

FOUNDATIONS FOR
families



Promoting excellence in early childhood education
to support families and strengthen communities.



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Foundations for Families is a woman-owned consulting, training and technical assistance company that provides services to the birth to eight early education and care community.

MISSION

Foundations for Families supports families and strengthens communities by promoting excellence in systems of early education, community based organizations and individual service providers.

VISION

Foundations for Families supports the highest aspirations of Head Start and Early Head Start Programs and early childhood education to ensure more infants and toddlers, especially the most vulnerable, have access to the highest quality early learning.

Today's Trainer: **Julie Weatherington**



Family Style Dining

Best practice for today's early childhood environment

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Agenda

Family Style Dining



Welcome and Introduction



Understanding family style dining; **What, Why, How & Who**



The key's to success



Exploratory center activity



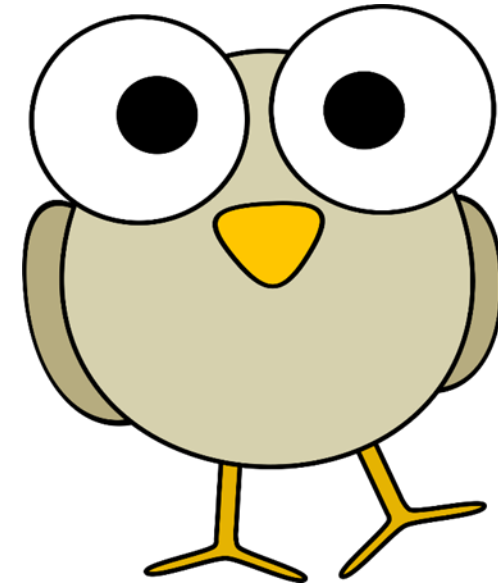
Feeding Phrases



Putting it all together



Reflection and action planning



Think about your childhood:

What is something unique about your family or upbringing that may surprise the group?



Sensory Activity: Mealtime Memory



- Close your eyes for a few minutes and think about your favorite place to eat. This can be a current place or a place from your childhood. What do you:

- See?
- Hear?
- Smell?
- Think about?
- Feel?

Sensory Activity: Mealtime Memory

Now, close your eyes again and do the same thing, but this time think about feeding a classroom of infants, toddlers or preschoolers. What do you:

- See?
- Hear?
- Smell?
- Think about?
- Feel?





Family Style Dining is **Best Practice**

Family Style Dining (FSD) enriches learning while building relationships and enhancing development

WHAT is Family Style Dining?



FSD = A dining experience where:

- The children and adult staff eat at the table together in a relaxed atmosphere.
- The children serve themselves from appropriately-sized bowls and pitchers and assist with cleaning up after the meal.
- Conversation at the table adds to the mealtime environment and provides opportunities for informal modeling of appropriate eating behaviors, communication about eating, and imparting nutrition learning experiences.

Characteristics of Family-Style Dining



- Children help set the table
- Child-size tables, utensils, and serving dishes are utilized
- Food is passed in small containers
- Beverages are served in small pitchers
- Children serve themselves
- Adults sit at the table with children and role model by eating the same foods
- Children engage in conversation

Family-Style Dining with 2 year olds



Why Family Style Dining (FSD)?

Mealtimes

- Most Early Childhood Centers serve breakfast, lunch and a snack (sometimes two) every day.
- This means **most children receive 75% of their daily nutrition in the day care setting.**

Why is FSD Important?

- Enriches a child's learning environment
- Gives children the opportunity to take an active role in their feeding
- Creates a unique opportunity for us to model healthy food choices and table manners
- Supports child development
 - Physical
 - Social
 - Emotional
 - Social
- Builds Language

Your Turn...



Take a few minutes to talk to your neighbor about reasons **why** each of the following areas are an important in establishing good nutritional practices in the ECE classroom.

- **Role models**
- **Establishing eating rituals and routines**
- **Healthy foods – healthy attitudes**
- **Balance of active/quite play**





Motor Development

- Small
- Large
- Oral

FSD

Supports Child Development

- Passing out plates, tipping a pitcher of milk, and lifting a serving spoon of food offer lots of practice.
- Learning to use serving utensils, such as tongs, allows children to develop fine motor skills.
- Children need to balance to stay in their chairs, which strengthens core muscles.
- Oral motor skills are developed when children learn to drink from a glass.



Social Development

FSD

Supports Child Development

- FSD provides teaching opportunities for sharing, turn taking, and table manners.
- Children learn empathy and how to recognize and respond to others' needs.
- As children talk with their peers and adults at meals, they practice social etiquette behaviors, such as saying “please” and “thank you”, and learn the art of conversation and how important these are for a pleasant mealtime experience.
- Adult role modeling of both manners and conversation skills is fundamental to FSD



Language Development

FSD

Supports Child Development

- Mealtimes conversations develop children's language and can support a language-rich environment.
- Using words and sentences describing the flavor, texture, color, or temperature of a food enriches children's vocabulary.
- Talk about topics that interest the children in your program!



Emotional Development

FSD

Supports Child Development

- FSD can boost a child's self confidence through trying new things and mastering new skills.
- Getting food from the serving bowl to their plate is a reason to celebrate!
 - "I did it!" are important words for children to say.
- Waiting their turn for food to be passed around helps children practice self-regulation.
- Children learn independence when they help to set the table, serve themselves, and clear the table.

Getting Ready for Family Style Dining

Preparing the Staff





Getting Staff Ready for FSD

- It's important that staff are prepared to:
 - Encourage self-feeding practices
 - Arrange seating to support skills
 - Assess children's mealtime skills
 - Integrate Meal Service Practice into other activities



Provider's Role in FSD

- **Display appropriate dining manners**
- **Make each moment a teachable moment**
 - Help expand children's language skills
- **Educate and integrate**
 - Educate children on the various foods and proper ways to eat and serve
 - Integrate the information learned into your every day activities

Tips for Dealing with Messes



This video comes from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Tools for FSD

- **Wide lip bowls and platters**
- **Measuring cups or short handled hard serving spoons**
- **Age and developmentally appropriate:**
 - Cups
 - Small pitchers
 - Plates
 - Spoons
 - Small tongs
- **Cleanup supplies**

Child Size Equipment

- **Developmentally appropriate equipment allows children to:**
 - Develop and enhance fine motor skills to grasp, hold, and manipulate small objects and tools
 - Improve hand-eye coordination skills



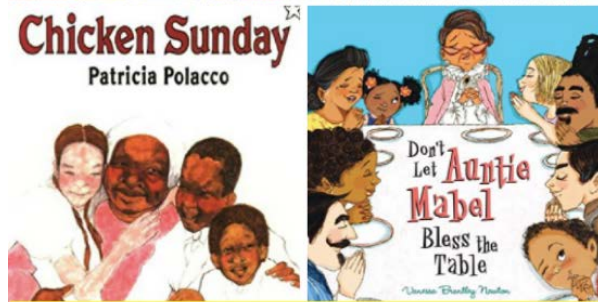
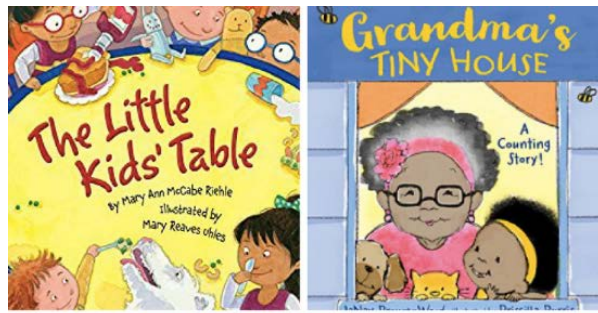
Getting Ready for Family Style Dining

Preparing the Children



Getting Children Ready for FSD

- To be successful with family style meal service, it's important that children:
 - Learn and develop mealtime skills
 - Practice self-feeding



*Multicultural Children's Books
About
Sunday Dinner*

Integrating Family Style Dining into Daily Activities

- Daily transitions and routines
- Dramatic play
- Small motor experiences
- Sand and water play
- Literacy and music/movement activities





Add to Exploratory Centers

- Housekeeping: Child sized utensils for pretend play
- Water Tables: Cups, spoons, bowls and pitchers available for use
- Outdoor: Practice using forks and spoon to scoop in the garden or sand



Housekeeping Center

- **Housekeeping is the most common exploratory center in which children engage in pretend play.**
- **Children naturally demonstrate family-style dining in this area.**
- **Make this area family-friendly!**
 - Use household items such as healthy food containers from families to promote diversity and parent participation

Create a Mealtime Environment that Promotes Learning and Exploration

Phrases that Hinder

- “You have to eat that”
- “Do not leave the table until everything is finished”
- “Carli, look at Maria. She ate all of her bananas and you did not.”
- “You may not have seconds, we don’t have enough to give them to everyone.”
- “I’m going to tell your mom you weren’t a good eater today at school.”

Phrases that Help

- “These radishes are crunchy! What other vegetable is crunchy?”
- “This is a kiwi. It is sweet. What fruits do you like that are sweet?”
- “What should you do when your stomach is full from eating?”
- “Thank you for trying a new vegetable. It is ok that you did not like it”



Getting Your Program Ready for FSD

- Ensure the appropriate furniture
- Gather right sized equipment
- Implement gradually
 - Introduce in circle time
 - Daily Activities
 - Play
 - Story time
 - Movement

FSD at Home

- **Encourage families to practices family-style dining at home**
- **You can promote family-style dining by:**
 - Offering special days that parents can participate in eating family-style (Mother's/Father's Day Breakfast, Back to School Night, etc.)
 - Sending home easy/quick recipes that allow less time for cooking and more time for eating together at the table
 - Taking photos of children eating family-style at the program and send home a conversation starter for 'table talk'

Tips for Success



TIPS for FAMILY STYLE DINING SUCCESS

- **Follow the Same Routine**
- **Adult Involvement is Key**
- **Be Prepared for Mistakes**
- **Make Clean-Up Easy**
- **Quiet Transition Activity**

3:20 / 4:09



Family Style Mealtime Routine

Mealtime Routine Sample

1. Call for helpers - children with daily jobs.
2. Transition activity – song.
3. Bathroom and hand wash break.
4. Children sit at the table as food is placed.
5. Teachers sit and eat with children.
6. Children and teachers dispose of plates.
7. Transition – children choose quiet books or puzzles as others finish eating.

Family Style Mealtime Checklist

Mealtime Routine

- Teachers' routine allows for food to be prepared and ready at the designated mealtime.

Appropriate size bowls and serving utensils

- Food is served in bowls of appropriate size that children can lift and pass.
- Serving bowls are made of materials that do not conduct heat and are not too hot to pass.
- Small size scoops, one-piece plastic tongs, and short-handled hard plastic serving spoons are used.

Mealtime expectations to review with children

- We eat together at the table.
- We all come to the table at the same time.
- We wait until everyone is ready before we begin.
- We serve ourselves and pass food to each other.
- We use inside voices.

Passing food practices for children

- Pass with both hands.
- Keep food over the table when passing it.
- Hold the bowl by the sides (to keep fingers out food).

Family Style Practice Activities

Serving utensils practice (small group activity or set up a learning center in classroom)

- Practice with scoops, tongs, and short-handled hard plastic serving spoons.

Pouring practice (set up water table or learning center in classroom)

- Pretend practice.
- Practice with dry liquid such as sand or beans.
- Practice with water and pouring into child-size cups.

Cleanup practice (dramatic play or a small group activity)

- Pretend cleanup with sponge or cloth.
- Pretend floor cleanup with mini-mop or cloth.
- Practice cleanup of table and floor with water.

National Food Service Management Institute, (2011). *Happy mealtimes for healthy kids*. University, MS: Author.

Nemours.

Mealtime Routine Sample Handout

Are You Ready for Family Style Dining?

Some questions to consider...



- How can you encourage FSD?
- Whose support is needed?
- Who is affected?
- Where will FSD take place?
- What steps are needed?
- What equipment or furniture is needed?
- When will you start the process?
- What gradual steps will be taken?

Sample FSD Policies

- **At ABC Child Care, we support family-style dining by:**
 - Role-modeling positive healthy eating behaviors in the presence of children
 - Sitting with children at the table and eating the same meals and snacks
 - Encouraging children to try developmentally-appropriate servings of new foods
 - Providing child-size tables, utensils, and serving dishes at mealtime
 - Providing opportunities outside of mealtime to strengthen pouring and scooping skills that can be utilized during family-style dining

Reflection and Action Planning



Tying Temperament and Communication Together

Gather in your Animal - Temperament Groups

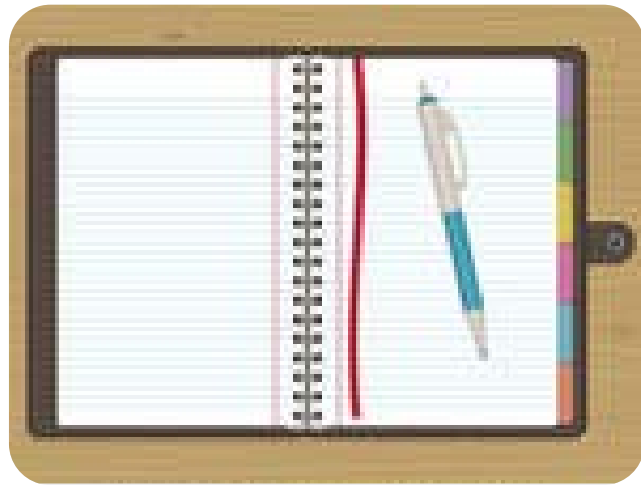
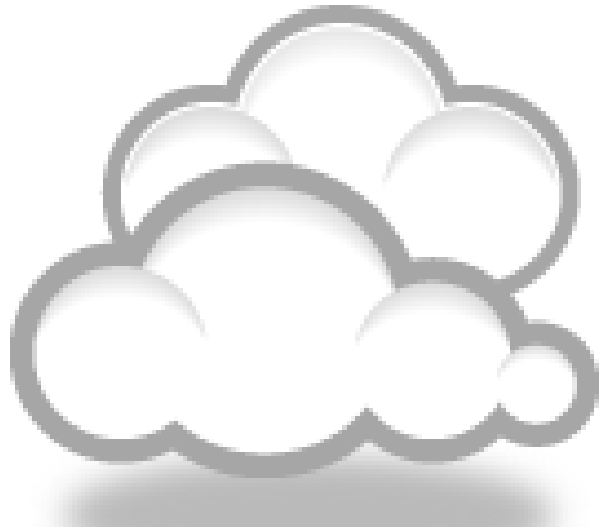
Looking at the **Rules of Good Communication**, Answer the following question;

- **Where are the challenges?**
- **Where will you naturally excel?**

Rules of Good Communication

1. Be present
2. Be brief
3. Use open-ended questions
4. Don't be afraid to be honest
5. Don't equate your experience with theirs
6. LISTEN
7. Seek to understand

Reflect and Action Plan



- What questions do you have about the material we discussed?
- Share one strength you were able to recognize in your work and practices.
 - In the children you care for.
 - Families you help support.
- What strategies did you see or hear that might be useful in your role and work?

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Thank you for your participation
in today's workshop!

Please take a few minutes to fill out
an evaluation.