

Attachment Q: English Handouts



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# Mealtimes With Toddlers

## in the Child and Adult Care Food Program

# Mealtimes With Toddlers in the Child and Adult Care Food Program



Children ages 1-2 years old are growing and developing quickly. They are learning about themselves and the world around them, even at mealtimes.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern for children 1 through 2 years old supports their growth and development. As a child care provider, you can help a child learn healthy habits at an early age during meals and snacks.

## In this booklet, you will learn how to:

- Assist children in learning how to feed themselves.
- Encourage children to try new foods.
- Serve milk to children as part of CACFP meals.
- Offer more vegetables and fruit at meals and snacks.

## What is a toddler?

A toddler is a young child ages 1 through 2 years.

## How do you use this booklet?

You can use this booklet to assist you with feeding 1-2 year olds in your care.

Bonus: In the back of this booklet you will find a handout to share with parents. It may help make mealtimes at home with their toddler easier and more enjoyable.

# Assist Children in Learning How to Feed Themselves

Watch Video



[url.com/urlurlurl](http://url.com/urlurlurl)

## 1-2 Year Olds

Toddlers ages 1 through 2 years are improving their fine motor skills every day. Certain activities give them a chance to strengthen the small muscles found in their fingers—this includes meals and snacks.

You can help toddlers learn to feed themselves, by:



Offering foods in bite-size pieces that are easier to pick up with their fingers.



Allowing them to practice eating with spoons and forks at mealtimes.



Using child-sized utensils, bowls, and plates.



Being okay with messes. When spills do occur, teach children how to help clean them up.



Modeling how to use utensils at mealtimes.



**Look what I can do!**

I can eat with a spoon and my fingers, but I'm still learning how to eat safely.

## Prepare Foods to Lower a Toddler's Risk of Choking

Help toddlers eat table foods safely. Prepare foods to the right size and texture to lower risk for choking by:

- Cooking foods until they are soft.
- Cutting foods into bite-size pieces no larger than ½-inch or in small thin strips.
- Making sure vegetables and fruit are free of large seeds, pits, and tough skins.
- Reminding children not to jump, play, or lie down while eating.



### What are table foods?

Table foods are any foods that older children and adults eat. Prepare foods in a way that makes it easy for a toddler to chew and swallow.

# Encourage Children to Try New Foods

Toddlers are eager to learn, especially at mealtimes. Give 1-2 year olds a chance to try different foods while in child care by offering a variety of items on the menu.

## To encourage 1-2 year olds to try new foods you can:

- Introduce a new food outside of mealtimes through art, science, and reading.
- Offer a new food with a popular food.
- Allow toddlers to help prepare meals and snacks.
- Plan where toddlers sit around the table. Toddlers who need more help can sit closer to you. Toddlers who need a bit more encouragement can sit next to children who are more adventurous eaters.
- Describe the taste, texture, smell, and color of the food. Talk about where the food comes from.
- Reward with kind words—not food.
- Toddlers are trying to understand how to deal with their different emotions. Avoid using food as a reward, bribe, or punishment.



### Look what I can do!

I like to learn about everything, even food. I may not like a food the first time I try it, but please keep offering it to me! You may need to offer a food to me more than 10 times before I like it.

### How Can 1-2 Year Olds Help Prepare Meals?

Try giving toddlers small jobs to help prepare meals or snacks. They can:

- Tear lettuce or greens.
- Rinse vegetables and fruits.
- Help pour and mix ingredients in a bowl.

# Serve Milk to Children as Part of CACFP Meals

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, fat is important for babies and toddlers for healthy growth and brain development.

## 1-2 Year Olds

The USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) meal pattern for 1-2 year olds allows time for children to get used to milk with different amounts of fat. In order to claim fluid milk as part of a reimbursable meal for 1-2 year olds, you can offer:

- Breastmilk and infant formula from **birth through 11 months.**
- Breastmilk, infant formula, and/or unflavored whole milk from **12 through 13 months.**
- Breastmilk and/or unflavored whole milk from **13 through 23 months.**



### Look what I can do!

**I can drink from a cup.** Help me get used to whole milk slowly. Try adding a little whole milk to my cup of infant formula. Gradually increase the amount of whole milk over the course of a few weeks. You can do this with my older friends too when they switch from whole milk to low-fat (1%) milk or fat-free (skim) milk.

## 2-5 Year Olds

- Breastmilk, unflavored whole milk, unflavored low-fat (1%) milk and/or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk from **24 through 25 months.**
- Breastmilk, unflavored low-fat (1%) milk, and/or unflavored fat-free (skim) milk from **2 years through 5 years.**



# Offer More Vegetables and Fruit at Meals and Snacks

## 1-2 Year Olds

As best practice, offer a fruit and a vegetable to toddlers at snack. Offer two vegetables, instead of a fruit and a vegetable, at breakfast, lunch, and supper.

### What is in a Breakfast?

Milk (4 fl. oz. or ½ cup)  
Vegetables, Fruit, or Both (¼ cup)  
Grains (½ oz. eq.)  
Optional: Meat/meat alternate may be served in place of the entire grains component up to 3 times per week at breakfast.

### What is in a Lunch or Supper?

Milk (4 fl. oz. or ½ cup)  
Meat/Meat Alternate (1 oz. eq.)  
Vegetables (⅓ cup)  
Fruit (⅓ cup)  
Grains (½ oz. eq.)

### What is in a Snack? Pick 2:

Milk (4 fl. oz. or ½ cup)  
Meat/Meat Alternate (½ oz. eq.)  
Vegetables (½ cup)  
Fruit (½ cup)  
Grains (½ oz. eq.)

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**Offer and Make Water Available All Day.**

## Check out This One-day Sample Menu for Ideas!

### Breakfast

#### Toasted O's Cereal

½ cup toasted o's cereal  
¾ cup diced strawberries

#### 1-year-olds:

½ cup unflavored whole milk

#### 2-year-olds:

½ cup unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-fat (skim) milk

### Lunch

#### Chicken and Rice Bowls

1 ounce shredded chicken  
¼ cup cooked brown rice  
⅓ cup steamed bite-size broccoli florets  
⅓ cup cooked, diced carrots

#### 1-year-olds:

½ cup unflavored whole milk

**2-year-olds:** ½ cup unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-fat (skim) milk

### Snack

#### Baked apple and sweet

potato fries  
½ cup baked apple sticks  
½ cup baked sweet potato sticks

Family Handout:

# Feeding Tips for Toddlers

Does your child like a food at one meal, but not at the next? Don't worry, it's very common. Toddlers are busy learning new things, and may not be interested in a food at mealtime. Avoid calling your child a "picky eater." Instead, think of each meal or snack as a different event. If your child refused to eat a food or an entire meal or snack, let's find out why.

## What did your child do at this meal?

**Grabbed the spoon from you.**

Your child is learning how to eat with his or her fingers and with spoons and forks. He or she wants to practice every chance he or she gets.

**Try this!** Give your child pieces of food to pick up with his or her fingers and also provide a child-sized spoon. To help with clean up, place a mat or towel under the high chair to catch any food that may fall on the floor.

**Did not eat a lot.**

Children have small stomachs. They may not need as much food as you think.

**Try this!** Offer your child meals and snacks around the same time each day. Let your child decide how much he or she wants to eat. He or she does not have to finish all of the food on the plate to grow healthy and strong.

**Refused to eat a food he or she has tried before.**

Your child is learning to express his or her independence, even at mealtimes. This means he or she may refuse to eat a certain food at a meal—that's okay!

**Try this!** Keep offering the food. It may take your child 10 tries or more before they might try it.

**Did not want a certain texture of food.**

Your child is learning through all senses—touch, taste, smell, and sight.

**Try this!** Cook a food a different way to give it a different taste and texture. For example, if your child does not seem to like a steamed vegetable then try roasting it in the oven.

**Stared at you.**

Your child is learning from you! If you make a funny face at a food, then your child is less likely to try that food.

**Try this!** Eat the same foods your child is eating. Eat them enthusiastically and talk about how much you like them.







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