



# Nutrition Edition

Your Guide to Child Health and Nutrition



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CACFPRoundtable.org

## It Takes a Village:

### Breastfeeding Disparities & Support in Childcare

ONE MIGHT ASSUME that breastfeeding is the first choice for any new mother today, but despite agreement on the value of breastfeeding, the number of infants who are formula fed from birth is higher than desirable. Furthermore, breastfeeding rates in the U.S. differ between racial/ethnic groups, with black infants breastfed for substantially shorter periods compared with white and other minority infants, resulting in considerable health disparities for those infants. This begs the question, why do mothers choose formula over readily available, free and highly nourishing breast milk and how can we help?



#### HOW DID FORMULA REPLACE BREASTMILK?

Formula replacing breastmilk has a long and complicated history. In the 1940's breastfeeding rates dropped quite dramatically with women entering the workforce during WWII. By the early 1970s, breastfeeding during the usual 5-day hospital stay was a shocking 25% or less in the U.S. Even mothers who intended to breastfeed were often not encouraged in their decision. Hospitals and doctors were quick to push formula as a supplemental option and became brand ambassadors, recommending and giving out formula from big brand manufacturers. At the same time mothers were not given the breastfeeding guidance and support they needed.

As more American women joined the workforce and increasingly relied on caregivers, formula feeding offered a solution; society supported taboos around breastfeeding in public and formula became an indication of a certain status and wealth. Just like that, formula became the easy alternative.

Breastfeeding rates in the U.S. have improved dramatically, now 84%

*(continued on page 2)*

### Farmer Fran's Fun Facts



- Wild watermelon seeds have been found in the prehistoric Libyan site of Uan Muhuggiag and in Pharaoh tombs in Ancient Egypt.
- Watermelon was originally domesticated in Africa. With more than 1000 varieties, it is grown in favorable climates from tropical to temperate regions worldwide.
- The sweet, juicy flesh is usually deep red to pink, with many black seeds. The seedless varieties are a hybrid, and now comprise about 90% of U.S. watermelon sales. The fruit can be eaten raw or pickled and the rind is edible after cooking.
- Fresh watermelon can be enjoyed anytime, it is a delicious addition to a summer fruit salad and it makes an easy dessert for a picnic.
- To choose a ripe watermelon, thump it with the palm of your hand; it should have a deep resonance, like a bass drum. Also look for the field patch where the fruit has been lying on the ground, as it becomes more apparent with ripeness. Once cut, watermelon lasts only one day on the counter and 3-5 days in the fridge.
- Watermelon is about 90% water. It is a very good source of Vitamins A and C and a good source of potassium.

### INSIDE:

- Back to School Not Back to Normal
- Recipes
- Physical Activity Around the World
- Food Funny

## It Takes a Village: Breastfeeding Disparities & Support in Childcare

— Continued from front page

of mothers breastfeed their infant in the first 5 days. Unfortunately, not all mothers receive the same encouragement, maternity care access and postpartum support. The disparities between racial or ethnic groups are too wide to be ignored, with only 44.7% of black infants breastfed at six months of age. This is a 14.7% difference in breastfeeding rates between black and white infants. At the heart of the disparities are **false** assumptions made such as, black moms prefer to bottle feed, because of this they are less likely to receive crucial breastfeeding resources. Furthermore, many mothers rely on low paying jobs without appropriate accommodations for breastfeeding moms. In addition, there are not enough birth and postpartum specialists and lactation consultants to support black women through pregnancy, labor, delivery and breastfeeding. According to the study “Racial Disparities in Breastfeeding Initiation and Duration Among U.S. Infants Born in 2015”

*“Black mothers disproportionately experience a number of barriers to breastfeeding, including lack of knowledge about breastfeeding; lack of peer, family, and social support; insufficient education and support from health care settings.”*

### WHAT ROLE DOES CHILDCARE PLAY IN BREASTFEEDING SUCCESS?

When mothers return to work, family childcare providers and center staff are important resources to these families and many times the only emotional support during this transition. Childcare providers are part of a child’s village, and they make a difference!

#### Childcare providers can make a difference by:

- Helping to create an infant feeding plan that replicates what they are already doing at home.
- Setting up an inviting and quiet space where mothers can breastfeed before work and/or going home. Include



a few basics: a comfortable chair, a stool or footrest that supports the mother’s back while nursing, a pillow to support the baby, drinking water for the mother and a sink where she can wash her hands and pumping equipment. Although this is not a requirement in the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), it is a Best Practice and breastfed meals on site are reimbursable on the CACFP.

- Learning how to handle and store breastmilk and how to feed a breastfed baby. Knowledge will give providers confidence to guide and support mothers.
- Sharing community resources with expectant mothers such as the WIC program or local La Leche League chapter.
- Encouraging mothers to learn more about the Federal law requiring employers to provide reasonable break times for an employee to express breast milk. Employers are also required to provide a place, other than a bathroom, that is shielded from view and free from intrusion from coworkers and the public.

Worldwide Breastfeeding Week is celebrated in over 120 countries in the first week of August. Black Breastfeeding Week is celebrated the last week of August to raise awareness and close the gap in breastfeeding disparities. Help spread the word, celebrate and find support at: [breastfeedingusa.org](http://breastfeedingusa.org), [blackmamasmatter.org](http://blackmamasmatter.org), [blackmothersbreastfeeding.org](http://blackmothersbreastfeeding.org) and your local La Leche League.

**Sources:** La Leche League International at [l.li.org](http://l.li.org), “Racial Disparities in Breastfeeding Initiation and Duration Among U.S. Infants Born in 2015,” published in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, August 30, 2019

— *Alejandra Marín Santos,*  
*Child Health and Nutrition Specialist, CocoKids*

## KIDS' HEALTH &amp; SAFETY

# Back to School, Not Back to Normal

**BOTH FEDERAL AND STATE HEALTH OFFICIALS** have long said that it is relatively safe to bring students back to school if health and safety practices are implemented and followed. While COVID cases appear to be on the decline and it looks like we are finding our way out of the worst of the pandemic, it is reasonable to expect this year's back-to-school season to look quite different than in years past. Even with in-person school this fall, we must also remember that back to school will not mean back to normal.

Recognizing that the last year was not typical in any way, it will be beneficial to take a unique approach to the return to school. Students returning to in person instruction can expect to still see masking, frequent hand washing and sanitizing, as well as continued social distancing. It's imperative to understand that many students faced severe challenges and not all will be on the same level academically, socially or emotionally. The long-term impacts COVID has played on our children is still being understood, think of this as the first mile on a very long marathon.

## BACK TO ROUTINE

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it might be how important routine is for us and especially our children. With the extended shift in many of our typical activities such as work and school, other things in our lives may have been thrown off as well. Regular mealtimes and bedtimes can be a huge help in promoting better moods and productivity. Start by getting back into routines that get children fed and in bed in time to provide a good night's sleep for returning to school. Try planning breakfast and packing lunches the night before to save yourself the inevitable rush in the morning, especially in the first few weeks when getting out the door may be relatively new for some.

A drop in childhood vaccinations during the pandemic may raise the risk of other disease outbreaks when schools reopen. The American Academy of Pediatrics calls on parents to get their children up to date on immunizations before they return to class and if your child is eligible for the coronavirus vaccine, get it now! In addition, it's



important to return to the routine of scheduling annual wellness exams at the pediatrician and dentist.

## CHANGES TO CONSIDER

Thousands of our youngest children have never been to in-person school, as many parents chose to delay school for another year altogether or children began Kindergarten in distance learning. These little ones will now be grouped together by age or grade yet have an enormous range of abilities and skills that can make for a very different approach to the classroom goals and expectations.

While we now know how to use Zoom, let's remember this was new for everyone in the beginning. Many teachers who were previously not tech savvy may now feel confident using online tools to increase digital literacy and enhance teaching and learning. In a recent survey by NWEA, a research-based, not-for-profit organization that supports students and educators worldwide, 89% of teachers had little to no prior experience with virtual teaching going into 2020; yet nearly all teachers now expect to continue using digital tools at least some of the time when they return to more typical modes of instruction.

Going back to school may be welcome for some and anxiety producing for others. Let us all be kind and patient with one another as we find our way on this long journey.

— *Rachel O'Neal*  
*Child Health and Nutrition Specialist, CocoKids*

## Easy Watermelon Sorbet

**Watermelon, cubed** ..... 2 cups     **Lime, juiced** ..... ½ to 1

1. Dice watermelon and freeze overnight. (After several hours in the freezer, you can proceed, but if the watermelon isn't completely frozen, the sorbet will have more of a slushy texture rather than be a solid sorbet)
2. Place frozen watermelon into food processor and add some lime juice. Start with 2-3 cups of watermelon for each half lime, adding more, to taste.
3. Process watermelon and lime juice in food processor until you get a sorbet-like texture. Serve immediately. (For a creamier "ice cream" try adding mangos or use coconut milk instead of the lime juice.)

Yield: 4 servings

Meets requirement for fruit as 100% juice

— Tracy Ariza, DDS

## Watermelon For Little Fingers



A child with a huge triangle of watermelon makes for an adorable photo, but what the pictures don't show is watermelon juice covering their faces, shirts, shoes and more, because a good slice of melon will drip! *Mama Say What?!* came up with a great way to slice the fruit so little kids can eat it without covering themselves in its sticky sweetness.

## Thai Style Peanut Noodles

<b>Peanut or almond butter</b> .... ¼ cup	<b>Veggies</b> ..... 3 cups
<b>Soy sauce</b> ..... 2 Tbsp	<i>Shredded cabbage, carrots, or broccoli florets</i>
<b>Brown sugar</b> ..... 1 Tbsp	<b>Scallions, sliced</b> ..... 3
<b>Lime juice</b> ..... 1 Tbsp	<b>Cilantro, chopped</b>
<b>Ginger, minced</b> ..... 2 tsp	<b>(optional)</b> ..... ½ cup
<b>Garlic, cloves, minced</b> ..... 2	<b>Pasta</b> ..... 6 ounces
<b>Sesame or other oil</b> ..... 1 Tbsp	<i>Whole wheat spaghetti, angel hair or soba noodles</i>

1. Mix together the peanut butter, soy sauce, sugar, lime juice, ginger, garlic and oil. Set aside.
2. Prep all the vegetables you wish to use.
3. Cook the pasta according to package directions. While warm, mix with a little of the peanut sauce, add scallions and other veggies selected. Mix, adding peanut sauce to taste.

Yield: 6 servings

Meets requirement for grains/breads and vegetable

— Adapted from *feastingathome.com*

## ACTIVITY CORNER

### Physical Activity Around the World



### CATCH THE DRAGON'S TAIL [CHINA]

This is a very simple game that is good for a large group of children to play. The more children that participate, the greater the fun and challenge. The children form a human chain by standing in a line and placing their hands on the shoulders of the child directly in front. The child at the very front is the dragon's head and the very last child is the dragon's tail. The goal is for the dragon's head (the child in front) to tag the dragon's tail (the child in back).

This can be harder than it seems because the children behind the dragon's head have to try to stop the dragon's head from catching the dragon's tail. When the dragon's head succeeds in catching the dragon's tail, the head becomes the tail and a new child becomes the dragon's head.

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**Food Q.** When do you go at red and stop at green?  
**Funny A.** When you're eating a watermelon!