

Participant Information Sheet

For parents and whānau (focus groups/one-on-one discussions)

Study Title:	Parents' and Whānau Perspectives on Complementary Feeding in Aotearoa New Zealand		
Lead Investigator:	Dr Amy Lovell	Phone:	021 02059300
Locality:	Auckland	Ethics Ref:	AH30915

An invitation

You are invited to take part in a University of Auckland research study about starting solids (also known as complementary feeding) for babies.

Please read this information carefully.

You may talk about it with your whānau, family and friends if you wish.

You are welcome to ask any questions before deciding whether to take part.

Quick study overview

Who can take part?
Parents, caregivers, and whānau of babies aged 0–24 months.

What will I do?
One discussion one (focus group **or** one-to-one) about starting solids

Time
Up to 1 hour (plus travel)

Where
Online or in person (Auckland)

Your choice
Taking part in voluntary

Thank you!
\$50 voucher provided

Why are we doing this study?

Starting solid foods is an important time in a baby's growth and development.

This study is about listening to parents and whānau talk about their experiences of starting solid foods, including the foods they offer and the information they use when making feeding decisions.

By listening to these experiences, we hope to improve future research and information that supports children and families in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Why am I being asked?

You are being asked to take part because you are a parent or whānau member of a baby aged 0–24 months. Your baby or child may not yet have started solids or may have already started eating solid foods.

To take part, you must be 16 years or older and able to read and understand English well enough to take part in a discussion.

You do not need any special knowledge or experience to take part.

What will happen if I take part?

If you choose to take part, you can choose one of the following options:

- a focus group discussion, or
- a one-to-one discussion.

You only take part in one option. You will not be asked to do anything else.

A focus group is a small group discussion with about 4–6 parents or whānau members. Focus groups may be held in person or online, depending on participant preferences and practical arrangements.

A one-to-one discussion is an informal conversation between you and a researcher about your experiences of starting solid foods. Discussions can be done online, in person, or by phone, depending on what works best for you.

A researcher will help guide the discussion.

The discussion will:

- be about experiences of starting solid foods, including food choices and where people get information (for example, foods linked with iron)
- last up to one hour
- be held online or in person
- be audio recorded so it can be written down for research purposes

You will be asked to sign a consent form before taking part in the study.

There are no right or wrong answers.

We are interested in hearing about your experiences. You may bring a support person if you wish.

You will be asked to complete a short, optional form with general demographic information (such as your age, background, role as a caregiver and your baby's age) to help describe the group of people taking part. This information will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes.

If the discussion or interview is held online (e.g. Zoom or Microsoft Teams), only the audio will be recorded. You do not need to have your camera on if you do not wish to.

Do babies or children take part?

No.

This study is for adults only.

Your baby or child may be with you during the focus group or interview if needed.

They are not part of the study.

They will not be recorded.

No information will be collected about them.

Do I have to take part?

No. Taking part is voluntary.

You can:

- choose not to take part
- skip any questions
- stop taking part at any time

There will be no disadvantage if you choose not to take part or if you stop early.

Are there any risks?

This study is about everyday feeding experiences.

Some people may find it uncomfortable to talk about their experiences.

If this happens:

- you can pause
- you can skip questions
- you can stop at any time

Information about support services is included in this information sheet and can be shared again if you would like it.

Are there any benefits?

You may find value in sharing your experiences and hearing from others.

What we learn may help improve future research and information that supports parents and whānau during the early feeding period.

Will I receive anything for my time?

Yes. You will receive a NZD\$50 supermarket or general store voucher. Any mileage costs can be reimbursed with an MTA voucher, where applicable. You will receive these even if you choose to stop taking part early or skip questions.

Will my information be kept private?

Yes.

Your name will not be used in the study.

You will be given a study number instead.

The discussion will be audio recorded and written down.

Recordings and written notes will be kept secure.

Because focus groups involve other participants, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed.

We will ask everyone to respect each other's privacy.

All information will be stored securely on University of Auckland–managed systems, in line with university data security policies.

What happens to the information?

Audio recordings from interviews and focus groups will be transcribed (written down), and identifying details will be removed.

The research team will look for common themes across all discussions. Results will be reported in a way that means no individual can be identified.

If you take part in an interview or focus group, you may choose to receive a written transcript (a typed record of what was said during the discussion). If you request this, a copy of your transcript will be emailed to you and you will have up to 7 days to request corrections for accuracy or ask for specific statements to be removed. If no response is received within this timeframe, the transcript will be considered final.

All study information will be stored securely by the University of Auckland for 6 years, in line with university research requirements, or until the study and all related peer-reviewed publications and research outputs have been completed.

What if I change my mind?

You may withdraw (stop taking part) from the study without giving a reason.

For one-to-one interviews:

You may withdraw your data up until it has been de-identified. You may also request to review your interview transcript before it is finalised for analysis.

For focus groups:

You may withdraw from the study up until the focus group begins. Because focus groups involve discussion among several participants, it may not be possible to remove individual contributions once the discussion has taken place. After the focus group has occurred, your individual comments cannot be withdrawn.

Who is leading the research?

This study is being led by researchers from the University of Auckland.

Lead researcher

Dr Amy Lovell

Senior Lecturer, University of Auckland

Email: a.lovell@auckland.ac.nz

Researcher / study contact

Dr Jeanette Rapson

Post-doctoral Fellow, University of Auckland

Email: jeanette.rapson@auckland.ac.nz | 0210773419

Who is funding the research?

This research has received funding from the Ministry for Primary Industries Sustainable Food and Fibre Futures (SFFF) and Meat Industry Association Innovation Ltd as part of the Infant Nutrition Workstream of the Tomorrow Programme. The funders have no role in the overall study design, data collection, analysis, interpretation of findings, or publication.

Support services

If taking part in this study raises concerns or feelings you would like support with, you may find it helpful to talk with someone you trust, such as a family member, friend, or whānau member. Taking part in this study is not a replacement for health or medical care.

You may also wish to contact your Well Child Tamariki Ora provider (such as Plunket) or your general practitioner (GP).

Cultural support

For Māori participants

You may wish to talk with your kaumātua or a trusted whānau member.

You can also contact Te Kupenga Hauora Māori at the University of Auckland for advice and support.

Phone: 09 373 7599

For Pasifika participants

You may wish to talk with a trusted family or community member.

You can also contact the free national Pacific helpline, Ola Lelei.

Phone: 0800 652 535

Questions, concerns, or complaints

If you have questions about:

- **the study** – you can contact the research team to ask questions or talk things through.
- **your rights as a participant** – if you have concerns about your rights or how the study is being carried out, you can contact | Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee (AHREC) | Email: ahrec@auckland.ac.nz | Phone: 09 373 7599 ext. 83711

To speak to someone not involved in the study – you can contact an independent health and disability advocate | Email: advocacy@hdc.org.nz | Phone: 0800 555 050

If you would like immediate emotional support, you can contact **Lifeline** on **0800 543 354** or text **HELP to 4357**, available 24/7 in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information.

Approved by the Auckland Health Research Ethics Committee on 06/03/26 for three years. Reference Number: AH30915.