

## Welcome to Group Care!



THE NATIONAL CENTER ON  
Health

**H**ead Start and other programs that serve infants and toddlers provide your child a safe environment to learn. We believe you are your child's first teacher. Parents, grandparents, and other caregivers are viewed as partners. We promise to...

- Value individual culture, beliefs, and traditions in raising children
- Listen to your concerns and share ideas on healthy child development
- Support and encourage you through your child's enrollment
- Provide you with daily reports on how your child is doing

### Bottle-feeding

Babies should be fed when they shows signs of being hungry. We hold babies during feeding to build the relationship between baby and caregiver. Bottles are never propped.

### Breast (human) milk

- We support moms who breastfeed when they return to work or school
- We encourage moms to stop by to breastfeed. A comfortable space is provided
- We store bottled milk in a refrigerator, clearly labeled with your infant's name and date

### Formula

- We give the same formula you give at home
- We prepare, heat, and store formula safely

### Safe Sleep

At 2 months of age, your infant may not have a regular sleep schedule. Throughout the day, he may sleep only one or two hours at a time. We place your baby on his back to sleep. This is the safest position for your baby until he is able to roll over by himself (usually 4 to 7 months).



- We keep cribs free of toys, stuffed animals, and extra bedding for safety
- We supervise infants while they are sleeping
- Our cribs meet current safety standards

### Immunizations (Shots)

Immunizations help your baby stay healthy. Your baby's pediatrician should provide routine immunizations based on the current state schedule.

- We explain how to determine if your infant is up-to-date
- We support you in working with your pediatrician to bring him up-to-date

*School readiness begins with health!*

## Tummy Time

Have fun and play with your baby while he is awake. Depending on the infant, we play with babies while on their tummy two to three times each day for a few minutes. This helps strengthen and develop muscles.

- We have “tummy time” and play with him each day
- Try to find tummy time with your infant at home

## Diapering

Diaper changing is part of your infant’s daily routine. We change diapers often and as needed. We diaper him in ways that are clean and healthy.

- We sing songs and teach words such as toes and fingers to engage your baby. Try this at home too
- We maintain physical contact with him (placing our hand on his tummy) to reinforce safety and comfort

## Environment

We have a clean, safe, and cheerful space with colorful objects to promote your infant’s development.

- We make sure rooms and toys are clean and safe with daily checks. Check your infant’s room at home to make sure it is also clean and safe
- We meet state regulated child-caregiver ratios and take care of infants in small groups
- We promote brain development by offering age-appropriate toys, materials, and learning experiences

## Relationships

The relationship between a caregiver and child is very important. When possible, one main caregiver will take care of your infant. This supports secure attachments and consistency.

- We are friendly and responsive to you and your baby
- We rock, speak, and read to him, building a positive relationship
- We respond to his cues and tell him when we are about to feed or change him
- We update you daily on his eating, sleeping, diapering, and play

### Questions to Ask Your Baby’s Pediatrician

“How often should I be feeding my baby?”

“How can I make sure my baby has a safe sleeping environment?”

“Do you have information about programs like WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) that can help me get food/formula?”