NE LESSON CODE CF-000-23

I'm Not A Baby Anymore: Tips For Feeding Toddlers

OBJECTIVES:

Participants will be able to apply the division of responsibility principle to state:

- who is responsible for providing food.
- who is responsible for how much food is eaten.

MATERIALS:

- TV, DVD
- Video, I'm Not a Baby Anymore: Tips for Feeding Toddlers / Ya no soy un bebé, Consejos para alimentar a los niños pequeños, stock no. DV0101 produced by Lemon-Aid Films, Inc., 11 minutes in English and 11 minutes in Spanish. This video discusses common toddler feeding issues and provides common sense solutions. To order additional copies use the Texas WIC Materials Order Form and fax to the Publications Coordinator, at (512) 458-7445.
- Marker board or flip chart
- Marker or chalk
- Pens or pencils or post-it notes

Note about New Lesson Survey Forms:

The first few times a new lesson is presented, staff and participants need to complete the survey forms attached at the end of this lesson. Please note that the Staff Survey Form is different from the Participant Survey Form. Please mail 30 completed Participant Surveys to:

Delores Preece
Texas Department of State Health Services
Nutrition Education/Clinic Services
1100 West 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756

PREPARATION:

Prior to class, make and hang these simple signs in the classroom. Make sure they are hung in such a way that participants will be able to see them.

Plays with his food

Eats inconsistently from day to day

Does not want to try new foods

Messy

Easily distracted at the table

Disagreeable, Says "no" a lot May whine, cry, or act-up at the table

Does not want to eat what you prepare Has trouble calming down to eat

ICEBREAKER:

COMMON TODDLER FEEDING CHALLENGES:

Take a look at the signs up around the room.

Point to the signs and read a couple.

Each of these signs lists a common challenge when trying to feed a toddler.

Give each person a pen/pencil or post-it notes. I'd like for everyone to get up, walk around the room, read each one and indicate which 3 challenges you are most interested in, have the most questions about, or would like to discuss the most (Participants "vote" by either putting a mark or post-it on the topics they are most interested in.). We don't have time to talk about all of them, so we will pick the 2 or 3 that get the most votes.

Give participants a few minutes to complete this activity and return to their seats.

This is what we will be talking about today, feeding toddlers. First we will watch a short video and then discuss strategies for feeding toddlers.

Play video, I'm Not a Baby Anymore: Tips for Feeding Toddlers, produced by Lemon-Aid Films, Inc.

INTRODUCTION:

DISCUSSION:

Sometimes, it seems like preparing the food is the easiest part about feeding a toddler. You try hard to do all the things the video mentioned - cook healthy foods, offer a variety of foods, turn the

TV off during meals, limiting candy and sweets, try to set a good example, etc. However, getting your toddler to sit at the table, be still, pay attention, try something new, not to play with his food, and so on can be the real challenge.

It might surprise you or even relieve you to know that your toddler's eating behavior is mainly due to his age or developmental stage. In fact, your child is not acting this way just to drive you crazy; he is acting like a normal toddler.

There is hope. Learning more about your toddler, how he thinks, what he is learning and using some simple strategies can help you feed your toddler and eliminate a lot of the unpleasantness.

DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY:

When we talk about feeding young children, the first thing to remember is that children are responsible for some things and parents are responsible for different things. We call this the "division of responsibility," or dividing responsibility between child and parent. It is a simple idea that can help you feed your young child, avoid arguments, power struggles, and even keep you from feeling guilty. So, let's take a look at what we mean by division of responsibility.

Write the following information on a marker board or flip chart and then read it out loud to the class.

DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY

Parents are responsible for:

What food is served

Children are responsible for:

• How much food they eat or if they eat at all

That's seems pretty simple, doesn't it? As the parent, you must shop for and offer regular healthy meals and snacks in a pleasant and positive way. Mealtimes and snack times should be on a consistent predictable schedule. Your child needs to feel confident that 3 healthy meals and 2 to 3 healthy snacks will be offered everyday. That is your responsibility. A child may overeat if they are not sure when they will eat again. By providing food at regular, predictable times, you are helping your child learn to eat when they are hungry and not because they aren't sure when they will eat again. So, your part is the food, you must trust your child with the rest. This can be hard, but in the long run it will make feeding your young child much easier.

Your child is responsible for how much she eats or if she eats at all. That is surprising isn't it? Trust your child to know when she is hungry and when she is not. If you do this, you are teaching your child to listen to her body to know when she is full and when she is hungry. You don't want your child to ignore her internal signals. We all have a natural survival instinct that tells us when we are hungry.

This may be a very new idea to you, but it really works. It relieves you of a lot of worry and stress. As we go through the class today we will refer back to this idea of division of responsibility.

COMMON TODDLER FEEDING CHALLENGES:

Determine which items received the top 3 votes and discuss at least 2 using the information and table below.

Use the attached discussion guides to facilitate a discussion about at least 2 of the topics. Discuss one topic at a time.

First, let's remember that a toddler is learning a lot about himself, he is learning that he is an individual, separate from everyone around him. He is also learning about how he fits into the world around him. So, for each toddler feeding challenge let's look at common toddler behaviors and traits that can help us understand why toddlers act like they do.

For each topic first discuss the information on toddler behavior. This will help participants understand why toddlers act the way they do.

Discuss the information titled "Strategies and Solutions." Consider using some of the following questions to facilitate a discussion.

- What strategies have you tried to deal with this behavior? Did it work?
- Someone tell us a strategy they think would work?
- Or, can someone tell us a strategy they have tried that didn't work?

If participants come up with strategies that violate the division of responsibility, gently remind them that this will likely cause more problems and cause their child to have negative feelings about eating. For example, someone may say a child should have to eat a certain amount of each food on his or her plate. You can remind participants that the child is responsible for how much or if they eat. And forcing a child to eat will probably make mealtime very unpleasant.

Thank each participant who shares information. If not mentioned by participants, cover the majority of the information in the column titled, "Solution/Strategy."

Repeat this discussion process with 1 or 2 more topics.

EVALUATION:

Ok, let's see what we learned. I'm going to read some statements and I'd like you to tell me if they are true or false. Read each statement. Ask participants if it is true or false and then ask them why it is false.

• Usually when a toddler refuses to eat, it is because the parent is not cooking the right food or because the parent is doing something wrong.

False, it is usually due to the toddler's age and developmental stage. This is normal toddler behavior.

• Parents should determine when a child is full. The child should not be allowed to leave the table until they have eaten most of the food on their plate.

False, this is the child's responsibility. Don't take it personally or try to force your child to eat. Relax, respect your child, and accept that your child will eat when he is hungry. Refer participants back to the division of responsibility.

• It is unhealthy for a child to eat a lot one day and very little the next day. To be healthy, a child needs to eat about the same amount every day. Parents must make sure their child eats the same amount every day.

False, it is normal for toddlers to eat a lot one day and very little the next. As long as the child is healthy and growing, it is considered normal. Parents should not force their children to eat, this leads to power struggles and usually make feeding a toddler harder. Refer participants back to the division of responsibility.

• The main responsibility of the parent is to let the child know who is in charge, to teach them that they must eat all types and amounts of foods, even if they don't want to.

False, the parent and child are each responsible for certain things. Parents should not force their children to eat, this leads to power struggles and usually make feeding a toddler harder. Refer participants back to the division of responsibility.

• It is the parent's responsibility to serve healthy meals and snacks at regular times that the child can depend on.

True, your child depends on you to provide healthy meals and snacks at regular times. Some children will overeat if they are not sure when they next meal or snack will be available. Consistent mealtimes and snack times will help your toddler eat in response to their hunger level and not because they are not sure when their next meal will be.

Thank you for your time today. I hope this information will make feeding your toddler more enjoyable. If your child is healthy and growing properly, then don't let the day-to-day struggles of feeding your toddler frustrate you. You provide healthy meals and snack and your child decides how much to eat or if he eats at all.

What questions do you have?

Discussion Guide: Behavior Challenge - Plays with his food

Why do toddlers play with their food? What is it about toddlers that make them play with their food? Pause for participants' responses. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Toddlers are very curious. They touch, smell, lick, rub, pinch, sniff, stare, chew, bite and poke to learn about themselves, their world and their food. This is normal.
- Toddlers are usually suspicious of new things, including new foods. They may want to really inspect it before they consider tasting it.
- Sometimes a toddler will begin to play with their food once they are full.

Now that we understand more about your toddler, let's discuss some strategies you can use to deal with this specific challenge.

Solution/Strategy

Let's discuss some strategies to deal with this behavior. I'm sure some of you have dealt with this problem before, share with us how you handled it?

Pause for participants' responses. Write responses on a marker board or flip chart. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Be patient, your toddler is exploring and learning.
- Be realistic, If it is a new food, your child will probably not eat it until you have offered it 3, 4, even 10 times.
- Ask your child if he is finished eating, if so, it is probably time for him to leave the table. Help your child identify if he is full and, if so, let him leave the table. This is part of setting limits and teaching your child table manners. Tell your child something like, "If you are finished eating, please take your plate to the sink and you can leave the table." Or, "If your tummy is telling you it is full, you can be excused from the table."
- Praise good behavior; ignore bad behavior.

Point to the division of responsibility you wrote on the marker board or flip chart earlier. Now let's compare the strategies we came up with to the division of responsibility we talked about earlier. It will help us decide if a specific solution or response is going to work or make things worse. This can help you decide if you need to do anything or just relax and let your toddler be a toddler. Sometimes the best thing you can do it nothing. Forcing a child to eat is not your responsibility and can cause other problems.

Note to instructor: The division of responsibility may not apply to each challenge.

Discussion Guide: Eats inconsistently from day to day

Why do toddlers eat a lot one day and not much at all the next day? Pause for participants' responses. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

After one year of age, a child's growth slows down. Your child is no longer growing as fast as he was during the first year. His appetite is decreasing and his eating will vary from day to day.

Simply may not be hungry.

Solution/Strategy

Let's discuss some strategies to deal with this behavior. I'm sure some of you have dealt with this problem before, share with us how you handled it?

Pause for participants' responses. Write responses on a marker board or flip chart. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Your child is responsible for how much he eats. This is a situation where you need to trust your child.
- Don't worry as long as your child is healthy and growing normally, the amount he eats from day to day is not that important.
- Trying to control the amount of food your child eats each day will probably lead to arguments and power struggles. Remember you provide the food, your child decides how much to eat.
- Toddlers may eat poorly if they are drinking too much milk and juice. Limit juice to no more than 4 ounces per day and milk to no more than 16 ounces per day.

What about making your child eat a certain amount, even if he says he's not hungry? After all, a child needs food to grow. Pause for participants' responses. Just imagine this situation, your child says he's not hungry, you tell him he has to take 2 bites of everything on his plate. Can you feel the frustration and power struggle in this situation – it feels like a situation that is going to make mealtime very unpleasant and stressful.

What would the division of responsibility tell us to do in this situation? Pause for participants' responses. That's right, nothing. Remain calm and let your child be in charge of if he eats and how much. Remember, you want your child to listen to his body. If he is not hungry, then forcing him to eat anyway, teaches him to eat even when he is not hungry. Trust your child to know when he is hungry and when he is full.

Sometimes the best thing you can do it nothing. Forcing a child to eat is not your responsibility and can cause other problems.

Note to instructor: The division of responsibility may not apply to each challenge.

Discussion Guide: Does not want to try new foods

Why do toddlers resist trying new foods? Pause for participants' responses. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Toddlers are usually very suspicious of new things, including new foods. There is even a name for it -"neophobia" literally, fear of new things.
- Normally, it will take 3,4, even 10 times before a toddler will try a new food.

Solution/Strategy

Let's discuss some strategies to deal with this behavior. I'm sure some of you have dealt with this problem before, share with us how you handled it?

Pause for participants' responses. Write responses on a marker board or flip chart. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Your child is responsible for how much and what he eats.
- You put the food on the table; it is your child's decision whether or not to eat it.
- Don't worry or make a big deal out of the new food, try again later. Let your child help pick out and prepare new foods. The goal is to get him to taste it, not eat it.
- Try serving just a very small amount and let them ask for more.
- Offer several different foods at each meal, if your toddler refuses the new one, he has other food to choose from.
- Do not force your child to eat the new food. This will lead to negative feelings about food and mealtime and can cause arguments and power struggles.

Point to the division of responsibility you wrote on the marker board or flip chart earlier. Now let's compare the strategies we came up with to the division of responsibility we talked about earlier. It will help us decide if a specific solution or response is going to work or make things worse. This can help you decide if you need to do anything or just relax and let your toddler be a toddler. Sometimes the best thing you can do it nothing. Forcing a child to eat is not your responsibility and can cause other problems.

Note to instructor: The division of responsibility may not apply to each challenge.

Discussion Guide: Messy

Why are toddlers messy? Pause for participants' responses. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Toddlers are still developing small motor skills. That means eating with their hands is sometimes easier than eating with silverware.
- Toddlers are very curious. They touch, smell, lick, rub, pinch, sniff, stare, chew, bite and poke to learn about themselves, their world and their food. This is normal.

Solution/Strategy

Let's discuss some strategies to deal with this behavior. I'm sure some of you have dealt with this problem before, share with us how you handled it?

Pause for participants' responses. Write responses on a marker board or flip chart. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Provide small silverware, a chair that puts her at the right height, and serve small amounts of liquids and food.
- Use a bib. Consider putting newspaper or an old shower curtain on the floor to help with clean up.
- Provide finger foods for children who have not mastered silverware.
- Be patient

Point to the division of responsibility you wrote on the marker board or flip chart earlier. Now let's compare the strategies we came up with to the division of responsibility we talked about earlier. It will help us decide if a specific solution or response is going to work or make things worse. This can help you decide if you need to do anything or just relax and let your toddler be a toddler. Sometimes the best thing you can do it nothing. Forcing a child to eat is not your responsibility and can cause other problems.

Note to instructor: The division of responsibility may not apply to each challenge.

Discussion Guide: Easily distracted at the table

Why are toddlers so easily distracted? Pause for participants' responses. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Young children are learning about things around them and how they fit in.
- Toddlers are curious about things going on around them and may be easily distracted.

Solution/Strategy

Let's discuss some strategies to deal with this behavior. I'm sure some of you have dealt with this problem before, share with us how you handled it?

Pause for participants' responses. Write responses on a marker board or flip chart. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Eliminate as many distractions as you can turn off TV, turn off the ringer on phones, sit down together as a family
- Put the focus on eating together. Make mealtime a comfortable time to talk together
- Ask each person at the dinner table to talk about his or her day.

Point to the division of responsibility you wrote on the marker board or flip chart earlier. Now let's compare the strategies we came up with to the division of responsibility we talked about earlier. It will help us decide if a specific solution or response is going to work or make things worse. This can help you decide if you need to do anything or just relax and let your toddler be a toddler. Sometimes the best thing you can do it nothing. Forcing a child to eat is not your responsibility and can cause other problems.

Note to instructor: The division of responsibility may not apply to each challenge.

Discussion Guide: Disagreeable, Says "no" a lot

Why do toddlers say "no" a lot? Pause for participants' responses. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Your toddler is learning that he is an individual, separate from everyone around him, and learning that he can make choices. He is learning that he can have an opinion and that he make get a reaction from other people.
- He is also learning about how he fits into the world around him.

Solution/Strategy

Let's discuss some strategies to deal with this behavior. I'm sure some of you have dealt with this problem before, share with us how you handled it?

Pause for participants' responses. Write responses on a marker board or flip chart. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Have some simple rules. Remember you decide what food is offered. Let your toddler know that he can eat what everyone else is eating or maybe something that is healthy and easy to prepare (like a bowl of cereal with fruit, bread with peanut butter, yogurt with fruit). Then let him choose. Let him know you are not going to prepare a completely different meal for him nor are you going to let him eat junk food, just to get him to eat anything.
- Let him choose between 2 choices that you choose. Have you noticed that if you ask a toddler an "yes" or "no" question that they will almost always answer "no," no matter what the question is? So, give him to choices and let him choose. For example,
 - "If you are finished eating, you can either sit at the table like a big boy or you can leave the table and go color quietly.
 - "You can either have water or milk to drink." Instead of "what do you want to drink?" or "do you want water?" or "do you want milk?"
 - "You can either eat what Mommy made for dinner or you can have a bowl of cereal with bananas" instead of "what do you want to eat?"
 - Praise good behavior; ignore bad behavior.

Point to the division of responsibility you wrote on the marker board or flip chart earlier. Now let's compare the strategies we came up with to the division of responsibility we talked about earlier. It will help us decide if a specific solution or response is going to work or make things worse. This can help you decide if you need to do anything or just relax and let your toddler be a toddler. Sometimes the best thing you can do it nothing. Forcing a child to eat is not your responsibility and can cause other problems.

Note to instructor: The division of responsibility may not apply to each challenge.

Discussion Guide: May whine, cry, or act-up at the table

Why do toddlers whine, cry, or act-up at the table? Pause for participants' responses. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

Toddlers have trouble expressing emotion with words. You will need to help them find the words and deal positively with their emotions.

Solution/Strategy

Let's discuss some strategies to deal with this behavior. I'm sure some of you have dealt with this problem before, share with us how you handled it?

Pause for participants' responses. Write responses on a marker board or flip chart. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

Help your child put emotions into words. For example,

- "I can tell that your feelings are hurt, can you tell me what is wrong?"
- I can tell you are sad, please tell us why you are sad and maybe we can help you feel better."
- "I can tell you are frustrated because you don't want to sit at the table. You can either sit at the table like a big boy or you can leave the table and go color quietly.
- Praise good behavior, ignore bad behavior.

Point to the division of responsibility you wrote on the marker board or flip chart earlier. Now let's compare the strategies we came up with to the division of responsibility we talked about earlier. It will help us decide if a specific solution or response is going to work or make things worse. This can help you decide if you need to do anything or just relax and let your toddler be a toddler. Sometimes the best thing you can do it nothing. Forcing a child to eat is not your responsibility and can cause other problems.

Note to instructor: The division of responsibility may not apply to each challenge.

Discussion Guide: Does not want to eat what you prepare

Why do toddlers not want to eat what you prepare? Pause for participants' responses. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Toddlers are discovering they are separate from others and can make choices. They are learning they are independent from others.
- Simply may not be hungry.
- Parents are responsible for what food is served, not the child.

Solution/Strategy

Let's discuss some strategies to deal with this behavior. I'm sure some of you have dealt with this problem before, share with us how you handled it?

Pause for participants' responses. Write responses on a marker board or flip chart. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Offer variety of dishes (a vegetable or two; a fruit; bread or pasta; meat, chicken, fish or beans) at each meal, if your toddler refuses one, he has other food to choose from.
- You can suggest that your child take one bite of each food. Remember, it should be a suggestion, not a demand. If you child does not want to eat what you have provided, that is her choice.
- Do not get in the habit of cooking something different just for your toddler. Then your toddler is planning the meals, not you.

Point to the division of responsibility you wrote on the marker board or flip chart earlier. Now let's compare the strategies we came up with to the division of responsibility we talked about earlier. It will help us decide if a specific solution or response is going to work or make things worse. This can help you decide if you need to do anything or just relax and let your toddler be a toddler. Sometimes the best thing you can do it nothing. Forcing a child to eat is not your responsibility and can cause other problems.

Note to instructor: The division of responsibility may not apply to each challenge.

Discussion Guide: Has trouble calming down to eat

Why do toddlers have trouble calming down to eat? Pause for participants' responses. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

Toddlers have trouble making transitions from one activity to another. They may get fussy between activities. For example, a toddler may have trouble transitioning between playtime and mealtime or playtime and naptime or playtime and bedtime.

Solution/Strategy

Let's discuss some strategies to deal with this behavior. I'm sure some of you have dealt with this problem before, share with us how you handled it?

Pause for participants' responses. Write responses on a marker board or flip chart. Do not comment on participants' responses at this point. Mention the information below, if participants do not mention it.

- Have a schedule and set activities and duties before mealtimes. For example,
 - 20 minutes before dinner, you instruct your child to put his toys away
 - 10 minutes before dinner, your child must turn off the TV and wash his hands
 - Immediately before dinner, your child puts placemats and silverware on the table.
- Give your child warning that mealtime is coming; this will help your child get ready to eat. And provide warning about mealtime coming to an end.
 - 10 minutes until we eat.
 - 5 minutes until we eat.
 - After we eat, you can play for while and then it will be time for bed.
- Give your child time to get ready to eat, time to eat, time to transition to the next activity.

Point to the division of responsibility you wrote on the marker board or flip chart earlier. Now let's compare the strategies we came up with to the division of responsibility we talked about earlier. It will help us decide if a specific solution or response is going to work or make things worse. This can help you decide if you need to do anything or just relax and let your toddler be a toddler. Sometimes the best thing you can do it nothing. Forcing a child to eat is not your responsibility and can cause other problems.

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NE LESSON CODE – CF-000-23 I'M NOT A BABY ANYMORE: TIPS FOR FEEDING TODDLERS Staff Survey

LA#_	Date
1.	Was the lesson easy to read and follow? Yes No
2.	Did you like the video included with this lesson? Yes No
3.	Did you like the discussion included with this lesson? Yes No
4.	What did you like best about this class?
5.	What would make the class better?
6.	How well did participants respond to the class? Participation was (check one) Good Negative Indifferent
7.	Do you plan to use this lesson again? Yes No
Comn	nents:

Note about New Lesson Survey Forms:

The first few times a new lesson is presented, staff and participants need to complete the survey forms attached at the end of this lesson. Please note that the Staff Survey Form is different from the Participant Survey Form. Please mail 30 completed Participant Surveys to:

Delores Preece
Texas Department of State Health Services
Nutrition Education/Clinic Services
1100 West 49th Street
Austin, Texas 78756

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I'm Not a Baby Anymore: Tips for Feeding Toddlers Participant Survey Form

#_	Date:
	My ethnic group is:WhiteAsianHispanic
	Native American African American Other
	How much did you like this class? A lot A little Not at all
	How much will the information presented in today's class help you to feed your toddler? A lot A little Not at all
	What is the most useful thing you learned from the class today?
	What would make this class better for you?