

Cues for Positive Communication

Staff working in the child care setting can use the following examples when interacting with children. Doing so will create a pleasant mealtime environment and encourage healthy eating behaviors.

Occasion	Goal	Example Phrases <i>Most applicable for pre-plated meal service</i>	Additional examples for Family Style Meal Service if the other examples do not apply
Menu Introduction and Greeting	Create a welcoming atmosphere	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Hello! We are looking forward to having [entrée] for lunch today!” • “Today is [entrée] day. We think you will like it!” • “Here is our meal today (show picture menu). We hope you like it!” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The menu today is _____. Remember to give everything a try!” • Be sure to use good manners at lunch today by using “please and thank you.”
Serving	Promote healthy foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Welcome to lunch! We have a tasty [entrée] today. Here is some for you to try!” • “The [vegetable] goes well with the [entrée].” • “The [fruit] is perfectly ripe.” • “If you are not sure about [food item], how about trying a small taste?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Welcome to lunch! We have a tasty [entrée] today. Would you like some?” • “Here is a menu (show picture menu). What would you like today? What looks the best to you?” • “You can move the serving bowl closer to your plate.” • “Let’s all help each other pass the food around the table.”
Integrating Learning	Teach basic food and nutrition concepts, recognize feelings and behaviors around satiety and hunger	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Eating [fruit/vegetable] will help give our bodies lots of energy.” • “What color is this [fruit/vegetable]?” • “What do you like about the [entrée name]?” • “How many [fruit slices] are there?” • “Who can tell me how this [fruit/vegetable] grew?” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Don’t forget to take the [fruit, vegetable].” • “You forgot milk! How about getting some now?” • If children ask for additional food, ask: “Is your tummy telling you that you’re hungry?”