

## **SPOON TECHNIQUE:**

Developmental age  $\geq$  7 months. Go much slower and in smaller steps/increments if  $<$  7 months

Use an infant feeding spoon with a small bowl, and a long handle

**STEP 1** = Adult makes eye contact and models opening their mouth **WHILE** saying “ahhhhhhhh” in a drawn out fashion

**STEP 2** = Adult brings the spoon straight on towards the front of the Child’s mouth (not sideways or tipped up or down), and touches the Child’s lower lip gently with just the tip of the spoon.  
A. Parent models smacking their lips – open and close – and using the tongue to sweep the food off of a spoon

**STEP 3** = Adult moves the spoon forward slowly into the mouth, straight on, and **STOPS** the spoon entry when it is just inside the lips, with the spoon tip approximately at the tip of the tongue.  
A. **DON’T** dump the food on the tongue **OR** scrape the food into the palate. Let the Child suckle on the spoon.  
B. Model by saying “Ma!” in a very over exaggerated fashion to show Child how to use suction to move the food back for the swallow

**STEP 4** = Adult draws the spoon straight back out of the Child’s mouth when the Child’s lips begin to close on the spoon or the tongue starts to suckle the spoon, **WHILE** continuing to model the “Ma!” “Ma!” motions/sounds. Again, no dumping or scraping.

**STEP 5** = Repeat Steps 1-3 twice

**STEP 6** = Next, again offer the spoon straight on into the mouth, but insert the spoon a little further into the mouth and onto the top of the tongue (tip of spoon should not be past the mid-way point in the mouth)

**STEP 7** = as the Child’s cup begins to cup around the spoon and their lips start to close down on the spoon, the Adult draws the spoon straight back and out of the Child’s mouth (**NO** dumping or scraping). Adult models the lip smacking and “Ma!” motions/noises **WHILE** drawing out the spoon.

**DO NOT CLEAN ANY FOOD OFF THE CHILD’S FACE OR LIPS WITH THE SPOON DURING A FEEDING** (you gave them the food, you don’t get it back)

**Do NOT clean the Child up at the end of the feeding WHILE he/she is in the high chair either.** Give them a wash cloth or paper towel to “help” you wipe their tray clear at the end of the meal. Then, take them, still messy, out of the high chair and bring them to the sink. Set them in the sink and clean them off **IN** the sink while they are playing in the water.