



## EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES TO BUILD VOCABULARY

### TIPSHEET-7: meal times

Building your child's vocabulary does not always have to involve setting up separate activities and games in your already very busy lives. One of the most powerful ways to build your child's vocabulary is through your natural interactions together during your day to day activities and routines.

**Meal times:** We all have to eat and most, though not all children, are highly motivated by food. Mealtimes provide us with many opportunities to build vocabulary through commenting or talking about what is happening in the environment as it occurs.

**Examples of vocabulary you can use during meal times** There are a huge range of words you can use during meal times which include nouns (names); verbs (actions); adjectives and adverbs (descriptive language). Below are some examples of suggested vocabulary which you can use during meal times. Of course the lists can be endless, so use whatever words/vocabulary that fits for you and your child. I have chosen a vocabulary of nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs that relate together. For example, when giving your child **pasta**, you can tell them to "**blow**" as it is "**too hot**"!! Remember if your child is not yet talking or only has a limited vocabulary make sure you keep your language model simple (single words or 2 words together).

#### NOUNS

Bowl/plate/spoon  
Mummy/Daddy  
food items  
(eg. name what your child is eating)

Cup/bottle  
drink  
tummy  
face/mouth  
hands/fingers  
chair/high chair/table

#### VERBS

open/hold/"bang-bang"/stir  
cooking/baking/mixing/making  
eat/chew/blow/more/help  
drop/fall/all gone

drinking/thirsty  
pour/more/all gone  
rub/pat/tickle  
open/eat/drink/wash  
squish/play/touch/wash  
sit/climb/help

#### ADJECTIVES/ADVERBS

big/little/colours/loud/in/out  
fun/don't like/in/out/hot/cold  
"yum-yum"/hot/cold/"yuk"  
"uh-oh"/messy/count  
mouthfuls

big/little/colours  
in/full/empty  
full/empty/hungry  
Clean/dirty  
Clean/dirty  
up/down/on/off

**REMEMBER:** Children learn best through rhyme and repetition, so don't be afraid to repeat the same word over and over again!!! Make up your own silly little rhymes such as;

**"yummy-yummy, food in my tummy"**

**"one, two three, eat like me".**

It can take some time for children to learn new words. If your child is not naturally imitating the words don't worry. Keep talking and providing an ongoing commentary as this is an appropriate technique to use all day long every day (if you feel like you can manage it). If you feel that your child needs something a little more than commenting/talking, try the language stimulation strategies outlined in tip sheets 1, 4 & 5.

Always contact a speech and language pathologist if you have any concerns regarding your child's speech and language development.

Kath Keiper (Paediatric Speech Pathologist; Creator of "Can you sound like me?")

visit [www.chewchewchatter.com.au](http://www.chewchewchatter.com.au) for more information

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