



Practical help and information
on nutrition and development

www.infantandtoddlerforum.org



Supported by an educational grant from Danone UK

Experts in toddler feeding

The Infant & Toddler Forum (ITF) is an independent group of leading experts from paediatrics, neonatology, health visiting, dietetics and child psychology, specialising in early years nutrition and development.



Infants and toddlers need a varied, balanced diet to grow and thrive; it is never too early to start encouraging healthy lifestyles. We promote positive feeding behaviour from birth to three years of age, and raise awareness about healthy eating and the nutritional needs of toddlers.

A good diet in the early years affects lifelong eating habits and, subsequently, long-term health. Improving early nutrition can prevent serious conditions in adulthood, such as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and some cancers.

For these reasons, toddler nutrition is a matter of public health, and initiatives to improve the UK's general health and wellbeing need to support positive changes in early feeding behaviours.

Parents, family members, health visitors, childminders, pre-school and nursery staff can all have a big influence on how healthy a toddler's lifestyle is; all have significant roles to play in preventing long-term health problems.

We provide reliable, evidence-based information and practical tools to support healthcare professionals, parents and carers in making the right choices when feeding toddlers, helping to ensure that the quality and quantity of meals is consistent and that positive attitudes to food and exercise are encouraged.

This leaflet introduces some of the educational resources provided by the ITF.

The Infant & Toddler Forum is supported by an educational grant from the Infant Nutrition division of Danone UK. The views and outputs of the group, however, remain independent of Danone UK and its commercial interests.

Free advice and tools online

Interested in positive feeding habits for toddlers?

There are two essential websites for you:



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www.infantandtoddlerforum.org

The Infant & Toddler Forum website provides health and child care professionals with evidence-based information and practical advice, including

free-to-download Factsheets on common nutritional issues (see *Practical guidance and information*).

You'll also find professional learning and development, reports and

discussion documents on key topics, news, podcasts, and details about ITF events to help equip you with the knowledge and skills needed to provide families with simple, sound guidance.



Feeding the under 3s
the food they need

www.littlepeoplesplates.co.uk

Created by the Infant & Toddler Forum to provide parents and carers with practical tips and helpful tools, Little People's Plates is designed to make sense of the often-conflicting advice on how to feed toddlers well.

Feeding a toddler is a wonderful responsibility, but it can be daunting. Little People's Plates helps parents and carers make informed choices with, amongst other things, evidence-based Guidance & Tips sheets on common nutritional issues, real life case studies of families' experiences with feeding young children, and interactive tools providing bespoke advice.



Sign up online for the **Infant & Toddler Forum** and **Little People's Plates** email alerts and stay up to date with the latest news from the world of toddler nutrition.



What you say

"Being a first time mother, I would say that the thing I worry most about is what my daughter eats... I just wish I'd found this website sooner!"

Parent

"Lots of practical ideas to use with parents, and lots of research and information to build up my knowledge."

Nursery Nurse

"Wow! What an excellent website! We had so many questions and not always anyone to ask but to have this is just fab ... I will recommend it to my friends who are all in similar situations."

Parent

Practical guidance and information

Factsheets

Our Factsheets give healthcare professionals who interact with toddlers and their families evidence-based, best practice guidance on feeding and nutrition in the under threes.

The Factsheets cover four main areas:

- Healthy Eating for Toddlers
- Difficulties in Feeding Toddlers
- Growth and Development of Toddlers
- Common Nutrition and Eating Problems in Toddlers.

Each contains a discussion of the topic in question, a summary of key learning points and a 'Guidance & Tips for Parents' page. Examples include "Combining Food for a Balanced Diet" and "How to Manage Simple Faddy Eating in Toddlers".

We produce new Factsheets every year and all those currently available can be downloaded and ordered from www.infantandtoddlerforum.org

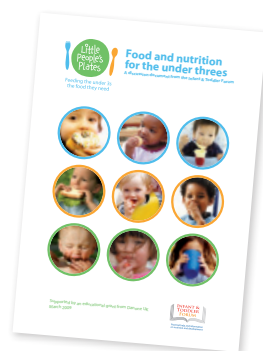
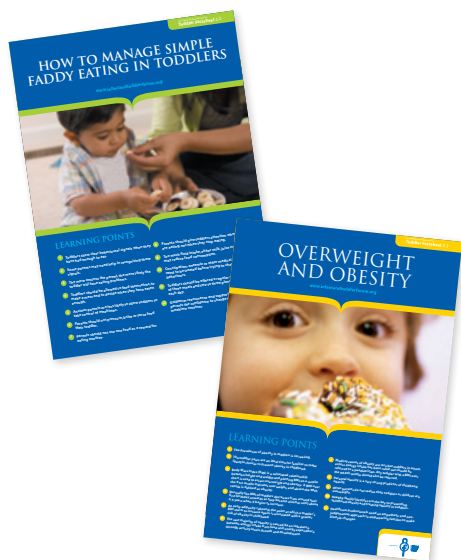
Guidance & Tips

Providing parents and carers with advice on how to give toddlers a balanced diet and instil positive eating habits, 'Guidance & Tips' sheets are written by our experts and are available on the Little People's Plates website (see *Free advice and tools online*).



Reports

We also produce reports on key issues in child nutrition and development. Topics covered include "Food and nutrition for the under threes: A discussion document" and "Meeting an unmet need: healthcare professionals and toddler nutrition and feeding", as well as summary reports from our annual Study Days (see *Where to meet the Infant & Toddler Forum*).



Where to meet the Infant & Toddler Forum



Infant & Toddler Forum Study Day

Our annual Study Day event for health and child care professionals helps facilitate interaction, share current thinking, and showcase best practice from the field of early years nutrition and childhood development.

The theme for each Study Day is influenced by current priorities and the necessity for debate, and the event acts as a platform for discussion and learning around the topics that matter to those involved with feeding toddlers.

Professional events and conferences

Members of the Infant & Toddler Forum regularly appear at professional events around the UK, presenting our pioneering work in seminars and exhibitions.

For details of where we will have a presence, and for dates and themes for the next Study Day, contact us via www.infantandtoddlerforum.org

Through joint working with professional partners, we engage with the people who use our services and resources, and aim to influence the wider public health agenda.

What you say

"The knowledge I have gained will help me support and educate families."

Family Outreach Worker

"Refreshed my knowledge greatly. I enjoyed learning about new and important evidence."

Public Health Nutritionist

"Very informative and enjoyable. Some guidelines have been clarified for me."

Child Care Advisor

Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers

To approach mealtimes with confidence, health and child care professionals, carers and parents need consistent, trustworthy advice that can be applied everywhere toddlers are fed.



The 'Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers' is a practical, easy-to-follow guide on what food to offer, what behaviour to encourage, and how best to manage mealtimes.

The 'Ten Steps' are available on both of our websites, and posters and flyers can be downloaded for free or purchased online.

What you say

"Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers will be a really useful tool in the workplace."

Specialist Paediatric Dietitian

"Using the Ten Steps was about the emotional attachment and involvement each child has with food. We gave the children opportunities to really step back and tell us how they felt about it... I was able to go back and think, 'how can we make it more enjoyable based on the Step of mealtimes being a family time?'"

Nursery Manager

Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers

Good habits for health, growth and development

Feeding the under 3s the food they need

The toddler years (1-3 years) are a time of rapid change. After your child's first birthday he or she may:

- Show some food preferences – this might be for different textures, tastes and colours
- Like to feed himself or herself and be more independent
- Show sudden changes in food likes and dislikes
- Refuse to try new foods – this usually decreases as toddlers approach school age.

Try these ten steps for a healthy balance:

<p>1. Eat together as a family and make mealtimes relaxed, happy occasions</p> <p>Make food easy to eat – finger foods are good. Eat the foods that you would like your toddler to eat. Praise your toddler when he or she eats well or tries something new – toddlers take time to learn to like new foods.</p>	<p>7. Respect your toddler's tastes and preferences – don't force feed</p> <p>Understand that some children eat almost everything while others are much more picky. Some like foods kept separate at a meal and others are happy with foods mixed in together.</p>
<p>2. You decide which nutritious foods to offer but let your toddler decide how much to eat</p> <p>Never insist your toddler eats everything on his or her plate.</p>	<p>8. Reward your toddler with your attention – never give food or drink as a reward, treat or for comfort</p> <p>Play, read or talk with your toddler as a reward. Always give fruit or a nutritious pudding – don't use it as a reward for eating other foods first or for good behaviour.</p>
<p>3. Offer foods from all 5 food groups each day</p> <p>Together they give the right mix of nutrients your toddler needs (see overview).</p>	<p>9. Limit...</p> <p>fried food, crisps, packet snacks, pastries, cakes and biscuits to very small amounts. sweet foods to four times a day e.g. as part of the three meals and one snack. ...and avoid sweetened fruit squashes, fizzy drinks, tea and coffee, undiluted fruit juices – only give juice well diluted at meal times, whole nuts which may cause choking or be inhaled.</p>
<p>4. Have a routine and offer 3 meals and 2-3 snacks each day</p> <p>Offer 2 courses at each meal and only offer nutritious snacks. Don't allow grazing on food.</p>	<p>10. Encourage at least an hour of active play every day and about 12 hours sleep</p> <p>Active play can be in short 5-10 minute bursts, such as playing outside, dancing and walking. Limit TV and other screen time like computers to just 1 hour a day.</p>
<p>5. Offer 6-8 drinks a day</p> <p>Give all drinks in a beaker or cup – not bottles. 3-4oz or 100-120ml is about right. Water is a good choice.</p>	
<p>6. Give vitamins A & D each day</p> <p>Choose a vitamin supplement suitable for toddlers – most toddlers don't get enough in their food.</p>	

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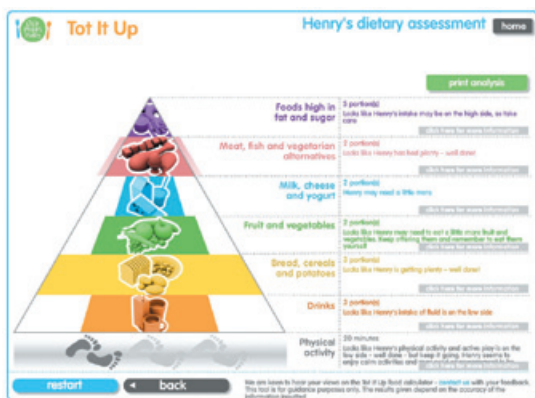
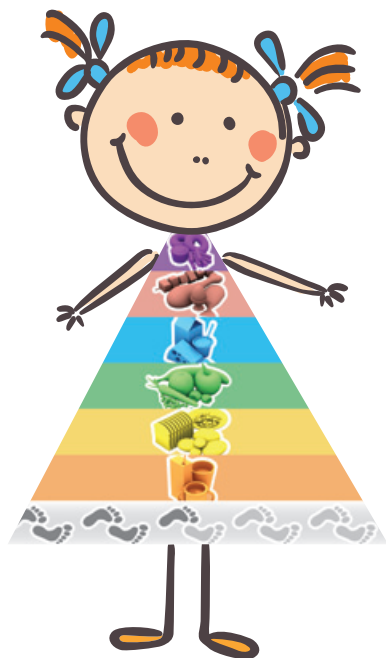
www.littlepeoplesplates.co.uk

Tot It Up

The 'Tot It Up' food calculator is an interactive online tool designed to help parents and carers monitor and assess toddlers' food intake and activity levels.

'Tot It Up' provides personalised analysis of the diets of children aged one to three years, so that parents and carers can see whether their little ones are getting the right balance of foods to help them lead healthy lives, both now and in the future.

Input details of what meals, snacks and drinks your toddler has consumed throughout the day and/or week, plus the amount of physical activity he or she has done, and receive bespoke advice on physical activity and healthy eating.



www.littlepeoplesplates.co.uk/totup

Professional training

Training and education for health and child care professionals on how to achieve best practice around feeding children from birth to three years of age.

Our educational programme includes tailored workshops and lectures, and an annual Study Day (see *Where to meet the Infant & Toddler Forum*).

If you feel you could enhance your knowledge and skills around feeding toddlers and would like further guidance on how to implement best practice using the 'Ten Steps for Healthy Toddlers', contact us to ask how we could work with you to develop appropriate training.



"Open Book on Growth" is an interactive online learning tool, which seeks to raise the standard of child growth monitoring in the UK.

The online learning programme is supported by a training pack, providing practical resources for those developing training sessions to meet individual course requirements. Find out more at www.infantandtoddlerforum.org

