#### ELLYN SATTER'S DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY IN FEEDING

Children develop eating competence step-by-step throughout the growingup years when they are fed according to a stage-appropriate division of responsibility. At every stage, parents take leadership with feeding and let the child be self-directed with eating.

### The division of responsibility for infants:

- The parent is responsible for *what*.
- The child is responsible for *how much* (and everything else).

Parents choose breast- or formulafeeding, help the infant be calm and organized, then feed smoothly, paying attention to information coming from the baby about timing, tempo, frequency, and amounts.

# The division of responsibility for older babies making the transition to family food

- The parent is still responsible for *what*, and is *becoming* responsible for *when* and *where* the child is fed.
- The child is *still* and *always* responsible for *how much* and *whether to* eat the foods offered by the parent.

Based on *what* the child can *do*, not on how *old* s/he is, parents guide the child's transition from nipple feeding through semi-solids, then thick-and-lumpy food, to finger food at family meals.

## The division of responsibility for toddlers through adolescents

- The parent is responsible for *what*, *when*, *where*.
- The child is responsible for how much and whether.

Fundamental to parents' jobs is trusting children to decide *how much* and *whether* to eat. If parents do their jobs with *feeding*, children do their jobs with *eating*:

#### Parents' feeding jobs:

- Choose and prepare the food
- Provide regular meals and snacks
- Make eating times pleasant
- Show children what they have to learn about food and mealtime behavior
- Be considerate of children's food inexperience without catering to likes and dislikes
- Not let children have food or beverages (except for water) between meal and snack times
- Let children grow up to get bodies that are right for them

### Children's eating jobs:

- Children will eat
- They will eat the amount they need
- They will learn to eat the food their parents eat
- They will grow predictably
- They will learn to behave well at mealtime

