

# Observation Project: Infant and Toddler

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## OBSERVATION 1

### *10 month old Alannah*

The first observation I conducted was with a ten month old infant named Alannah and her mother, Alicia. Little Alannah is an alert, energetic, and happy girl who was very excited when it was time to eat lunch. At this age she is much more experienced than a six month old starting pureed carrot. When her mother straps her safely in her highchair she is able to sit upright with her hands eagerly waiting on the large tray. While preparing Alannah's simple meal her mother talked with her and gave her an appetizer: one 4 oz of infant formula.

Although she was slightly clumsy the infant was able to hold the sippy cup to her mouth and drink the formula inside. Alicia also placed a small handful of cheerios on Alannah's tray which were placed one by one in her little mouth by two pincer-like fingers. By eating cheerios and drinking out of a sippy cup she shows us that she can finger feed herself and exhibit hand-eye-mouth coordination. I believe that Alannah also exhibits hand-eye-floor coordination because a few cheerios were playfully tossed onto the floor. Her mother immediately tried to correct her behavior by telling her that it is a "no-no" to toss food on the floor. Since she is so young I'm unsure if this is a behavioral program but it was something that bothered Alicia.

The main course consist of apple sauce, Gerber brand pureed carrots and a whole Gerber Spaghetti with Beef jar. Alannah easy took all of the food off of the spoon and was able to chew flawlessly.

The food offered was appropriate for a ten month old infant to consume. Everything was soft and easy for Alannah to eat. Honestly I do not believe any recommendations are required because the food was practically custom made by Gerber for her age and skills. In all Alicia showed many different eating skills: up and down chewing, eye-hand-mouth coordination, finger feeds, cup drinking, and she removes food from the spoon. She also shows interest in the food and she let her mom know when she was full by completely losing interest in eating.

The bonding between the parent and child was very touching. There was a lot of talking and laughter throughout the feeding as well as eye-to-eye contact. Alannah's mom understood when she was done feeding and didn't try to push eating past fullness. This was a learning experience for Alannah because her mother let her know that it was inappropriate to throw food off the highchair. Also, this eating session was a learning experience because it was a chance to further improve self-feeding skills.

For Alannah's age, weight, and height the DRI for caloric intake is 676 kcal. During this meal she consumed 227.47 kcals which is 34% of her daily calories. This is adequate seeing as it is a third of her recommended daily intake. However, many of her nutrients seemed quite high. These nutrients included: thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin B6, vitamin B12, folate, vitamin A, zinc, potassium, and magnesium. I believe these nutrients are high because the percentage for this meal is more than 50% of the DRI. Alannah's intake of all of these vitamins is probably very high because she is eating nutrient dense foods such as her formula and the foods made by Gerber. Perhaps such high amounts could be avoided if she paired the Gerber foods differently. For instance instead of having carrots with tomato sauce (since both are very high in vitamin A) the mother could have paired the tomato sauce with pureed peas.

### ***Total foods consumed***

- 8 oz infant formula
  - 1/4 cup cheerios
  - 4 oz of Gerber Spaghetti in tomato sauce with beef
  - 1/2 cup applesauce
  - 2 oz Gerber Carrots
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### **OBSERVATION 2**

#### ***3 year old Harmony***

My second observation was done on a little three year old named Harmony. I unfortunately was unable to complete this observation at a day care facility so instead I completed this at Harmony's home with her mother, Kailey. Before it was time to eat Harmony's mother played very actively with her. She put on music and danced with Harmony around the house. When it was time to sit down and eat Harmony still wanted to dance and had no interest in eating anything. With some encouragement she reluctantly sat upright in her little chair.

Harmony received her meal all at one time: 4 oz of 1% milk, ½ cup of cream of mushroom soup, five Ritz crackers, 1 oz chicken thighs with about 2 tbsp fat free ranch dressing. The milk was offered in a small, plastic open ended cup and Harmony drank it carefully without spilling. The color of the meal was all the same; the food was either white or a cream color. Since this is sort of bland I would recommend adding more colorful food such as fruit and vegetables. This is especially important because the DRI of Harmony's vitamins was very low.

Harmony was low in many nutrients including: niacin, vitamin B6, folate, vitamin C, vitamin E, magnesium, potassium, and fiber. This meal was low in these nutrients because she didn't have any whole grains, fruits, or vegetables. Had she of had these three important items

I'm sure the values would be much higher. I would definitely recommend adding softly cooked vegetables for her to eat at every meal and perhaps small pieces of fruit.

She was only high in a few nutrients: protein, riboflavin, and sodium. These nutrients are high because of her intake of chicken, ranch dressing, and mushroom soup. The chicken has many beneficial nutrients but the mushroom soup and ranch dressing hardly have anything good but are full of sodium. I would recommend using a different soup that provides more essential nutrients and perhaps fiber as well. Her caloric intake, however, was perfect. The recommended DRI for her age, weight, and height is 992 kcals and she consumed 334.98 kcals which is 34% of the DRI.

Harmony's meal was a learning experience because according to her mother she never had cream of mushroom soup before. Since Harmony enjoyed the soup it shows that she is willing to try new things. Also, she received more practice with drinking from an open ended cup.