



RESIDENT New York

parenting

Ga-Ga Goods

After Feeding Five of Their Own, Sisters Create Way for Parents to Make Baby Food

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Cheryl Tallman grew up in a suburban household where all her siblings took turns making dinner one night a week for the family.

She recalls those days fondly as she paints those memories into a picture that foreshadows her current endeavor.

Two years ago, after giving birth to her son, Spencer, she received a handful of recipes from her younger sister, Joan Ahlers, in New Mexico for homemade baby food. Ahlers explained how she made many of these for her four children, who gave her a four-star smiling-and-clapping rating.

As a New York businesswoman, Tallman thought homemade baby food would be a great idea to market. Now living in Michigan with her husband and son, Tallman packed not only her savvy personality but her experience in promotions to turn "The Fresh Start Kit" into a huge success.

Currently, Tallman serves as the CEO

of Fresh Baby, named in part by a former nanny who called Spencer the Fresh Kid. Ahlers is the director of sales.

To create Fresh Baby, Tallman sat for hours behind a computer writing a variety of recipes for fruits and vegetables while keeping an on-the-go professional in mind who has so little time to spare.

"Since people, particularly in New York, are hardly home, this kit is perfect for them to use because each recipe takes no more than 30 minutes to prepare and only requires fresh produce, a blender, and a microwave," Tallman said.

The 113-page cookbook contains 49 pages of recipes that use such foods as strawberries, yams, cantaloupes, pears, butternut squash, apples, and green peas.

Every food is listed separately by page and has six step-by-step cooking instructions, a layout on how to measure a baby portion, a nutritional value chart, and the age parents should start feeding their baby each particular food.

"What makes Fresh Baby so unique is the product promotes good eating habits for infants as early as six months

old, when babies can begin eating things other than milk or formula," Tallman explained.

While most parents begin to teach kids about good eating habits between four and five years old, Tallman says that the majority of those kids have already developed eating habits that are hard to break.

Tallman relies on health-care specialists for the latest medical information when she prepares her recipes. According to the experts, parents should give their babies the same food for approximately three days to make sure the child is not allergic to the prepared item.

Not all allergic reactions are noticed right away, since a baby's immune system is still in the process of developing.

Tallman learned it is difficult to give a child new foods they are not accustomed to because by four and five years old, a child has established a set menu of foods they will eat.

More often, they tend to like treats such as cookies and candy.

"Fruits are sweet and loaded with nutrients," Tallman said. "If a child eats a lot of them at an early age, it will remain with them as he/she grows."

According to Tallman, Fresh Baby recipes are healthier and cost a lot less than premade jarred food.

Tallman calculated that the average cost to feed an infant premade food from a grocery store during the first eight months is between \$300 and



Fresh Kits: Making baby food at home

\$600. On the Fresh Baby plan, Tallman spent \$55 and knew all the ingredients contained in Spencer's food.

The Fresh Start Kit contains the *Fresh Start Cookbook*, a 22-minute demonstration video, a Nutrition Tips Guide Sheet, and two "ice trays" used to measure a baby serving size.

Tallman notes another major difference in making your own baby food is that kids on this plan eat more of a variety of foods because Fresh Baby promotes color, which gives children a variety of different vitamins and nutrients depending on the food's hue.

The kits cost \$34.95 and are available in more than 150 retailers across the country.

This multitasking mother, still new to the baby-product world, is already expanding the Fresh Start Kits into the European and Canadian markets and also has an eight-minute spot making its debut on QVC in July.

For more information or to order a kit online, visit myfreshbaby.com.