BABY LED WEANING

The Basics

What is baby led weaning?

Baby led weaning is an approach to introducing solid foods that can skip over spoon feeding purees and goes straight to eating table foods in a way that is safe and easy to eat for the child.

How do we use it at Little Raiders?

While in the transition classroom, we will ask you your preferences and how you feed your child at home. In most cases, we will start with purees as that is what most of our families prefer. This allows us to establish a baseline on any potential allergies/preferences. Once your child is eating purees at both mealtimes, we will move on to approved soft foods, and then we will jump up to all table food. This is all at your pace and we will not attempt to feed your child something we feel they cannot handle or that you are not comfortable with. If you would like us to skip purees completely and do baby led weaning completely, just let us know!

Mealtimes

We all sit at the table together and each child is fed according to what "level" they are at.

Breakfast: 8:00-8:15
Lunch: 11:00-11:15
Snack: 2:00-2:15

Food "Levels"

1. Purees; both bought and homemade here at the center
2. Soft foods; mashed potatoes, applesauce, breads etc.
3. All other table foods provided at meals

LITTLE RAIDERS CHILDCARE CENTER
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Is My Child Ready?

Ready to Eat

-Bottles do not seem to "fill" them up for very long
-They are very interested in what you're eating
-Their swallow reflex is developed and they start to show signs of attempting to chew items they place in their mouth
-Either sits unassisted or can sit assisted steadily with good head control
-Around 6 months of age and shows all the above signs

How is food cut/served?

Purees: We offer the puree alone at first to be sure the swallow reflex is working correctly and that the child is okay with the taste and texture. Once they are doing well with swallowing, we add in oatmeal or rice cereal to thicken it up to imitate foods like mashed potatoes. This will help us determine if they are ready to move up to soft table foods.

Soft table foods: Once we move up to soft table foods, we will spoon feed things like applesauce and mashed potatoes. For foods like pancakes, we will cut those into inch thick strips to allow the child to hold the food and feed themselves.

All other foods: Once the child is doing well on soft foods, we offer everything else. We cut most things into the inch thick strips and/or rip them apart (muffins or bread) until the child can eat without gagging. Once they are doing well with all foods, we will let them use their own spoon or fork and feed them whole foods that are not cut or ripped up.

Gagging vs. Choking

We understand it can be very scary to try foods for the first time because of choking. Here's how to tell the difference and know when you need to intervene.

Gagging: the child is coughing and making noise. They may make a funny face, but they are still getting air in.

Choking: No air or sound is getting in or coming out. Their eyes may "bug out."

Reminders

1. We are all CPR/Heimlich trained!
2. We will not give your child anything we don't think they can handle.
3. We will always check with you before we change anything for your child!

Questions?

Please don't hesitate to reach out to us with any questions or concerns you may have!