



CELEBRATE Feeding Newsletter

**Coaching in Early Learning Environments to Build
a Responsive Approach to Eating & Feeding**

April 2023

Highlights from the Infant Feeding Webinar

The Early Years Nutrition Coaches covered a lot of material at the infant feeding webinar. One of the most popular topics was the difference between gagging and choking.

- Choking occurs when the airway is obstructed and the child can't breathe. It requires immediate first aid.
- Gagging is a safety mechanism that keeps children from choking.
- Infants gag to move food away from their airway.
- Younger infants have a more sensitive gag reflex than older babies.
- Gagging can be startling but is a normal and important part of learning to eat.
- Encourage babies to work through a gag by speaking calmly and reassuringly.
- Try to avoid sudden reactions that may startle the baby. They may gasp or jump, which could result in the gag turning into a choke.

Signs of Gagging

- Watery eyes
- Open mouth
- Red face
- Moving tongue forward
- Coughing, crying, burping

Signs of Choking

- Blue skin or lips
- Blank or panicked expression
- Silent and unable to cry or cough
- Wheezing and high-pitch noises

For more information, and to see videos of what gagging looks like, visit:
solidstarts.com/gagging

Reminder:
Upcoming
Events

Webinar - Menu Planning

Monday, April 17, 6:30-8pm

Webinar - Learning to Like (Rethinking "Picky Eating")

Tuesday, May 16, 6:30-8pm

Final Coaching Visits - May

Observations - May and June

Surveys, Interviews and Focus Groups - July

**Email your coach to register
for the webinars!**



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CELEBRATE Play: Facilitate play related to food, cooking and mealtime.

Children can build food skills outside of mealtime. Here are some ideas that support learning about food away from the table:

- Read books with neutral messages about food (ie books that don't depict food as being healthy or unhealthy).
- Use kitchen tools like spoons, tongs, pitchers or whisks in water or other sensory play.
- Encourage dramatic play by stocking the play kitchen with a variety of play food, dishes and loose parts.
- Involve children in a gardening or cooking activity.
- Introduce songs, rhymes or games that feature food.
- Ask food-related questions during circle time, such as "what is your favourite food?" or "what did you eat for breakfast?".
- Invite children to participate in an art project that has a food theme.

Coaching Cue

Start meals and snacks by naming each food being offered. It's a simple way to help children know what to expect and helps them decide which foods they would like to eat.

Feature Product: Silicone Muffin Cups

Did you know? Silicone muffin cups can be used for more than baking muffins! Here are some ideas:



1. **Use as portion cups.** Filling the muffin cups lets children visualize how much they are serving themselves.
2. **Divide the plate.** These cups are perfect for children who don't like their food to touch.
3. **Sort it out.** Use these cups away from the table for sorting loose parts.