

Every day in YourTown, we spotlight a different Lorain County community:

TODAY: Avon/Avon Lake

TUESDAY: Amherst/Vermilion/South Amherst

WEDNESDAY: Wellington/Oberlin

THURSDAY: North Ridgeville

FRIDAY: Grafton/LaGrange/Columbia

SATURDAY: Lorain/Sheffield/Sheffield Lake

SUNDAY: Elyria

YOURTOWN AVON & AVON LAKE

WWW.CHRONICLET.COM



CARL SULLENBERGER / CHRONICLE

Julianne Hood of Avon Lake with the tools of her trade and her book, "The Basic Baby Food Cookbook."

Baby food made simple

Avon Lake mom publishes guide to nutritious meals that little ones won't spit up

LeeAnn Mullen

The Chronicle-Telegram

AVON LAKE — If you have kids, you've almost certainly been there.

It's lunch time, so like a dutiful parent, you pop open a jar of baby food — say, peas and carrots — in hopes of getting some healthy food into your little one.

Fat chance.

That baby — your baby — wrinkles up his or her little nose and makes that unmistakable, "Not a chance, Mom!" face before spitting it everywhere.

That's where Julianne Hood of Avon Lake comes in.

Hood is trying to help bewildered parents overcome this all-too-common scenario with her self-published book, "The Basic Baby Food Cook-

MEET THE AUTHOR

Meet Julianne Hood at 7:45 p.m. Oct. 1 at the Westlake Prince of Peace Church; at 2:30 p.m. Nov. 4 at Cedars on the Green Health Center, University Heights; at 7 p.m. Nov. 7 at the Medina Early Childhood PTA or from 1 to 5 p.m. Nov. 18 at the Ohio Authors Book Fair, Shaker Heights Public Library in Shaker Heights.

book" (AuthorHouse, 2007).

As a mother of three and a foster parent of many, Hood wrote the book to assist parents and grandparents alike in getting their young children off to an early start of healthy eating habits.

"If your children learn to love vegetables early on, they'll love them later in life,

too," Hood said.

She said she learned that reintroducing foods repeatedly is a key element to getting your child to like vegetables.

"On average, it takes eight or nine tries before a child grows accustomed to the taste of a new food. Just because they don't like it on the first or second try doesn't mean they won't like it later on," she said. "Learning to appreciate different flavors takes time."

Organic produce is optional, she said.

"Since you peel the produce in baby food preparation, organic fruits and vegetables aren't as important as they would be if you were feeding your child a whole fruit with the skin on," she said. "But you should do whatever you

feel comfortable doing."

The book, which was released in June, features simple, easy-to-follow recipes with ingredients that are already found in your refrigerator.

"Anyone can make these recipes. I've actually been criticized for how simple they are," she said, laughing.

The recipes are organized into chapters by children's ages. Some of the tempting treats include Apple Pear Peach Medley, Broccoli Sweet Potato Barley, Carrot Zucchini Pasta and Peaches and Cream Cereal.

The recipes are also very cost-effective, as all items are made in bulk and then frozen.

"The average jarred food costs 50 cents, as compared with about 5 cents per serving

when you make it at home," she said.

Hood will be making several appearances throughout the area over the next few months. She presents at baby showers and PTA meetings and teaches Baby Food 101 classes at no charge.

"I want to let people know that this is what I love to do, and there is never any charge for my services," she said.

Anyone interested can visit www.thebasicbabyfoodcookbook.com for ordering instructions, local appearance schedules, and more information about Hood. The book can be purchased at Barnes & Noble, Borders and other local book stores.

Contact LeeAnn Mullen at 329-7155 or metro@chroniclet.com.