

STEP 3: Feeding Practices

why does this matter?

There is a growing body of evidence on the long-term health effects of establishing healthy eating practices early in life.

In fact, children who learn these habits, when they are young, are more likely to continue making healthy choices into adulthood.

It is important for caregivers to understand their role and the child's role at mealtimes.

The caregiver's role is to offer healthy foods at regular times; the child's role is to decide whether and how much to eat.

This section will provide you with information and resources on feeding practices and the benefits of breastfeeding.

If you are interested in learning more, familiarize yourself with the *Best Practices for Healthy Eating* guide, from Nemours.

http://www.nemours.org/content/dam/nemours/www2/filebox/service/healthy-living/growuphealthy/fivetwoone/Nemours_BestPracticesHealthyEatingGuide.pdf

Key Feeding Messages for Caregivers:

- Make mealtime fun and enjoyable
- Role model healthy eating
- Divide responsibilities for healthy meals – caregivers provide, kids decide
- Acknowledge hunger cues – Eat when your body is hungry, stop when you are full
- Control portions – Start with smaller portions
- Turn off screens when eating
- Avoid food rewards and bribes