

Erica Italiano
NFSC 360
Nutrition Throughout the Lifecycle

Lifecycle Project

For the first part of this project I observed an infant eating. The infant that I watched is named Aidan and he is 8 months old. I watched him eat at 11 am and he ate about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of applesauce and raspberry baby food, a baby size handful of dry pieces of rice cereal, and about 4 oz. of breast milk. The DRI's per day for this infant are 743 kcals, 84-121 carbohydrates, 17-29 grams of fat, and 17.1 grams of protein. Aidan's mom is doing a good job of getting him adequate amounts of macronutrients and some micronutrients. He needs a little more of omega 3 and 6 fatty acids, as well as Vitamins, B6, B12, D, and E. A way to increase these micronutrient intakes could be to use human milk fortifiers.

He ate sitting in a highchair next to the dining table, while his mom fed him sitting right in front of him. I think that the foods that were offered were age appropriate because he is an 8 month old and is able to push food out of his mouth, meaning he is ready to eat solid foods. One thing I noticed is that his mother fed him from the jar of baby-food, which we learned is not sanitary. The reason this is unsanitary is because the baby's germs are on the spoon that is going back into the jar, and once the jar is placed back in the fridge it has the possibility to grow bacteria and cause the baby to become sick. I would recommend that she take out some food from the jar, and place in a bowl and then feed the baby from the bowl of food, so that the jar is not contaminated.

While watching Aidan eat, I noticed certain feeding skills that he exhibited. He was able to pick up his own bottle and suck from it, without the help of his mom. He also was able to chew his food up and down, and push the food out of his mouth. Also, while eating the rice cereal, he would pick it up and shove it into his mouth.

His mother was the one feeding him during this observation. He was very responsive to her and would become very excited when he saw the spoon full of food coming toward him. It was funny because when the food was in his mouth, he would make a look like he was disgusted with it, yet he still wanted to eat it. When he was done eating, he would simply turn his head away from the food when it was coming toward him, and his mom would stop feeding him because she knew he was full. He did not exhibit any behavioral problems during this time. He sat in his seat and ate the food that his mom gave him. I think this could have been a learning experience for Aidan, because he is learning how to react to different types of food, and how to tell his mom that he is done eating.

The second child I observed eating is named Carly and she is 7 years old. I observed her eating breakfast at Four-winds elementary school. She was served oatmeal, French toast, an apple, and 2 % milk. A lot of her food was thrown out. She only had a few spoonfuls of oatmeal. She ate the entire piece of French toast, but with a lot of syrup on it. She only had about half of the apple, and she drank most of the milk, but only because the lunch lady made her drink it before throwing it out. Her DRI's per day are 1642 kcals, 185-267g of carbohydrates, 36-64 grams of fat, and 37.42 grams of protein. She received an adequate yet lowered amount of protein at breakfast and her omega 3 and

6 fatty acids were low. The reason the values may have been low is because high protein and leafy vegetables are not usually served at breakfast. She was also lacking in niacin, B6, folate, C, and E. A few ways to increase these values would be to eat all of the oatmeal and possibly have some fresh squeezed orange juice with her breakfast. She is also a little low on potassium; she can increase this by also drinking the orange juice, eating a banana, and drinking milk.

While watching her eat I noticed a lot of things around her that were influencing her eating. She had a few friends sitting with her at the table, and they were all talking to each other. Since they were talking it caused Carly to eat very slowly and not eat much of her food. I also thought it was weird that the lunch lady was forcing her to drink her milk. I did not think this was something that lunch ladies did.

In general I think that children receiving breakfast from the school probably have a better breakfast than children eating breakfast at home. This is mostly because when children eat breakfast at home they will eat sugary cereal that has low nutrient content or they won't eat breakfast at home. When they eat at the school, they have healthier food and they are then ready to start their day.

Even though the school breakfast is most likely better than a home breakfast, there are still empty calories in it. The syrup is not a necessity for the French toast and oatmeal, yet kids were pouring that onto their food. A way of portioning out the syrup so the children do not have high intakes of it would be to have pre-portioned sizes that only have two tablespoons in it. Also the children had a choice between milk and fruit juice, so some were drinking fruit juices instead, that most likely had very little nutrient content.

Instead of making the children choose between milk or juice, they could let the children take both.

Some suggestions for improvement would be to have some scrambled eggs or sausage for breakfast also. This way they are getting in some more protein in the morning, instead of sugary starches. They could also offer light sugar syrup instead of the normal type. I would only recommend this because a majority of children at this school are overweight. Other than that, I think it is great that they are offering breakfast at elementary schools now.