

# SPEECH AND LANGUAGE

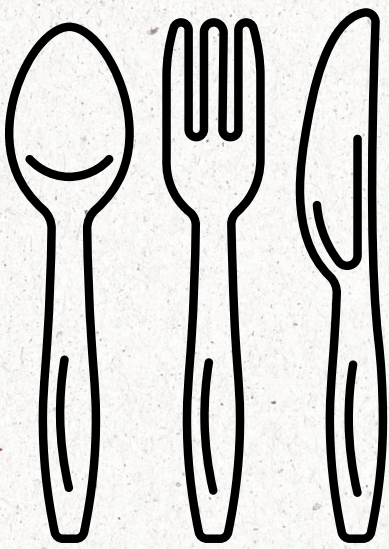
## MEALTIME

Encouraging language development at the dinner table

### 1. CREATE A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

What makes mealtime enjoyable for you? Who was at the table?

Serve meals 'family style' - put everything on the table and let your child choose what they add and how much they take!



### 2. BUILD A ROUTINE

Children require 3 meals and 2-3 snacks a day

Allot 20-30 minutes for meals, and 10-15 minutes for snacks

Remove everything (except water) after max time and say, "X is over, we will have snack later!"

### 3. TRANSITIONS

Give lots of notice prior to mealtime... eg., "You are playing blocks, we will have supper in 5 minutes"

Join in on the activity and transition to the table with your child

Let your child know that they can keep playing after they eat



### LITERACY AND MEALS

Use a placemat with your child's name on it. Talk about the letters!

Chat with your child to help them practice their conversation skills

If you're at a restaurant, encourage your child to order their own food  
Use fun describing words to talk about how the food tastes, smells, or feels!

You decide:

WHAT  
WHEN & WHERE they eat

Children decide:

IF & HOW MUCH they eat

### MEALTIME ROUTINE



- wash hands
- offer choice of what plate/bowl/cup child wants to use
- sit at the table
- start eating
- put dishes in sink
- get ready for bathtime