

Mealtime Jobs

It is helpful to clearly understand your jobs and your child's jobs during mealtime. When we know our mealtime jobs, mealtime can be more enjoyable with less conflict.

What is the caregiver's job before and during mealtime?

Your job as the caregiver is to decide what foods to offer for meals and snacks, when your child will eat, and where your child will eat.

You will:

- Decide what to make for the meal
- Make the food
- Keep the mealtime positive and enjoyable
- Do what you want your child to do (sit down, use utensils, eat healthy foods)
- Support your child to explore new foods
- Be sensitive to your child's feelings about new foods
- Help your child try new foods
- Avoid giving your child only their favorite foods
- Have your child eat only during the meal and snack times you choose
- Avoid making comments on your child's weight.



What is the child's job during mealtime?

Your child's job is to decide if they want to eat and how much to eat. Having consistent meal and snack times helps your child eat well. With your help, mealtimes can get easier.

Most children will:

- Eat when they are hungry and stop when they are full
- Eat the amount they need to grow
- Learn to eat different kinds of foods
- Learn how to behave during meals
- Take part in the mealtime routines and rituals in their home

