



PART OF THE  
"BETTER BRAINS FOR BABIES" COLLABORATION

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# *Building Baby's Brain*

*The University of Georgia College of Family and Consumer Sciences*

## **Breast-Feeding is Best**

Breast milk is the perfect food for babies. It has everything in it that babies need for good health. Breast-feeding is a convenient, low-cost way to feed your baby. You may also save money on doctor visits, since breast-fed babies don't get sick as often as bottle-fed babies.

Many mothers find that breast-feeding is convenient. They get more sleep because they don't have to get up in the middle of the night to fix bottles. And breast milk is always the right temperature, so it's ready when the baby wants to be fed.



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Some women think they will have to stop breast-feeding if they go back to work or school. That's not true. You can mix breast and bottle feeding after 4-6 weeks of breast-feeding alone. Your baby can be given bottles during the time you are away, and you can still breast-feed in the morning and/or at night. Use infant formula or breast milk that you have pumped in the bottles. You may want to use powdered formula if you are using only a few bottles a day.

Breast-feeding your baby for the first year of life is best. But even if you can only breast-feed for a little while, it's worth it. The first milk you produce is colostrum. It is yellowish and watery and doesn't even look like milk. Colostrum is high in antibodies, which help your baby fight infection. No infant formula can provide this protection for your baby—only you can do it.

Give breast-feeding a chance! If you need help getting started or have any problems or questions, ask your nurse, doctor, lactation consultant, or nutritionist. Your baby will thank you.



## TIPS FOR BUILDING BABY'S BRAIN

Whether you breast-feed or bottle-feed your baby, make feeding time special! You can help your baby grow a healthy brain. Here are some tips:

- Talk to your baby. Babies whose parents talk to them learn more words than other children.
- Hold your baby when you feed her. Babies can see things best when they are about 10 inches away. That's about the distance between your eyes and hers when you hold your baby.
- Respond to your baby's signals. Babies who turn away from the breast or bottle may not be hungry. Your baby will "talk" to you even before he can say words!
- Hold the bottle upright when feeding. This helps prevent ear infections, which could affect your baby's hearing.
- Hug and cuddle your baby. This helps your baby feel secure.