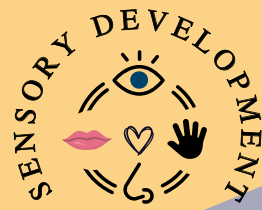




Collaboration with North Carolina Early Learning Sensory Support Program

MEALTIME



SUPPORTING EXPLORATION AND SENSORY DEVELOPMENT

Children with vision impairments learn best through hands-on experiences. Touching, moving, listening, and interacting with objects and people helps build their understanding of how things work and connect to the people and things around them. Everyday routines—like getting dressed, mealtimes, or bathtime—offer consistent, familiar moments to explore, communicate, and make sense of the world around them.

Prepare your child by telling them what you are going to do **before** you do it.



PREPARE THE ENVIRONMENT

- Notice and adjust room lighting and sound.
- Provide wait time for your child to respond.
- Remember to think about using your child’s best visual field.
- Think about opportunities to use visual contrast.

WHAT TO SAY

WHAT TO TRY



“Let’s put your bib on, it’s crinkly.”

Put your child’s bib on and help them feel it.

“Beep, I heard the microwave.”

Take your child to the microwave and help them open it.

“Your red cup is on the right.”

Give a touch/sound cue to help your child find their cup.

“Your banana smells yummy. It’s squishy.”

Hold the food to their nose to smell, touch, and eat.

“You’re having a popsicle. It’s cold and wet.”

Let your child hold and feel the popsicle.

“All done, let’s wash your hands!”

Clean your child’s hands.

WHAT TO TEACH

- Colors
- Textures
- Locations
- Mealtime objects
- Foods/drinks
- Smells
- Hungry/thirsty
- Temperature
- More/all done
- Appliances
- Sounds
- Taste

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

- Facial expressions
- Licking lips
- Widening eyes, eye contact
- Reaching/pushing food away
- Making or imitating sounds or words



End mealtime the **same** way each time so your child learns when they are done.



Family, Infant and Preschool Program of the J. Iverson Riddle Developmental Center

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