

Supporting Your Child's Posture at the Table

Why is Postural Stability Important?

- Postural stability is our bodies' second priority (protecting the brain)
- Frees up the motor brain to focus on the task of eating
- Allows for better hand-to-mouth coordination and fine motor/tactile manipulation
- Allows for full range of motion of the jaw for chewing
- Supports respiratory function (breathing = #1 priority)
- Provides a feeling of safety and security while sitting at the table

To get your child into the correct position, check for the following things:

- The tray/table surface should fall between the child's belly button and breast level
- The child is sitting forward enough that their knees are over the edge of their chair
- Everyone needs a foot rest (babies who are still reclined do not)
- This should result in 90-degree angles at the hips, knees, and ankles
- Use side supports if needed (rolled towels or cut pool noodles for younger children; yoga blocks or stiff cardboard boxes covered in duct tape and attached to the chair for older children)
- After 14-16 months, children should be up at the table with the family and no longer using a high chair with a tray (if the high chair is very adjustable, it may be okay to continue using without the tray, pushed up to the family table).
- Remember – you will need to adjust the child's seating arrangement every 3 months

Chairs We Recommend:

First Feeding Chairs

- Infant feeding chairs that can recline and then sit up, such as the Ingenuity ChairMate High Chair and Booster, the Chicco Polly Progress High Chair, or similar models.
- A swing seat or bouncy seat also works if the family already owns one (no motion while feeding). Once the child is pulling forward to reach the spoon, it will be time to transition to a feeding chair that allows them to sit up more (see above).



After 14-16 months of age

- Adjustable wooden chairs are the easiest to adjust as the child grows. The infant insert may be helpful depending on how big the child is and how much support they need. Examples include:
 - Stokke, Height Right, Badger Basket Embassy, Svan, Euro II Chair, Mocka Soho (available in Australia/New Zealand only)
- Continued use of a booster seat or space saver high chair, such as the Ingenuity ChairMate High Chair and Booster (with added foot rest)
- Hook on high chairs (you must provide a foot rest for all of these chairs). Ideally, find one that has a flat, solid bottom. These work well for tall top tables or kitchen islands.
 - Chicco Caddy Hook on High Chair or Chicco 360 Rotating Hook on Chair, Regalo Easy Diner Fold and Go Chair, Phil & Ted Lobster Chair



Preschool through Elementary ages

- Continued use of an adjustable wooden chair, possibly adding side supports with yoga blocks
- Continued use of a booster seat.
- Ensure the chair they are sitting in provides back support and a foot rest. Items such as a diaper box, upside down trash can, step stool, or laundry basket can be easy foot rests if the right size.

