

Connecticut WIC Program:

Consistent Breastfeeding Education Messages: Secrets of Baby Behavior

Why is it important?

Understanding infant's behaviors is essential for moms who want to breastfeed their babies. Many moms, new or otherwise, have unrealistic expectations regarding infant behavior, including feeding, sleeping, and crying. There are many mixed messages being given to parents about how the infant should behave and this makes breastfeeding more challenging. Additionally, unrealistic expectations often lead to unnecessary use of supplemental formula, pacifiers, and inappropriate substitutes for breast milk or introducing foods too early. Educating moms about their baby and what is normal helps moms feel more confident in their ability to nourish their babies, helps them have a more rewarding breastfeeding experience and allows them to meet their breastfeeding goals.

Goal:

Educate participants, parents, and caregivers on The Secrets of Baby Behavior (SBB) to help prevent inappropriate feeding practices that result from misunderstanding or unrealistic expectations of infant cues, crying and sleep. For moms that choose to breastfeed, understanding SBB can help them meet their established breastfeeding goals.

Learning Objectives: After participating in group sessions or in individual counseling the participant will:

- Identify SBB in order exclusively breastfeed and/or meet breastfeeding goals, avoid early formula supplementation, and reduce overfeeding.
- Respond appropriately to their baby's needs.
- Verbalize realistic expectations regarding infant cues, crying and sleep that will prevent behaviors of seeking unnecessary or inappropriate feeding as a solution.
- Exhibit confidence and further understanding of their baby.

Affirmation:

- You are doing a great job meeting your baby's needs.
- You have everything you need to meet your baby's needs.
- Dad, you play a big role in understanding your baby's needs.
- I can see you really care about your child because you are so concerned about making sure you provide enough for your baby.

Key Messages:

Infant sleep

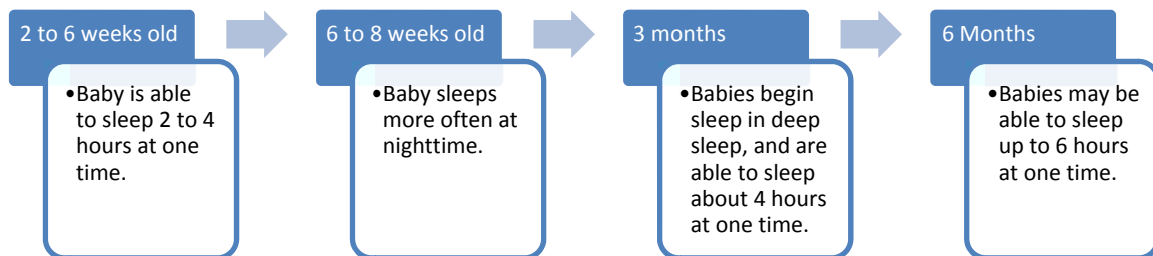
- As a new parent, you may have heard friends or family talking about how babies sleep. Has anyone asked you, If she/he a good baby? Do they mean they sleep longer, that they don't cry? There are lots of messages that we hear about how to make a baby sleep longer, when really a new baby really shouldn't be sleeping for long stretches of time.
- There are 2 types of sleep:
 - **Light sleep:**
 - This is when babies dream, they're eyes move underneath the eyelids and they will awaken easily.

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- **Light sleep** is important because it helps with brain development.
- A baby needs to be able to awaken easily to keep them healthy and safe; this helps to reduce the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- Breastfeeding, laying babies on their backs to sleep, and offering pacifiers are ways to increase **light sleep**.
- **Deep Sleep:**
 - **Deep sleep** is important for complete rest.
 - When a baby is in deep sleep they are very still, their breathing is regular and they are harder to wake.
- **Sleep Patterns:**
 - It is important for parents to understand that babies sleep differently than adults.
 - Newborns first fall into **light sleep** which lasts about 20 to 30 minutes.
 - They then fall into **deep sleep**; they also spend about 20-30 minutes in **deep sleep**.
 - An entire sleep cycle is usually about 50-60 minutes and newborns typically wake with each cycle about every 1-2 hours.
 - **A baby's sleep patterns will change as they get older.**

A Baby's Sleep Timeline



- **Waking Is Important**
 - Young babies are supposed to wake up at night.
 - Their needs must be met for feeding and comfort.
 - Young babies who sleep too deeply for long periods of time are at greater risk of SIDS.
 - Some reasons babies may wake more often than expected:
 - Prematurity
 - Ineffective/poor feeding
 - Illness/injury
 - Having the TV on/other interruptions
 - Breastfeeding mother consuming caffeine or medications
 - Changes in routine
 - Refer to doctor as needed

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Infant Cues:

- Babies can tell you what they want using their bodies and noises.
- Crying doesn't always mean hunger.
- Babies' needs will change all the time as they get older and knowing their feeding cues will help you meet their needs.
- Paying attention to your baby's cues will help reduce infant crying.
- Listening to your babies cues will help breastfeeding be more successful, and less stressful.

Activities:

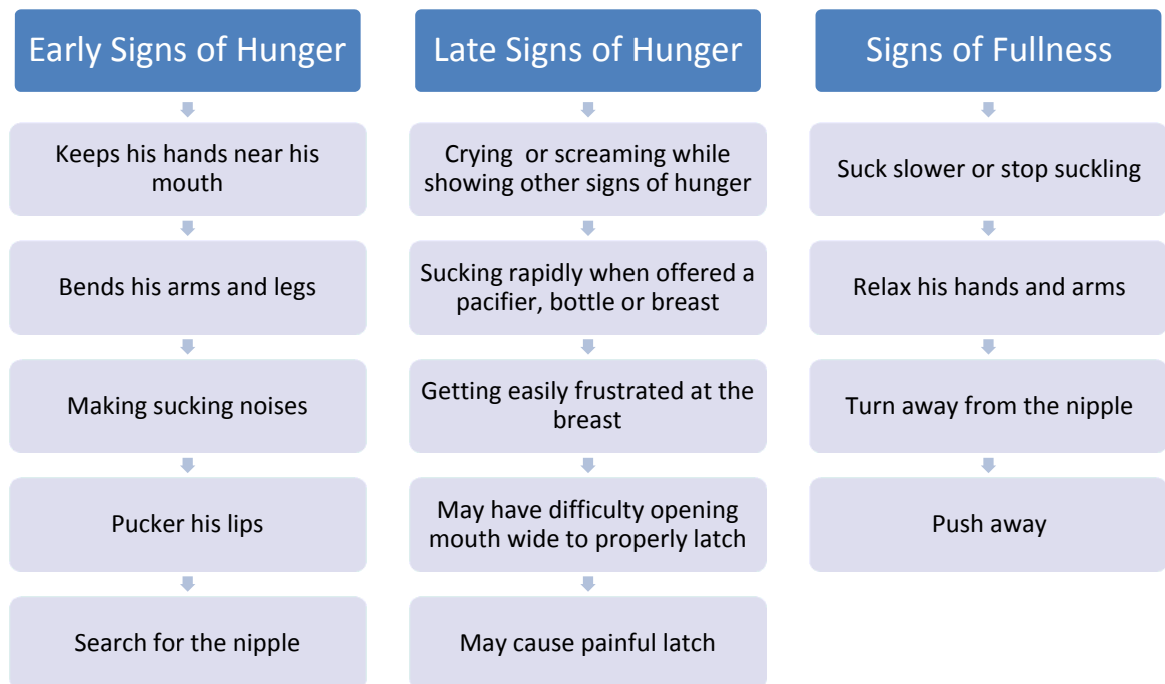
- Show pictures or videos of different states and have parents guess what the baby may need.
- If they have their baby with them, have them identify their baby's current state/what cues they are showing.
- Use Infant States tool

Hunger cues

- A baby will give you signals to let you know when they are hungry.
- Looking for early signs of hunger will make feeding more successful.
- Knowing when your baby is telling you she is hungry will also make it easier to know when she is telling you she needs something else.

Activities:

- Show pictures or videos of babies who are showing various signs of hunger, or another state. Have participants identify if they are hungry, and if they are hungry if they are showing an early or late sign of hunger.



- ***See hunger cues tool***

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Crying:

- Babies cry for many reasons, not just because they are hungry.
- Babies take time to calm down when they are upset.
- Using repetition and soothing techniques will help you calm your baby when they are upset.
- For breastfeeding moms: There are many solutions to soothe your baby when they are upset without use of infant formula or foods.
- For formula feeding moms: There are many solutions to soothe your baby without offering excessive formula or foods.

Responding to non-hunger crying:

- Babies cry as their way to communicate, understanding their different cries play a crucial role in comforting them and meeting their needs.
- Follow these simple steps to help you comfort your baby
 - Step 1:
 - Figuring out your babies cry/reason for crying; are they hungry? Tired? In need of a diaper change? Too hot or cold? Over stimulated?
 - If you have adjusted everything to make sure your baby is comfortable and isn't showing hunger cues then proceed to step two.
 - Step 2:
 - Hold your baby close to you- they may just want your touch and try one of the following:
 - Talking to your baby, singing, gently rocking, swaying or bouncing, massage his/her arms, legs and back.
 - Is your baby still crying? If you're trying several things like singing and swaying, try only doing one, babies can become over stimulated when too much is going on.
 - Step 3:
 - Repetition, repetition, repetition
 - Be patient! Calming your baby takes repetition and time! If you are feeling overwhelmed ask for help, listening to your baby cry is upsetting and stressful and it is supposed to be! It is your baby's way of telling you they need help! Understanding your baby's cries and learning techniques to soothe them can reduce crying.

Activities:

- Discuss or demonstrate ways to calm a crying baby.
- Show pictures of videos of different babies crying and have parents decide what the baby needs.
- Have parents list 5 reasons babies cry.
- Have parents demonstrate, using their baby or a doll, repetition and soothing techniques.
- Have parents list steps to help comfort their baby.

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Websites:

UC Davis Secrets of Baby Behavior Blog:

<http://www.secretsofbabybehavior.com/>

(See Resources list as well)

Handouts: Hunger cues tear off, Infant states, Infant sleep timeline

Resources:

WIC Works Baby Behavior Training: <http://wiclearning.skillport.com/skillportfe/login.action>

UC Davis Breastfeeding Research:

<http://lactation.ucdavis.edu/research/index.htm>

WIC Works California Baby Behavior Campaign Resource Page:

<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/wicworks/Pages/WICCaliforniaBabyBehaviorCampaign.aspx>

Books:

Secrets of Baby Behavior by Jennifer Banuelos ebook

<http://www.amazon.com/Secrets-Baby-Behavior-Jennifer-Banuelos-ebook/dp/B00AP7J2G6>