



# **Durable Toddler Feeding Products Final Report**

# Table of Contents

---

■ Executive Summary	Page	3
■ Detailed Findings		
■ Current Toddler Feeding Products	Page	8
■ Overview of Current Products	Page	9
■ Purchase Process	Page	12
■ Role of Brand	Page	18
■ Opportunities and Current Product Performance	Page	22
■ Bowls and Plates	Page	24
■ Cups and Lids	Page	27
■ Utensils	Page	31
■ Transitions in Feeding	Page	37
■ Concept Evaluation	Page	41
■ Appendix		
■ Objectives and Methodology	Page	64
■ Sample	Page	66



# **Executive Summary**

## **Current toddler feeding products, including Company's, often disappoint Moms as they fall short of expectations.**

---

- Toddlers frequent, erratic, and unpredictable eating habits make it necessary for Moms to carry food, beverages and feeding products everywhere. Eating takes place at home, away from home (e.g., outings) and in the car.
- Moms' greatest challenge is simply to get toddlers to eat with as little mess as possible.
- Many current products do not work as claimed. Moms are always looking for innovative products to solve their toddlers' feeding needs.
  - Products are generally purchased at a wide variety of places including specialty stores, mass merchants, grocery, discounters and on-line or through catalogs.
  - Important purchase criteria include: functionality, durability, safety, cleanability and appeal to toddlers (e.g. licensed characters).
- Toddlers typically transition through several stages in their journey to independent eating and their product needs differ by stage:
  - For young toddlers (12 – 24 months) the greatest challenges are transitioning from breast or bottle to a cup and learning to pick up food from a bowl (rather than being fed). These children are also teething, so Moms look for products that will not hurt tender gums and cannot be chewed to create small pieces.
  - Older toddlers (25 – 36 months) usually have improved motor control and can eat a greater variety of foods – if they choose to. The challenges for Moms at this stage is simply to get the child to eat. Toddlers this age are asserting their independence and can become very choosy about the appearance of feeding products. Products that look “grown up” and those with licensed characters are especially appealing.

## **The greatest opportunity is simply to produce reliable products. Other opportunities include easy cleaning and storage as well as age/temperament specific products.**

---

- Because so many products disappoint consumers, there is an opportunity to capture market share by simply producing and marketing products that consistently perform as claimed and continue to perform over time (e.g., cups that don't leak, lids that stay tight after repeated dishwashing, utensils that actually pick up food).
- Creating products that are easy to clean (e.g., all areas can be cleaned, dishwasher safe) will provide Moms with the convenience and time-saving benefits they desire.
- Product storage is also an opportunity. Currently, Moms are very dissatisfied with the difficulty of storing toddler feeding products. There appears to be opportunity to create easier-to-store products or product organizing devices.
- Developing products for specific ages/stages and temperaments would also be valuable to Moms.
  - Products appropriate to the youngest toddlers should make it easier for them to finger feed, be gentle on tender gums and not come apart if chewed.
  - Products for older toddler should give them a sense of independence (e.g., with handles, utensils that actually pierce food) and provide choices (e.g., "real" looking items or items with licensed characters.)
  - Products could also be developed for specific temperaments/eating styles – from the calmer eater to the more aggressive experimenter.
- These more targeted products could ease the shopping process for Moms and eliminate expensive trial and error. (However, the products must function as claimed in order for Moms to trust Company's age/stage/temperament designations).

## Concepts that alleviate worries are of interest; products to promote neat eating and facilitate eating on-the-go have potential.

---

- Of the concepts tested, the most appealing are those that address common worries:
  - Competitor Brand products address Moms' concerns about food spoilage. They also provide convenience (fresh food anywhere) and confidence (Competitor is a trusted brand).
  - The Company Seal provides assurance that the products will work as indicated. The concept can be improved by including Moms and kids among the experts and (if possible) stressing the experts' independence.
- Concepts that facilitate neat eating and eating on-the-go are also of interest:
  - Non-skid toddler feeding products are of interest to some parents, but they need more information about how the non-skid feature works and whether it will be safe for kids and furniture.
  - Disposable products are of great interest to some Moms (primarily working Moms or those with multiple children). Company can improve the concept by conveying durability in a more palatable way than "coated with plastic," by adding licensed characters and by providing a multiple use disposable product that will make mom feel like a smart consumer.
- Other concepts have little to no potential
  - Earth-friendly products are "nice" but do not create a compelling reason for purchase.
  - Portion Control products are considered stress-inducing for both Moms and kids and overly prescriptive.
  - Designer products are seen as unnecessary, designed by *"people who know nothing about kids"* and expensive.
  - Antibacterial products are difficult for consumers to understand and believe.



# **Detailed Findings:**

## **Overview of Current Toddler Feeding Products**

**Feeding plays an important and constant role in the lives of toddlers and their mothers.**





## Toddlers' erratic and frequent eating habits mean Moms must be prepared for eating in a variety of places and ways.

- Mothers care a great deal about their children's health and eating. Toddlers, however, are notoriously choosy, irrational and unpredictable eaters.
- Toddlers often take a long time to eat a meal, and need to eat every few hours, so mothers constantly carry food, beverages and feeding products with them. Typical consumption occasions include:



Occasion	Products Used
At home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bowls and plates</li> <li>• Sippy or straw cups</li> <li>• Toddler utensils</li> <li>• Disposable plates, bowls and cups (for some)</li> </ul>
On outings (e.g., park, play date, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snack containers</li> <li>• Sippy or straw cups</li> <li>• Keep-cold sippy cups</li> <li>• Zip loc bags</li> <li>• Plates/bowls/utensils (at restaurants)</li> <li>• Disposable cups (sometimes plates, bowls, utensils too)</li> </ul>
In the car	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snack containers</li> <li>• Sippy cups</li> <li>• Straw cups</li> </ul>

## Feeding products play an important role in Moms' greatest challenges: encouraging children to eat and preventing messes.



- Many toddlers simply refuse to eat. The right feeding product, however, can help make eating more likely.
  - Products with favorite licensed characters can induce children to eat: *"he wants to see Shrek at the bottom of the bowl."*
  - Products with bright and "fun" graphics can become favorites of toddlers and can help encourage them to eat: *"she loves this cup with the bear – she asks me for it, it's the only way she'll drink her milk."*
  - Products that resemble "adult" tableware can also motivate the older children to eat as they want to emulate older children/adults: *"he'll only use this cup because it looks like his brother's."*
- When toddlers do eat, they often create messes Moms have to clean up:
  - Spills are a major concern for Moms as their children eat and continue to graze throughout the day.
  - Toddlers are developing gross and fine motor control and tend to handle feeding products in a rough and/or exaggerated manner: *"they can't control their little arms very well, so sometimes they just sweep things onto the floor without meaning to."*
  - In addition, some children simply have a more aggressive temperament while eating or enjoy exploring and experimenting.
    - Cups, plates and bowls can be tipped or dumped *"to see what happens."*
    - Some moms report that feeding products *"are a challenge for my child, he wants to figure out how to open it (remove it from the table, etc.)"*



**Unmet needs across the category include products performing as claimed, easier cleaning/storage and desirable licensed characters and bright colors.**

<b>Toddler Feeding Products – Unmet Needs</b>	
<b>Need</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Product performs as claimed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevents worries/stress for Moms</li> <li>• Helps Moms feel they got a good value</li> <li>• Saves time and clean-ups (from leaking cups, open plates/bowls, spilled snacks, etc.)</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Includes characters my child likes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourages children to eat and provides fun play-like interaction</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to store – can be stacked and/or nested</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Makes it easier to keep all product parts together and find parts needed</li> <li>• Neater, easier-to-manage kitchen cabinets</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is dishwasher safe (over time )</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Convenient and time saving for Moms</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easy to clean – no small parts, no mold or dried food in small areas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensures the child will not ingest mold, old or spoiled food, etc. – alleviates Moms’ worries</li> <li>• Convenient and time saving for Mom</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Toddler-proof” design that is still easy for Moms to use</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevents messes (toddlers unable to overturn a bowl, spill all of a snack or drink)</li> <li>• Saves time and clean-ups for Moms</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disposable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Eliminates clean up</li> <li>• Ensures products are sanitary</li> </ul>



# **Detailed Findings:**

## **Purchase Process**

**In shopping, Moms consider usage situations and their child's temperament; media and word of mouth are also influencers.**



**Eating happens  
everywhere**



**Some eat  
neatly**



**Others are  
more  
adventurous**



**Media increases  
awareness of  
specific products**



**Other Moms  
provide  
recommendations**






**Baby and child specialty, mass merchants, discount and specialty web-sites and catalogs are the source for most toddler feeding product purchases.**






*OneStepAhead*



**Moms generally consider how they will use the product along with their child's temperament to determine what products are purchased. Other purchase criteria include...**



Functionality	Desired Benefits	Product Cues and Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fulfills package claims</li> <li>• Works for my child's temperament</li> <li>• Fulfills a need</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pieces appear to fit together tightly</li> <li>• Product is easy to see in the package <i>"you look at it and decide if it will work"</i></li> <li>• Often determined by trial and error or recommendations</li> </ul>
Safety	Desired Benefits	Product Cues and Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not have small parts that could cause choking</li> <li>• Will not enable my child to accidentally injure self</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No small parts</li> <li>• No parts that appear that they could come off through use, chewing, etc.</li> <li>• No/few sharp or thin edges</li> </ul>
Durability	Desired Benefits	Product Cues and Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Material will not break or tear</li> <li>• Materials cannot be chewed</li> <li>• Will maintain shape, seals and closures after repeated dishwashing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All parts (lids, handles, main piece) appear to be made of substantial material</li> <li>• Material does not have too much "give" (e.g., not too easy to "squish")</li> <li>• Often determined through trial and error or recommendations</li> </ul>

## Moms also consider graphics, cleanability and storage.

Graphics	Desired Benefits	Product Cues and Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has graphics that will help encourage my child to eat</li> <li>• Has “fun” graphics to make eating an enjoyable experience</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has licensed characters on it that the child likes</li> <li>• Has brightly colored graphics with familiar themes (e.g. animals, trains, bears, etc.)</li> </ul>
Cleanability	Desired Benefits	Product Cues and Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All parts can be cleaned completely without excessive effort</li> <li>• Can be cleaned in the dishwasher</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Dishwasher safe” noted on the package</li> <li>• Does not have an excessive amount of ridges, shaping, etc. where food can get caught</li> </ul>
Storage	Desired Benefits	Product Cues and Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be stacked or nested in the kitchen cabinet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Products shaped to allow stacking</li> <li>• All parts can be stacked/nested (e.g., even lids are stackable)</li> <li>• Some will buy a single brand and type just to maintain cabinet neatness</li> </ul>



## Moms are always looking for product innovation; price also influences purchase decisions.

Innovation	Desired Benefits	Product Cues and Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New product that solves a toddler feeding problem (e.g., leaking, messes, food spoiling, etc.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “New” on package</li> <li>• Product is unlike others in the area</li> <li>• Packaging explains product benefits</li> <li>• Often found via media or pediatrician recommendations, word of mouth and product trial</li> </ul>
Price	Desired Benefits	Product Cues and Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reasonably priced for the amount of time it is expected to last/be used.</li> <li>• Functionality and other benefits must still be maintained</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some will pay more for perceived superior functionality</li> </ul>



# **Detailed Findings:**

## **Role of Brand**

## Product functionality is the key decision driver regardless of brand. However, the brand can provide reassurance or a means to narrow the consideration set.

- Since feeding habits of toddlers are so varied and changeable, brand plays a much smaller role than it does for infants: *"with infants your pediatrician recommends a certain brand of nipple, so that's what you get. With toddlers it's all about 'does it work?' and 'does she like it?'"*
- Moms are far more likely to focus on perceived safety, functionality, durability and cleanability of a product before considering the brand.
  - For some, brand is completely irrelevant: *"if it looks like it will work, I don't care what brand it is, I will buy it."*
  - For others, brand provides some reassurance: *"you see it is a Competitor or a Company, you have some confidence that it will last and actually work."*
- For many Moms, licensed characters (often exclusive to a brand) are more important than the brand itself: *"you let her pick it out because you want her to eat, she'll always choose the Dora one."*
- Although brand plays only a minor role in choosing the product to purchase, a negative experience with the brand plays a large role in eliminating products from the consideration set.
  - If Moms have a bad experience with a particular branded product, they may decide to avoid the entire brand in the future: *"I had this sippy cup and it leaked all over him, all over the stroller, all over my stuff. I was so mad I just threw it away – I'll never buy anything from that brand again."*
- Products that perform as claimed add to a brand's positive image: *"The Competitor cups don't leak, so when I see the Competitor brand, I feel better about buying that product."*

**There is no clear category leader; Company and Competitor are seen as comparable; Other Competitor is known for innovation.**



- + Known for baby food and other baby products. Many are familiar with Company foods. Company is seen as a specialist in babies and toddlers.
- + Company *"has been around forever"* and therefore is credible and reliable.
- + Company provides a wide variety of foods and feeding products
- Some Company products (primarily sippy cups and utensils) do not perform as claimed.



- + Competitor is known for infant products; this helps Mom make a natural transition to toddler products.
- + Competitor is considered an established and trustworthy brand with a long history.



- + Competitor products are considered reliable: *"They do what they say they'll do."*
- + Other Competitor is considered the most innovative brand: *"They take the kinds of things Company makes and perfect them."*

## Reliability and innovation are keys to category leadership.



With so many products not living up to expectations, a manufacturer who creates products that always "do what they say they'll do" will stand out in this competitive industry.

Product innovation is also key; to be a leader, Company must continuously develop new product ideas that solve consumers' toddler feeding problems.





## **Detailed Findings:**

**Opportunities and Current Product  
Performance**

# The following sections provide opportunities for various toddler feeding products and reviews products respondents brought to the focus groups.



- Respondents were asked to bring toddler feeding products that work well for them and those that are not working well to the focus groups.
- On the following pages opportunities for each of these products categories are explored. In addition, the performance of products brought to the focus groups is reviewed. Product categories include:
  - Bowls and plates
  - Cups and Lids
  - Utensils





# **Detailed Findings:**

## **Bowls and Plates**



**Bowls and plates must facilitate eating, stay in place, be easy to clean and have a lid.**

- Bowls and plates need to stay in place so toddlers don't "*chase the bowl all over the tray.*" In addition, they must make it easy for the toddler to scoop out food without spilling. Desired characteristics of bowls and plates include:



A tight-fitting lid can't be removed by the toddler



A popular licensed character and compartments encourage eating.

Bowls and Plates – Desired Characteristics	
Characteristic	Benefits
• Stays in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps prevent bowl/plate being pushed to the floor</li> <li>• Helps toddler learn to eat independently</li> </ul>
• Has sufficient depth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps toddlers scoop without spilling</li> <li>• Helps toddlers eat successfully and independently</li> </ul>
• Is dishwasher safe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provides convenience and time-savings for Moms</li> <li>• Helps assure Moms that the bowl/plate is “really clean”</li> </ul>
• Has a tight-fitting lid	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows Moms to take pre-prepared meals on the go</li> <li>• Provides a way for Moms to carry used bowl and utensils</li> <li>• Prevents toddlers from spilling food</li> </ul>
• Has compartments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helps Moms serve a balanced meal</li> <li>• Good for two-part foods – (e.g., food and a dip)</li> </ul>
• Is disposable (for some)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No clean up, can be thrown away</li> </ul>

Current bowls and plates often do not maintain their ability to stick to a surface; easier cleaning is also desired.

- Bowls and plates often lose their ability to stick a surface after exposure to the dishwasher. Some also find it difficult to clean all of the cracks and crevices of bowls and suction rings.



This bowl is deep enough to scoop from



Suction ring holds the bowl in place

Current Bowls and Plates	
Strengths	Weaknesses
+Suction ring allows the bowls to be firmly attached to a surface, making it easier for the child to eat.	–Dishwashing diminishes suction –Children can succeed in removing suction rings from a surface –Some suction rings are difficult to attach
+Tight fitting lid can’t be removed by the toddler +Lid contains food or used bowl and used utensils when on the go	–Some toddlers can remove lids –Lids can get separated from bowls –Lids are hard to stack in a cabinet –Repeated dishwashing can damage seals so lids are no longer tight
+Plastic is shatterproof if dropped or thrown	–Some concern about chemicals leaching from plastic to food during heating
+Bowl is deep enough so toddlers can scoop effectively and neatly	–Some are too shallow – food is pushed over the side
+Compartments separate foods and remind Moms to serve a balanced meal	–Sometimes only two, not three compartments



# **Detailed Findings:**

## **Cups and Lids**

**Ideally, cups should contain liquid, but be easy to use, clean, assemble and store.**



The Company soft straw cup leaks around the straw



Company handle cups work well for new cup users

- There is great opportunity for improvement of sippy cups - Moms desire simple cleaning, less parts to assemble, neat storage and, most importantly, no leaking.

Cups – Desired Characteristics	
Characteristic	Benefits
• Leak proof	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevents messes</li> <li>• Filled cup can be stored virtually anywhere with no worries</li> </ul>
• Easy to use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No concerns about ear infections from difficult sucking</li> </ul>
• Limited number of parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cups can be reassembled easily and correctly</li> <li>• Less parts to lose in the dishwasher, in storage, etc.</li> </ul>
• Easy to clean completely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moms can be assured that all cup parts are completely clean</li> <li>• Saves time</li> </ul>
• Has a tight-fitting lid the child cannot remove	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevents messes</li> <li>• Ensures that liquid will not be spilled - available when needed</li> </ul>
• Cups and parts can be nested or stacked	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prevents "cabinet clutter"</li> <li>• Saves time finding all parts for a cup</li> </ul>
• Has handles (some)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Easier transition from a bottle</li> </ul>
• Disposable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No clean up required</li> <li>• Useful for guests/play dates</li> </ul>

## Cups often leak and can be hard for a child to use; many have small, difficult-to-clean parts.



These cups are inexpensive and easy for a child to use.



Competitor insulated cups keep drinks cold and don't leak



Moms say Competitor cups never leak

- Leaking sippy cups are one of Moms' greatest difficulties. In addition, Moms complain about the difficulty of thoroughly cleaning straws and cup valves.

Current Cups	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>+ Sippy cup valve allows child to suck liquid from the cup, but does not allow the liquid to leak.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Some valves do leak; some begin to leak after repeated washing</li> <li>– Valves can be separated from the cup, resulting in frustrating searches or need to replace the entire cup</li> <li>– Some valves are difficult for the child to suck from, children get discouraged and do not finish the beverage</li> <li>– Valves can be difficult to clean</li> <li>– Some pediatricians do not recommend sippy cups: <i>"they're a bottle in disguise"</i></li> <li>– Difficult sucking is perceived to cause ear infections</li> <li>– Moms do not like finding and assembling all of the parts</li> <li>– Hard plastic spouts can be uncomfortable on a child's teeth and gums</li> <li>– Spout can get "dirty" if cup is dropped</li> </ul>

**Handles are helpful, insulators provide usage on the go; finding and storing all parts are problems.**



Cups with handles make the transition from a bottle easier



This cup is easy to grip but leaks badly

Current Cups	
Strengths	Weaknesses
+Cups with straws allow easier usage and are recommended by some pediatricians	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>–Most cups leak around the straw insertion area</li> <li>–Straws can be hard to clean</li> <li>–Some children chew straws which renders the whole cup unusable; Moms also worry about choking</li> </ul>
+Cup with two handles eases transition from the bottle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>–Cups can be hard to stack in the kitchen cabinet</li> <li>–Multiple parts (cup, lid, handles, valve) can make it easy to lose parts</li> </ul>
+Cups are available in a variety of sizes for use as the child ages (and hands grow)	
+Cups with cold core help keep milk fresh – especially in the summer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>–Cups may not keep liquid sufficiently cold</li> <li>–Not all Moms trust these types of cups to keep liquids at a safe temperature</li> </ul>
+Disposable cups help toddlers feel like “big kids” and eliminate clean up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>–Since they have no lid, disposable cups can create a mess if tipped over</li> </ul>



# **Detailed Findings:**

## **Utensils**

**Utensils must make it easy to scoop or pierce food and be easy to clean.**



Company utensils do not pick up food well



"Real" silverware can encourage some children to eat

### Utensils – Desired Characteristics

Characteristic	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spoon deep enough to hold food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helps food stay on the spoon</li> <li>Encourages independent eating</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spoon correctly sized for toddler's mouth</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Toddler can use without injury</li> <li>Allows the toddler to eat independently</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fork that can pierce food</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourages independent eating</li> <li>Prevents frustration</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is dishwasher safe</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Does not "melt" or "warp" in the dishwasher</li> <li>Helps assure Moms that the bowl/plate is "really clean"</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looks like adult tableware</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourages toddlers to use it</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has easy-to-grip handle</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prevents toddler frustration</li> </ul>



**Some forks do not pierce food adequately, while spoons can be too shallow; both result in frustration for toddlers.**



Holes in the bowl keep food from falling off; the curved handle is easy to hold



Forks that effectively pierce food

Current Utensils	
Strengths	Weaknesses
+Spoons with a fairly deep, rounded bowl that hold the food while the toddler moves it to his/her mouth	– Shallow spoons – the food falls off
+Spoon or fork with a wide handle is easier for toddlers to grip	– Some grips are too wide or too narrow, making them difficult for toddlers to hold
+Spoons and forks made from soft plastic or rubber so they don't hurt teething toddlers	– Spoons and forks made from hard metal can hurt a toddler's mouth
+Spoons and forks that look " <i>like real silverware</i> ;" children want to use because they are " <i>just like Mommy's</i> "	– Some are too "babyish" and children refuse to use them
+Forks with tines sharp enough to pick up food, but not so sharp as to cause injury	– Some forks are blunt and frustrate toddlers trying to pierce food
+Spoon or fork appropriately sized for a toddlers mouth	– Some are too large



# **Detailed Findings:**

## **Snack Containers**

Snack container must be easy for children and Moms to use and prevent spills.



A lid helps prevent messes



Toddlers feel independent when carrying their own snacks

Snack Containers– Desired Characteristics	
Characteristic	Benefits
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lid is easy for Mom to open and hard for child to open</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Save time and frustration when filling containers</li><li>• Prevents messes</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lid is safe with no sharp edges or corners</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prevents injury to child’s hands</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Has a handle</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helps toddler feel independent</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Child can access food without spilling</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prevents messes</li><li>• Helps child eat independently</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is a washable bag-type configuration with a closure</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gives mom a place to put all used containers, utensils, etc.</li><li>• Can hold a variety of shapes and sizes</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Is disposable (for some)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No clean up, can be thrown away</li></ul>

# Snack containers allow kids to eat on the go, but sometimes cause them to make messes.

- Moms want toddlers to be able to snack while in the car or stroller. However, due to toddlers’ developing motor control and possible aggressiveness, they often “get food everywhere.”



This container allows the toddler to get one or two pieces, but not spill the entire contents



Company bowl works well for tidy eaters; aggressive eaters can still make messes

Current Snack Containers	
Strengths	Weaknesses
<div>+Lids holds the snack inside so it is not spilled</div> <div>+Lid stays tight even after repeated washings</div> <div>+Tight fitting lid can’t be removed by the toddler</div> <div>+Lid allows the toddler to remove a small number of pieces without spilling</div>	<div>– Some lids are too difficult to open, even for an adult</div> <div>– Some children can open lids</div> <div>– Some lids no longer fit after multiple washings</div>
<div>+Container includes a spoon<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allows serving of messier foods – like yogurt</li><li>• Encourages independent eating</li></ul></div>	<div>– Spoon can separate from container and be lost</div>
<div>+Has a handle, so toddler can carry independently</div>	



# **Detailed Findings:**

## **Transitions in Feeding**

## Young toddlers need products for their smaller hands and lack of motor control.

- Very young toddlers transitioning from breast or bottle feeding can benefit from products that they can control and that are designed for their specific capabilities and needs.
  - These young toddlers have still-developing motor control and have difficulty holding a spoon or a fork. Finger feeding is still very common. These toddlers could benefit from bowls, snack containers and plates that make finger feeding easier (e.g., stay in place, make it easy to grasp food, resist spilling.)
  - Toddlers this age are often teething and chewing to relieve pressure on gums.
    - Some Moms look for products specifically for this stage: *"I started with this cup because the spout is soft – it wouldn't hurt her gums."*
    - Chewing can also drive the choice of product: *"I had these cups with straws and I stopped using them because he would chew the straw and pieces would come off. I was afraid he would choke."*
  - Cups with two handles use a hand position similar to holding a bottle and are easier for young toddlers to hold.
  - Cups that incorporate a lip/tongue position similar to what is used for a cup (rather than a sucking position, such as is used with a valve sippy cup) may be welcome to Moms. Many report that their pediatricians do not recommend sippy cups. *"You have to get them drinking from a cup – its like the breast/bottle difference – a sippy cup is a different suck from a bottle – it's better to just go straight to a cup."*



## Older toddlers are more discriminating about their food and feeding products; products can help encourage eating.

- By the time toddlers have transitioned to using utensils most are also much more choosy about what they eat and how they eat it: *"My three-year-old wants a real cup – he says the sippy cups are 'baby' and he won't use them."*
  - The appearance of toddler feeding products can induce some children to eat:
    - For some children, licensed characters are key: *"I'm only going to buy a fork with a character my child likes – then she'll probably use it."*
    - For others, "grown-up" looking items are a draw: *"He's always saying 'Mommy's plate, Mommy's plate'." Some Moms like these too because "it's what they'll end up using, so its good life experience for him to use it now."*
    - For others, independence is the key to eating: *"my daughter loves this snack container because it has handles – she can carry it herself and she feels like a big girl."*
- In addition, children this age can be very clever and like to assert control over their world. This can result in great perseverance in defeating lids, seals and other devices designed to contain messes.
  - *"I used to use this for Cheerios – but the lid comes off easily – he can get it off, then he spills the Cheerios everywhere."*
  - *"My son saw those suction bowls as a challenge. He just kept at it until he got it off the tray."*





## A children's desire to "be big" and Moms desire for greater convenience drive the eventual transition to "big kid" products.

- Moms generally want to transition to "regular" feeding products as soon as possible. They dislike the difficult cleaning and storage of toddler feeding products as well as the need to take feeding products with them at all times.



Maintaining space for a variety of bulky products motivates Moms to transition



Toddlers signal readiness when they ask for Mom and Dad's plates, bowls and utensils



Moms want children to eat independently – it is part of growing up









Using "regular" feeding products saves the expense of buying special products and eliminates the inconvenience of carrying toddler products





# **Detailed Findings:**

## **Concept Evaluation**




- | Concept   | Overall Reaction  |  |
|-----------|---|--|
| Concept 1 |    | Moms like the safety and convenience of being able to take food on the go and having it stay palatable; there are questions about how long food safety is maintained |
| Concept 2 |    | Moms like the assurance this seal could provide but want Moms and children involved in the process too   |
| Concept 3 |    | Consumers find this concept hard to understand; they like the feature but have questions   |
| Concept 4 |    | Convenience and no clean up are benefits for some; others say these products are environmentally irresponsible   |
| Concept 5 |    | Moms say they know how much to feed their children; these products would only cause stress   |
| Concept 6 |  | The primary feature is a nice plus but in itself is not enough to increase consideration; functionality is more important  |

## Introducing Concept 1 Toddler Feeding Products

---

*This page included the product concept shown in the focus groups*

This was the copy about the concept that was shown to focus group respondents. The concept was described in a **value-neutral** way that **highlighted** key benefits. The concept statement was short – about 3 – 5 sentences. Color-coding was used to show words in the concepts that received **positive**, **negative** or **mixed** reactions.

-  Positive words
-  Mixed Reaction words
-  Negative words

## Concept 1 products have high potential with a credible brand name and a clear solution to a frequent problem.



- Moms like this concept for its safety, convenience and trustworthiness.
  - Keeping foods in the proper state assures Moms regarding food poisoning concerns.
  - Being able to pack a variety of foods and having all be ready at serving time is seen as highly convenient.
  - Partner is a trusted brand regarded as experts at the primary product benefit; adding Partner to Company's expertise in babies and children is a compelling combination for Moms.
  - This concept is seen as truly new and different compared to what else is on the market.
- The overall response is very positive with only a few concerns or questions:
  - The primary question is how long the products will maintain food safety.
  - There is some concern about foods that Moms want to alter before serving *"sometimes you make the Mac and Cheese and you want it to (change somewhat) before they eat it."*
  - Moms want both open top and sippy cups for use at different ages.
- Product Preferences/expectations include:
  - Licensed characters to encourage eating
  - Ability to keep food in the proper state for 4 – 8 hours.
  - Ability to allow foods to change state slightly if needed.
  - That all products, especially cups, be spill proof
  - **Recommendation: Company should proceed with product testing and development. If Partner is not available as a partner, other potential partners include Potential Partner 1 and Potential Partner 2.**

**The concept should proceed to product testing; a credible partner is critical to success.**




Concept 1 Toddler Feeding Products	
Strengths	Weaknesses
+ Partner Brand is credible and considered expert in keeping in its proper state.	- Moms say " <i>I don't want 'less worry', I want no worry</i> " products should guarantee that food will maintain remain safe.
+ "Keep the ____ of products consistent from start to finish" reassures Moms that foods and beverages will be safe to consume.	- Some say these products would not be appropriate for home use because " <i>it will keep her sitting there too long.</i> "
+ These products are seen as ideal for outings, when running errands or for packing preschool lunches.	- Some are concerned about foods that need to change state slightly before they can be eaten.
+ Some see the products as useful at home because " <i>little kids take forever to eat</i> " and the food will stay palatable.	
+ These products would eliminate the need for ancillary items, meaning less products to remember to pack and to store.	
+ The products are seen as completely new and different and very relevant " <i>this is great - I've been looking for something to do this.</i> "	

## Introducing Concept 2 Toddler Feeding Products

---

*This page included the product concept shown in the focus groups*

This was the copy about the concept that was shown to focus group respondents. The concept was described in a **value-neutral** way that **highlighted** key benefits. The concept statement was short – about 3 – 5 sentences. Color-coding was used to show words in the concepts that received **positive**, **negative** or **mixed** reactions.

-  Positive words
-  Mixed Reaction words
-  Negative words

## The Concept 2 products could be a valuable addition to Company products but must acknowledge the expertise of Moms too.



- Some Moms say the Concept 2 primary benefit would help them feel more confident and reassured about purchasing toddler feeding products.
  - Some say the Concept 2 primary benefit *"shows they care – its made by a whole team of people, not just one guy trying to make money."*
  - The Concept 2 primary benefit also reassures parents that *"they spent some time and tested it, they know it works."*
  - Using specialists gives the brand and products greater credibility.
- Others see the Concept 2 primary benefit as *"too scientific"* and too far removed from the day-to-day reality of a toddler's world.
  - Moms suggest that 'Moms and children' be included among the 'experts.' This tells parents *"you know it will work in the real world."*
  - Some would like to know that the experts are independent – this increases credibility.
  - It will be important that any products with the Concept 2 primary benefit perform as claimed or the credibility of both the Company brand and the Concept 2 primary benefit will be diminished.
- Product Preferences/expectations include:
  - A money back guarantee – which further demonstrates Company's confidence in its products
  - No increase in price due to the primary benefit
  - Age milestones and developmental stages (e.g., *"for crawlers, walkers or toddlers"*) information on packages
  - **Recommendation: this concept has potential, however, Company should include parents and children in the list of experts (e.g., "tested by parents and children and approved by experts") and, if possible, should include copy about experts being "independent."**

**This concept can be strengthened by adding Moms and children to the list of experts and highlighting experts' independence.**

Concept 2	
Strengths	Weaknesses
+ 'Primary Phrase' is seen as a guarantee that the products have been designed by " <i>people who know what they're doing</i> " and have been tested.	- 'Primary Phrase' sounds elitist to some and does not acknowledge that parents have expertise also.
+ 'Secondary phrase' gives some Moms confidence that the products will work as claimed.	- 'Secondary Phrase' leads some to believe that these experts are in Company's employ and so are not completely credible; "independent" is preferred.
+ Some appreciate the various specialties of the experts, perceiving that they cover the full range of child development.  + 'Specific Specialists' are seen as appropriate for feeding products.	- Some do not understand the role of each type of expert: " <i>what the heck is that type of specialist and what does that have to do with eating</i> " this makes them suspicious that the seal is just " <i>a ploy to raise prices.</i> "
+ 'Secondary features' are useful because they help Moms understand a child's development and choose appropriate products.	- Some say 'Secondary features' are meaningless because " <i>all children develop differently.</i> "  - Some prefer to have age milestones referred to in everyday language such as "for crawlers," "for walkers" and "for toddlers."
+ Some say the Concept 2 primary benefit will convince them that products will be more reliable and will work as advertised – a distinct advantage over many other products.	






## Introducing Concept 3 Toddler Feeding Products

---

*This page included the product concept shown in the focus groups*

This was the copy about the concept that was shown to focus group respondents. The concept was described in a **value-neutral** way that **highlighted** key benefits. The concept statement was short – about 3 – 5 sentences. Color-coding was used to show words in the concepts that received **positive**, **negative** or **mixed** reactions.

-  Positive words
-  Mixed Reaction words
-  Negative words

## This concept has potential, but as presented it is difficult for consumers to understand and believe.



- Some see these products as helping toddler eat independently.
  - The primary benefit will ensure that the toddler does not get frustrated “*chasing the bowl all over the tray.*”
  - The product will result in fewer messes because it will be harder for a toddler to dash a dish to the floor.
  - Some like the idea of a cup that includes the primary benefit but can still be picked up, saying it may result in fewer spills.
- Moms with more aggressive or very tidy toddlers see little value in this product.
  - Since the product is not stuck down, many say “*my kids will still move it no matter what.*”
  - Some do not see a need for this product since their children eat neatly and don’t attempt to knock dishes off of the table or high chair tray.
  - Moms are very confused by the method of sticking the product down. They do not understand how it works, whether it is dishwasher safe and whether it will leave marks on surfaces.
- Product Preferences/expectations include:
  - Sticking method cannot be removed from the product (concerns about choking.)
  - The product will work on all surfaces and will not leave marks
  - The product will remain sticky even after repeated dishwashing
  - **Recommendation: this concept has some potential, but may require consumers to test prototypes in order to fully understand it. Company may want to consider an in-home prototype test.**

**The concept can be improved by clearer explanations of how it works and answering frequent questions.**




Concept 3 Toddler Feeding Products	
Strengths	Weaknesses
+ A dish that 'employs the primary benefit' is seen as useful in helping the toddler eat independently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 'Sticking method' gives parents cause for concern. They wonder: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How long the method will last</li> <li>• What surfaces the dish will stick to</li> <li>• Whether the sticking method will leave marks on surfaces</li> <li>• If the sticking method will get dirty</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
+ 'Sticking method' is seen as useful by some Moms who envision that it will hold the bowl in place <i>"like a carpet pad."</i>	- 'Sticking method' causes confusion for others who do not understand how it will work and whether the child could remove it. There is also concern about a product with this sticking method being excessively heavy.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some say this product will have little affect on their aggressive eater who will <i>"just throw it anyway."</i></li> <li>- Others say their very tidy eaters don't have a problems with dishes and bowls sliding.</li> </ul>
	▪ Many say this idea is <i>"nothing new"</i> and see little benefit over existing products.

## Introducing Concept 4 Toddler Feeding Products

---

*This page included the product concept shown in the focus groups*

This was the copy about the concept that was shown to focus group respondents. The concept was described in a **value-neutral** way that **highlighted** key benefits. The concept statement was short – about 3 – 5 sentences. Color-coding was used to show words in the concepts that received **positive**, **negative** or **mixed** reactions.

-  Positive words
-  Mixed Reaction words
-  Negative words

## Concept 4 products have potential, but should be more thoroughly tested; durability must be communicated in a safe way.



- Some Moms (especially working Moms) “love” the convenience of the primary benefit.
  - No clean-up means this product saves time and effort.
  - This concept also helps Moms help their children feel more independent: *“you could have her pick the design, and she would feel like it is really her’s.”*
  - These products are seen as ideal for situations such as travel for play dates and for parties.
- Others see the products as “wasteful” and environmentally unfriendly. There are many questions about function and materials.
  - Many suggest products that can be re-used at least a few times to provide better value.
  - There is confusion regarding the “\_\_\_\_\_ coating” some are concerned about chemicals in food.
  - Moms are skeptical that cups can truly be spill proof: *“the lid may lock on, but they’ll just squeeze it and knock it off.”*
- Product Preferences/expectations include:
  - Licensed characters to encourage eating
  - Ability to use a few times for better value
  - Bowls and plates will have separated compartments
  - **Recommendation: this concept may have potential, however Company should reconsider how to convey durability (instead of “durability coating”). Licensed characters should also be pursued. In addition, Company should create prototypes for an in-home test of usability and durability.**

**Improve this concept by adding licensed characters, referring to 'food safe' plastic coating, and testing the durability of products.**




Concept 4 Toddler Feeding Products	
Strengths	Weaknesses
+ 'Primary benefit' and 'Secondary benefit' are positive to some because they suggest no clean up after and the products will be clean when opened.	- Some see 'Primary benefit' as a negative because products are environmentally unfriendly.
+ 'Tertiary benefit' helps ensure that products will be usable for toddlers.	- 'Tertiary benefit' is seen as poor value; many expect at least 3 – 4 uses.
+ 'Design benefit' can help encourage toddlers to eat	- 'Design benefit' sounds generic to some. They prefer licensed characters because their children prefer them.
+ 'Durability coating' leads some to believe these products will be strong enough for extended use <i>"it won't fall apart before she is done."</i>	- 'Durability coating' causes concern for some consumers who worry about plastics leaching into foods.
+ 'Lid-related benefit' tells Moms the cups will be less-likely to spill	- Some are skeptical of 'Lid-related benefit': <i>"he'll squish it and the lid will just pop off."</i>
+ 'Packaging benefit' is useful because <i>"I can just grab a pack to use for the day and go, I don't have to think about it"</i> saving time and "hassles" of packing feeding items.	- Some wonder this type of product can be sufficiently durable for use by toddlers  - Moms say they need more information about the 'lid benefit' (e.g., whether straw or sippy)
+ These products are considered ideal for out of home eating – travel, play dates and parties.	

## Introducing Concept 5 Toddler Feeding Products

---

*This page included the product concept shown in the focus groups*

This was the copy about the concept that was shown to focus group respondents. The concept was described in a **value-neutral** way that **highlighted** key benefits. The concept statement was short – about 3 – 5 sentences. Color-coding was used to show words in the concepts that received **positive**, **negative** or **mixed** reactions.

-  Positive words
-  Mixed Reaction words
-  Negative words

## Concept 5 products are another source of stress for Moms since toddler eating habits are unpredictable.



- Moms say they know how much to feed their toddlers, and the portion control products will simply add to their daily stress.
  - *"This would stress me out, there would be a fight at every meal – what if I don't fill every spot? My daughter would get upset."*
  - Moms also say their toddlers eat inconsistently: *"sometimes its vegetables all day, then only meat the next day, this is unrealistic."*
  - Some Moms say these products are *"an eating disorder waiting to happen – they will stress kids out."*

- A few see value in the product, suggesting that it will help prevent childhood obesity. However, most say the products are for other mothers.
  - Some suggest the products could be useful for new parents.
  - A few see value in the cups with markings to track milk consumption throughout the day
  - A few say the products *"would be fun and make healthy eating a game."*
  - **Recommendation: this concept receives strong negative reactions – Company should not proceed with this concept.**



## The concept has little potential and is not appealing to Moms.

Concept 5 Toddler Feeding Products	
Strengths	Weaknesses
+ Some say 'cup-related benefit' could help Moms track overall beverage consumption during the day (especially for milk).	- 'Portion-related benefit' is seen as overly-prescriptive and does not respect parents' knowledge of their own children.
+ Some see the products as helping to prevent childhood obesity and helping kids learn healthy eating habits.	- 'Cup-related benefit' – is seen as unrealistic since toddler beverage consumption varies greatly from day to day.
	- 'Plate-related benefit' stresses Moms out who say <i>"what if I didn't get just the right amount on?"</i>
	- For many this product is irrelevant because they are challenged to get their toddlers to eat anything at all.
	- Some say toddlers are too young for this product: <i>"they're just learning to eat!"</i>
	- Most say they would follow their own instincts rather than the markings on the products <i>"if they ask for more I'm not going to say no."</i>

## Concept 6 is poorly received.



- Concept 6 is mildly interesting to Moms, but functionality is far more important.
  - Moms say Concept 6's primary benefit is nice, but they will purchase the product that functions the best.
  - Many are confused by terminology used in the concept, especially 'term A' and 'term B.'
  - Some see Concept 6 as a negative because *"it's another thing I'll have to make sure I deal with – it's a hassle."*



# **Detailed Findings:**

## **Appendix**

## **The overall objective was to understand current use of toddler feeding products and explore opportunities for improvement.**

---

- Company's Toddler Care line, specifically the durables, has had minimal activity compared to the infant product line.
  - This could suggest a plateau in consumer satisfaction, or a forthcoming loss of interest in the current offerings.
- Through speaking with mothers about the toddler care business, Company would like to learn how they can revamp their offerings and provide 'ideal' products to consumers.
- Specific objectives of this research include:
  - Gauging overall use and knowledge of Company's toddler care business from mothers of this age group (including what they are currently using, for what purpose and for what occasions).
  - Understanding gaps and opportunities in the toddler care market
  - Determining what the ideal toddler care products consist of, and what elements consumers are currently missing in the market
  - Evaluating new product concepts to understand overall appeal, likes/dislikes and how closely they fit with the "ideal"

## **Project objectives were accomplished through focus groups with mothers of toddlers.**

---

- To achieve these objectives, four focus groups were conducted at a focus group facility in a major metropolitan area on February 30, 2008.
- Two groups included mothers of toddlers age x - y months and the remaining groups included mothers of toddlers age v - w months.
- Focus groups included:
  - A review of current toddler feeding products used, usage occasions and likes and dislikes of current products. Respondents also discussed their purchase process, perceptions of brands and transition to “big kids’ feeding products
  - A discussion of all characteristics of ideal toddler feeding products
  - Review of six toddler feeding product concepts
  - In two groups, discussion of related Company products

## Respondents included mothers of toddlers v - y months of age.

---

- Respondents were drawn from the focus group facilitie's database and met the following criteria:
  - Have toddlers age v - y months at home
  - Age x - y
  - A mix of Moms with one child and Moms with more than 1 child
  - A mix of age and gender of children (appropriate to the age guidelines for the particular group).