

# Weaning Week 2022

4<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> May

Aiming **to promote accurate, evidence based advice for introducing solids** throughout the week.

We are asking everyone to get involved to empower parents to introduce solids to their babies in the most nutritious way.

## How can you get involved?

The information included below can be used **to promote accurate, evidence based advice for introducing solids** to parents/carers as they begin the journey of introducing their babies to solid food.

### Health Promotion Stands/information events

Setting up a health promotion stand in your organisation can be an excellent way to engage parents and a practical way to provide advice and information around introducing solids.

**Here are some ideas to help engage parents/carers:**

### Weaning Equipment

Show a selection of equipment which can be useful to have when beginning their weaning journey.

#### Key points:

- Weaning equipment does not need to be expensive – typical kitchen equipment is usually enough without buying ‘baby food’ equipment.
- Once baby reaches 6 months this equipment does not need to be sterilised. Simply wash well in hot, soapy water.

#### Ideas for equipment you could show:

<b>Equipment</b>	<b>Take Home Message</b>
Sieve and Spoon Hand blender Potato masher and/or fork Knife and fork	To reach required consistency
Shallow bellied spoons	These help baby take the food from the spoon
Small bowls	To feed baby

Ice cube tray or small pots	For freezing prepared meals
Free flowing feeding cup	To introduce for drinks at 6 months
Bibs/ coveralls	Help keep clothes clean
Antibacterial spray and cleaning cloth	To wipe up spills and mess

## Samples of first foods and fingers foods

Show some samples of weaning foods to show parents' textures and portion sizes of first foods.

This can help increase confidence and provide ideas of how to begin their weaning journey.

### Key points:

- Use a hand blender and sieve and spoon to prepare first foods such as; broccoli, cauliflower, potatoes, porridge/baby rice.
- Finger foods such as carrot, toast and broccoli should be soft with no hard lumps or chunks that could break off and cause a choking risk.
- Commercial baby finger foods like puffs, corn snacks and wafers can be given, but try not to rely on these for finger foods. As they dissolve and breakdown in baby's mouth, they don't teach baby important skills like chewing.

## Taste test

Purchase a variety of commercial/shop bought baby foods and encourage parents to sample these.

Invite parents to give feedback and thoughts around; taste, texture, colour, smell and cost.

### Key points:

- The benefits of preparing weaning foods at home such as; more control over the ingredients, cheaper, encouraging the family to eat together and textures can be altered as appropriate for each infant's abilities.
- Weaning foods can be made of a mixture of sweet and savoury tastes together (eg peas and pears; apple and parsnips)- meaning baby may prefer them due to the sweet taste, but this doesn't given them the chance to develop a taste for savoury foods.
- Once opened, any leftover, unheated food must be stored in the fridge used within 24 hours. If heated or baby has been fed directly from the jar, leftover food must be discarded.
- Do not let baby suck food directly from pouches –, squeeze it into a bowl or spoon instead.
- Even if labelled as 'suitable from 4 months' solid foods should not be given until around 6 months.

- Commercial baby foods can be useful when tight on time, but it is best not to have them all the time.
- This taste test could also include some homemade weaning foods to for comparison.

### Cost comparison

	Home made	Commercial/shop bought jar	Commercial/shop bought pouch
Carrot puree (70g)	7p	45p	72p
Spaghetti bolognaise (190g)	50p	83p	£1.93

Average price based on 3 supermarkets where possible April2022

You can find out more about commercially available baby foods in the report by the World health organisation at this link:

[Commercial-Foods-Policy-Brief-LowRes.pdf \(who.int\)](#)

### What's on the menu?

Help give parents/carers ideas on how to plan meals for weaning.

- Set up a table with common store cupboard foods such as pasta, tinned fish, tinned fruit and vegetables and lentils.
- Ask parents to suggest how these store cupboard ingredients could be used to make a meal for weaning their infant.

### Introducing Solids- What to avoid:

To highlight to parents the foods which need to be avoided when starting weaning.

Set up a table or stand with salt, sugar, honey and whole nuts-the four main foods which must be avoided when weaning.

#### Key points

- Encourage avoiding these foods and also items which contain these such as; processed meats, sweets, chocolate, jam etc.
- Avoiding these foods help to ensure infants are being introduced to solids in the most nutritious and safest way.

**Don't forget to have posters and leaflets nearby for parents to take information home.**

**Also ensure any Covid 19 guidelines/regulations are followed**

## What else can I do?

### Display Posters and Information

Display posters about weaning in your area and link some of the activities already happening in your organisation to the main messages of the campaign.

### Emails/Whatsapp groups etc.

Send the campaign information, digital posters and infographics attached in this email to staff/ colleagues is a great method of promoting the work you are doing around the campaign.

Use the **email banner** below and attached in the email to help raise awareness.



### Use Social Media

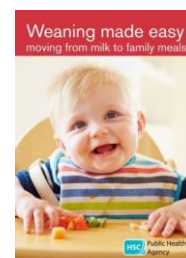
Share the 'Weaning week recipe cards', 'Starting weaning Infographics' and 'Things I wish I knew, Top tips from parents and carers infographics' attached in this email

Promote your weaning week events and post plenty of pictures!

**Websites:** We also suggest linking any posts with the following websites to direct parents/carers to further information.

### Public Health Agency- Weaning made easy:

[Weaning made easy: moving from milk to family meals \(English and translations\) | HSC Public Health Agency \(hscni.net\)](#)



### NHS Start for Life:

[www.nhs.uk/start4life/](http://www.nhs.uk/start4life/)



**Don't forget to use the hashtags for this campaign  
on your social media**

**#weaningweek2022**

**#introducingsolids**

**#PHDG**

**Evaluation:**

To evaluate the success of the campaign we would greatly appreciate if you could send through any photos of your organisation promoting the campaign or any feedback you have received.

**Please remember that we are here to support you and do not  
hesitate to contact us for information, advice and resources.**