

Feeding Development

(Ages 0 – 9 months)

0-4 months:

- Finger sucking
- Hand on bottle while feeding
- Identifies nipple or bottle
- May use one or both hands to pat bottle
- No liquid food yet, just liquids

5-7 months:

- Uses one or both hands to hold bottle by oneself
- Wide jaw movements seen while drinking from open cup
- Mouth/gum solid food
- When spoon is shown, baby will open mouth
- Introduce soft infant cookies, thick puree/cereal, soft foods with lumps
- Tongue moves towards small food pieces on side of gums
- Jaw movements start to match shape/size of food during chewing/biting
- To keep food in place, lip & cheek tighten during chewing where food is placed

7-9 months:

- Self feed crackers
- Reaches for and then bangs spoon when presented
- Prefers to be parent fed
- Pass food from hand to hand (8-9 months)
- Hold soft cookie in mouth (9 months)
- Relies less on breast/bottle feeding, manages different food/liquid textures
- Around 8 months upper lip becomes able to remove food from spoon
- Pick up food with fist and hold soft cookie to eat by self
- Consecutive & continuous sucks (6-12 months)
- Drink from adult held cup with some liquid loss
- Jaw control further develops
- Taught to drink from open cup and straw (6-12 months)
- Gag reflex on back third of tongue

References:

- Bahr, D. (2010). *Nobody Ever Told me (or my Mother) That!*
Arlington, TX: Sensory World.
- Lanza, J. R., & Flahive, L. K. (2008). *Guide to Communication Milestones* (2009 ed.). East Moline, IL: LinguiSystems.

Feeding Development

(Ages 9 - 16 months)

9 – 12 months:

Eating:

- Able to bite through soft cookie
- Can eat mashed/lumpy foods
- Holds/bangs spoon (9 months)
- Copies stirring with spoon (9 ½ months)
- Pick up small pieces with thumb and fingers rather than fist
- Jaw movements continue to develop
- Side-to-side tongue movements mature
- Move food from center of tongue to side of mouth to chew
- Maturation of removing food from spoon with lips

Drinking:

- Three or more continuous sucks when drinking from open cup, cup with recessed lid and straws
- Hold and drink from open cup with little spillage
- Holds cup handles when drinking

12-16 months:

Eating:

- Uses full hand to hold spoon
- Turns spoon over while bringing to own mouth
- Pick up small pieces with thumb and index finger
- Move food pieces into bowl
- May close lips while swallowing
- Use front teeth to easily bite soft cookie
- Eat small/chopped table food & soften meats (ground beef, stewed chicken)

Drinking:

- Holds cups with both hands
- 4 to 5 consecutive swallows while drinking
- Three or more continuous sucks when drinking from open cup, cup with recessed lid and straws

References:

- Bahr, D. (2010). *Nobody Ever Told me (or my Mother) That!*
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- Lanza, J. R., & Flahive, L. K. (2008). *Guide to Communication Milestones* (2009 ed.). East Moline, IL: LinguiSystems.

Feeding Development

(Ages 16 – 24 months)

16-20 months:

Eating:

- Scoops food with spoon with some spillage on transport
- Closed lips when swallowing, good control around 18 months
- Often self feeds
- Chews wide range of food with closed lips
- Chopped foods, such as vegetables & meat variety
- Bite hard cookie but may struggle some
- Tries to feed parent or caregivers
- Attempts to wash/dry hands

Drinking:

- Might bite edge of open cup for stability of jaw
- Gives up bottle
- Cup drinking with little spillage, take all liquids through recessed lid, straw, and open cup

21-24 months:

Eating:

- Bite through range of thicknesses
- Self feed by bringing utensil to mouth, palm up, some spillage (still needs assistance stabbing food on fork)
- Lips closed while chewing
- Move tip of tongue to place food for chewing and swallowing

Drinking:

- One hand hold on small open cup (20-22 months)
- No spillage which drinking from open cup
- Cup drinking using lips on rim

References:

- Bahr, D. (2010). *Nobody Ever Told me (or my Mother) That!*
Arlington, TX: Sensory World.
- Lanza, J. R., & Flahive, L. K. (2008). *Guide to Communication Milestones* (2009 ed.). East Moline, IL: LinguiSystems.