdered infant formula is not commercially sterile. Due to concerns about possible *Enterobacter sakazakii* infections, powdered infant formula is not recommended for infants born prematurely or those with underlying medical conditions.

### Quantities of Formula:

Remember to encourage parents and caregivers to feed infants on demand and to watch for hunger and fullness cues when feeding. Share the information below to help parents and caregivers learn to expect about how much infant formula they may need for their baby.

| Age               | Portion Size/Feeding | Feedings Per Day |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|
| Birth to 3 months | 2-3 ounces           | 8-12             |
| 4 to 6 months     | 4-6 ounces           | 6-8              |

Remind parents that infant formula left over in a bottle will need to be discarded after a feeding. To avoid this, parents and caregivers can prepare smaller bottles (2-4 ounces) until they learn about how much their baby needs.