



Supporting Positioning & Participation During Mealtime

Mealtimes are an important part of a child's day, but they can be challenging for children with complex needs who may require extra support. Try the ideas below to help your child participate during mealtimes.

Help Your Child Join In at Mealtimes

- Place your hands over your baby's to help them hold their bottle.
- Try different breastfeeding positions to find what works best for you and your baby.
- Modify a highchair using rolled-up towels or pool noodles for side support.
- Ensure a solid surface under your child's feet by adding a footrest or stacking boxes/books.

If your child needs additional support, talk to your service provider about assistive technology options in your area.

Make Mealtime a Fun Learning Experience

- Let your child explore food when introducing solids. This may include touching, smelling, or playing with the food.
- Talk about the food's colors, shapes, textures, and smells.
- Eat together when possible. Mealtime can be a wonderful social experience, even if you're eating different foods.

Engage Your Child in Mealtime

- Let your child help bring dishes to the counter or table.
- Use tools like a stool, tower, gait trainer, stander, or activity chair to position your child at counter height.

- Offer safe kitchen items (like bowls and spoons) so your child can help stir, bang or chop.
- Position younger children safely nearby and describe what you're doing as you cook.

Always supervise your child during mealtime.