

PROMISES

CLIENT	BEHAVIORS	TOOLS
Formula-Fed Initial Certification (age < 2 months old)	No cereal before 6 months old No cereal in the bottle (at any time) No solid foods until 6 months old	Client Gift: Bottle Stickers

TOOLS:



OPENING ACTIVITY:

SAY: “Moms are all about promises. What are some of the promises you are already making to your baby?”

If needed, provide an example of promises moms make like “I promise to keep you safe” or “I promise to be the best mom I can be.” Listen to client responses.

SAY: “One of the promises mothers make to their tiny babies is to always protect them. They promise to do everything they can to ensure a successful future for their children. What are some of the things you are doing now to protect your baby and his future?”

ASK: “One of most important ways to protect your baby is to let their tiny digestive systems develop before offering them cereal or solid food. And (baby’s name) digestive system won’t be developed and ready for cereal or solid food until around 6 months old. When you give your baby the gift of just breastmilk or formula for the first six months—and no solid food like cereal—you help protect your baby from a lifetime struggle with weight issues, and even diabetes. Best of all, giving (baby’s name) this ‘insurance policy’ doesn’t cost anything or

take a minute from your busy day, yet (baby’s name) benefits for the rest of his life.”

Discuss: “There is so much misinformation that floats around this topic. What have you heard about giving cereal or solid foods to babies in the first six months?”

- **If mom feels cereal or solids help baby sleep through the night:** “Thanks for sharing that common myth. Experts, like the American Academy of Pediatrics, don’t believe cereal greatly impacts sleepiness, but they do agree that cereal, or other solid foods, offered too early negatively impacts weight and obesity risk. Most parents don’t feel a lifetime struggle with weight or diabetes for their child is worth a few hours of sleep for them.”
- **If mom feels pressured to give solids from well-meaning relatives:** “This is your time to reinvent the best life for your baby. This is about your promises to your baby. It’s always

good to listen to others, but in the end, listen to your heart, and know the promises you made to protect your baby.”

- **If mom feels cereal will help calm a fussy baby:** “There are lots of ways to soothe a fussy baby that are more safe and effective than cereal. Experiment with these options, as all babies are different, even on different days. Try swaddling the baby in a snug blanket and gently rock. Some babies like being in a baby carrier or lying flat on a mother’s chest so they feel safe. The ‘football hold,’ soft singing or a pacifier works for many. Simple changes, like reducing stimulation by turning down lights and sounds, works for some babies, while others like ‘white noise,’ like fans. Cereal in the bottle may seem like a quick fix, but is not safe for babies under 6 months old.”

ACTION PLAN:

“Here are some cute bottle stickers that let others know of your decision to give (baby’s name) the time she needs to fully develop before starting solid foods. Please take as many as you want, if you think it will help you until (baby’s name) is around 6 months old. Thanks for all you do to secure a great future for (baby’s name).”