

Feeding **Another** Baby Sister or Brother

You know the basics. You know what to expect at feeding time. You know how to nurse or prepare infant formula and how to introduce solid foods. That is great! You are a pro! Can you relax? Maybe a little. But feeding time is probably more hectic with a preschooler *and* a baby!

Remember, each child is different.

If you thought you knew everything about feeding babies – surprise! Each baby may respond differently. Maybe your preschooler was easy to feed. And your new baby is now a fussy eater. With a new child, there's more to learn about parenting. You can do it!

Share your attention. Your preschooler may get fussy at the table. The reason? Perhaps it is competition with your baby for attention. Give each child his or her own separate time – with food, and in quiet and play time. Your preschooler needs to know that he or she still matters. Private time shows how much you care!



Give your preschooler a chance to help. Your child might gently wipe your baby's sticky hands or bring a bottle. Helping builds self-esteem. Your child knows that he or she can do something "grown-up" that helps you. Avoid expecting too much. Preschoolers are too young to be responsible. But they're great helpers!

Let your baby be part of family meals – to start a habit of family mealtime. You may need to feed the baby first.

Learn from your mistakes. It is okay to change your approach for feeding your next child. And it is not too late to change the way you feed your preschooler. After all, being a parent is a learning process for you, too.

Keep positive at mealtime. Even though there's more going on, keep mealtime calm and pleasant. That may take more planning from you.

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For advice on feeding your baby, talk to your health care provider or your WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Program.



Caution: Once your baby eats table food, you can offer many of the same simple foods your preschooler eats. But be cautious:

- **Before age 2, offer your toddler whole milk, not lowfat or fat-free milk.** Fat in milk is important for your baby's brain development.
- **Avoid hard, small, whole foods that may choke your baby or toddler.** That includes popcorn, nuts, seeds, and hard candy. Cut foods such as hot dogs in small strips, not circles.



Tip:

Take some time alone to relax and rest. You will be better able to cope and enjoy the extra kitchen activity. If you take care of yourself, you can care better for your children.

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