

Meal-times Routine for Children Birth To Two

Personal, Social and Emotional Development	Physical Development	Communication and Language	Literacy	Mathematics	Understanding the World	Expressive Arts and Design
What adults provide and What adults do						
<p>Be positive about food when serving it.</p> <p>Be aware that children are learning about their preferences and note how children respond when offered new foods.</p> <p>Serve from table so children can see foods and indicate what they would like.</p> <p>Provide small mealtime groups so children do not have to wait too long to be served.</p> <p>Encourage children's independence.</p>	<p>Helping to fetch the trolley and lay table.</p> <p>Provide suitable/ appropriate cutlery and plates/bowls etc. (depending on child's stage of development).</p> <p>Develop routines around washing hands before eating.</p> <p>Provide accessible mirrors, flannels and towels.</p> <p>Support children to serve them-selves or pass things to each other.</p>	<p>Talking about what's needed e.g. spoons, cup, and bibs.</p> <p>Encourage conversations during mealtimes.</p> <p>Engage in close 1:1 conversations.</p> <p>Respond verbally to children's non-verbal signs, signals & noises.</p> <p>Note and respond to the gestures and words babies / toddlers use to indicate what they would like to eat.</p>	<p>Singing songs and rhymes.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for listening and responding.</p> <p>Allow children to mark-make using their food and drink.</p>	<p>Talking about size & shape e.g., "The spaghetti is very long" "The peas are small and round" "Today I am cutting the bread into triangle shapes".</p> <p>Encourage children to see that each person needs "1 plate, 1 knife, 1 fork etc."</p> <p>Talking about quantity "We have a lot of potatoes today" "We need to ask the cook for some more bread".</p>	<p>Naming and learning about foods, where they come from (at age appropriate level), and who likes what.</p> <p>Learn about hot & cold, what happens when certain foods mix together.</p> <p>Provide opportunities for children to ask questions.</p> <p>Learn about why we wash hands before eating.</p>	<p>Exploring the colour / textures/smell of foods.</p> <p>Using/ creating fun rhymes eg, "yummy, yummy in my tummy".</p> <p>Imaginary fun games eg, "I'm eating frog's eyes" (peas).</p> <p>Give children time to use their senses to explore foods.</p>
What children learn						
<p>Enjoying being part of a group, and developing relationships with carers/peers.</p> <p>Becoming confident to make choices, recognising self and others.</p> <p>Independence in self-help skills.</p>	<p>Develop physical skills needed for feeding themselves using eating implements.</p> <p>Growing awareness of their physical needs regarding hunger and thirst.</p>	<p>Develop ability to gesture/talk about food and their dietary needs and preferences.</p> <p>Develop conversation in an informal situation.</p> <p>Develop new vocabulary.</p>	<p>Words to songs and rhymes.</p> <p>Develop mark-making skills.</p> <p>Encouragement to use words, sounds and gestures.</p>	<p>Know that things exist, even when out of sight.</p> <p>Develop an awareness of numbers and shapes.</p> <p>Saying some counting words randomly.</p> <p>Begin to organise and categories objects.</p>	<p>Anticipate and learn about routines of the day and how these routines affect them.</p>	<p>Respond to different textures and tastes.</p>