



The Satter Division of Responsibility in Feeding

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Children have natural ability with eating. They eat as much as they need, they grow in the way that is right for them, and they learn to eat the food their parents enjoy. Step-by-step, throughout their growing-up years, they build on their natural ability and become Eating Competent. Parents let them learn and grow with eating when they follow the Satter Division of Responsibility in Feeding (sDOR).

sDOR for infants

- The parent is responsible for *what*.
- The child is responsible for *how much* (and everything else).

Parents choose breast- or formula-feeding. Then they help the infant be calm and organized by feeding smoothly, paying attention to information coming from the infant about timing, tempo, frequency, and amounts.

sDOR for babies transitioning to family food

- The parent is still responsible for *what* and is becoming responsible for *when* and *where* the child is offered food.
- The child is still and always responsible for *how much* and *whether* to eat the foods parents offer.

Based on the child's increased regularity with eating, parents make skillful use of sit-down snacks offered at regular times to allow the

child to fit into the predictable structure of family meals and snacks. The cup replaces nipple feedings at mealtime. Nipple feedings may be offered as a structured, sit-down snack.

sDOR for toddlers through adolescents

- The parent is responsible for what, when, and where.
- The child is responsible for how much and whether.

Fundamental to parents' jobs is trusting children to determine *how much* and *whether* to eat from what parents provide. When parents do their jobs with feeding, children can do their jobs with eating.

Parents' feeding jobs

- Choose and prepare the food.
- Provide regular meals and snacks.
- Make eating times pleasant.
- Step-by-step, show children by example how to behave at family mealtime.
- Be considerate of children's lack of food experience without catering to likes and dislikes.
- Not let children have food or beverages (except for water) between meal and snack times.
- Let children grow up to get bodies that are right for them.

Children's eating jobs

- Children will eat.
- They will eat the amount they need.
- They will learn to eat the food their parents eat.
- They will grow predictably.
- They will learn to behave well at mealtime.

For more about raising a healthy child who is a joy to feed, read Part two, "How to raise good eaters," in Ellyn Satter's *Secrets of Feeding a Healthy Family*.

For more about following sDOR at every age, see the [Feeding with Love and Good Sense booklets](#).

For more about the evidence, see [The Satter Feeding Dynamics Model](#).