

Welcome to Group Care!



THE NATIONAL CENTER ON
Health

Head 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

Your baby should be fed when he shows signs of being hungry. We hold babies during feeding to build the relationship between baby and caregiver. We never prop bottles.

- Your infant will be fed breast milk or formula for the first four to six months of life
- We will never put a bottle in the microwave

Solid Foods

Breast milk or formula is all your baby needs until he is 6 months of age. When you know your infant is ready, introduce solid foods one at a time. We will wait to give your infant solid foods until you let us know.

- Signs that show your child is ready
 - Opens mouth for the spoon
 - Sits with support
 - Has good head and neck control
 - Shows interest in foods you eat
- Let us know if you have questions about bottle-feeding or solid foods



Safe Sleep

At 4 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 until he is able to roll over by himself (usually 4 to 7 months).

- He may start rolling over at this time. He may choose not to stay on his back
- We keep our 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

School readiness begins with health!

- We support families in working with the pediatrician to bring infants up-to-date
- Let us know if you have questions about your infant's immunizations

Environment

We set up our environment to encourage active play. Active play is a great way for your baby to practice movement, manipulate objects, and imitate sounds.

- We have “tummy time” and play with him each day two to three times a day for three to five minutes
- We use colorful toys, brightly colored books, and floor gyms to engage him in active play
- We encourage you to sit and play with him at home too
- Infants are comforted by predictability. Our spaces and daily routines are set up to meet your infant's needs

Development

We interact with your infant to make new connections in his brain. He explores with his five senses (seeing, smelling, hearing, touching, and tasting). We make sure the environment your infant explores is safe and clean. A 4-month-old can typically:

- Hold his head up
- Lay on his stomach and raise his body on his hands
- Babble, smile, and laugh

Relationships

As your infant learns to sit up, use his hands, and move about, he's likely to become more aware of objects and people around him.

- He may show a clear preference for parents and his caregivers
- We will be friendly and respond to his cues
- We enhance our relationship with him by reading books, singing songs, and rocking him, and you can too

Getting Sick

It happens to everyone. Catching a cold is an easy thing to do, even for a tiny person. We help protect him from illness.

- We wash his hands and ours
- We keep all of the toys clean—especially bottles and pacifiers
- At home, you can make sure to wash your hands and your infant's hands

Questions to Ask Your Baby's Pediatrician

“Is my baby ready to start solid foods?”

“What should I start with?” “How much and how often?”

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

“How do I know if my baby is developing normally?”