

# RESPONSIVE FEEDING

FOR INFANTS

0-6 MONTHS

Whether breastfeeding/chestfeeding or bottle feeding, your relationship with your infant is essential to happy and successful mealtimes! Using **responsive feeding** means that you feed your baby promptly when they are hungry, pay attention to their communication, and end the feeding when they show you they are full. As a parent, you can focus on connection and love at feeding times, instead of deciding when and how much they should eat. Doing these things can lead to less feeding stress and more enjoyment!

BREASTFEEDING



BOTTLE FEEDING



## YOUR INFANT

- Shows that they are hungry
- Decides how much to eat
- Learns to trust an adult will feed them
- Learns how to eat with practice

### “I’M HUNGRY! HUNGER CUES

- Begins to stir from sleep and become more active
- Moves their mouth more and may put fingers in mouth
- Roots (opens mouth and turns towards source of food)
- Cries (late hunger sign)

### “I’M FULL! FULLNESS CUES

- Stops sucking
- Does not open mouth for nipple or food
- Turns away from food source
- Becomes more relaxed

## WHAT TO DO AS A PARENT

- Help your baby feel safe and supported
- Learn to understand what baby wants and needs
- Feed your baby when they are hungry (feed on-demand)
- End the feeding when baby shows they are full

## RESPONSIVE MEALTIMES ARE ABOUT

- Trust
- Clear expectations
- Togetherness
- Opportunities | Not demands
- No pressure
- Conversation | About things other than food

## FAMILY BENEFITS

- Supports bonding between babies and caregivers
- Reduces parent stress by focusing on quality of the feeding vs. how much baby eats
- Helps your baby learn to self-regulate and eat what they need each time
- Helps your baby learn that mealtimes are positive experiences
- Supports your baby's overall development

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## KEEP IN MIND:

- Newborns may be sleepy at first
- Newborn infants typically eat every 2-3 hours
- Your baby may not eat exactly the same amount at each feeding
- Focus on positive and stress-free feeding rather than emptying the bottle or breastfeeding longer