




**Integrated Community Paediatric Services
Paediatric Occupational Therapy Service**

Worksheet K



Mealtimes and Cutlery

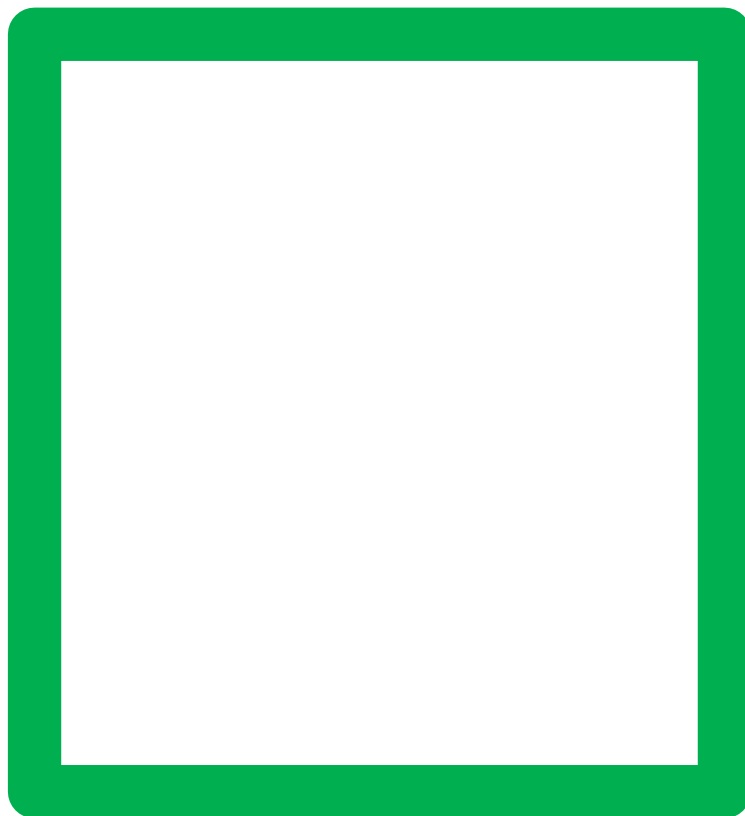
Area of Difficulty	Strategy	Tick when strategy has been tried and add comments.
Sitting for mealtimes.	<p>Sitting at table can make it easier to develop cutlery skills. Make sure your child is sat securely at the dining table, or at a small table and chairs.</p> <p>Refer to Worksheet A “Seating and Posture” for strategies. Your child may benefit from a small foot stool to rest their feet on.</p>	
Attending to mealtimes.	<p>Ensure that the environment is calm and there are limited distractions. Turn the TV off.</p> <p>Use a now and next board (see “Now and Next board below”) or a countdown timer.</p>	
Plate is slipping and moving on the table making it harder for the child to eat.	<p>Non-slip mats can be placed underneath the plate/bowl to help it stay in place.</p> <p>www.completecareshop.co.uk</p>	
Child lifts up bowl / plate and throws it off the table.	<p>Suction plates and bowls can be used to stop children picking them up and throwing them.</p> <p>www.munchkin.co.uk</p> <p>www.tinydining.com</p> <p>www.boots.com</p> 	
Child has difficulty holding cutlery.	<p>Make sure you are offering your child the appropriate size cutlery to use e.g children’s cutlery.</p> <p>Try large handled cutlery, to make it easier for children to hold.</p> <p>Place foam tubing over standard cutlery to make it easier for children to hold.</p> <p>If difficulties are still apparent, adapted cutlery can be trialled.</p>	

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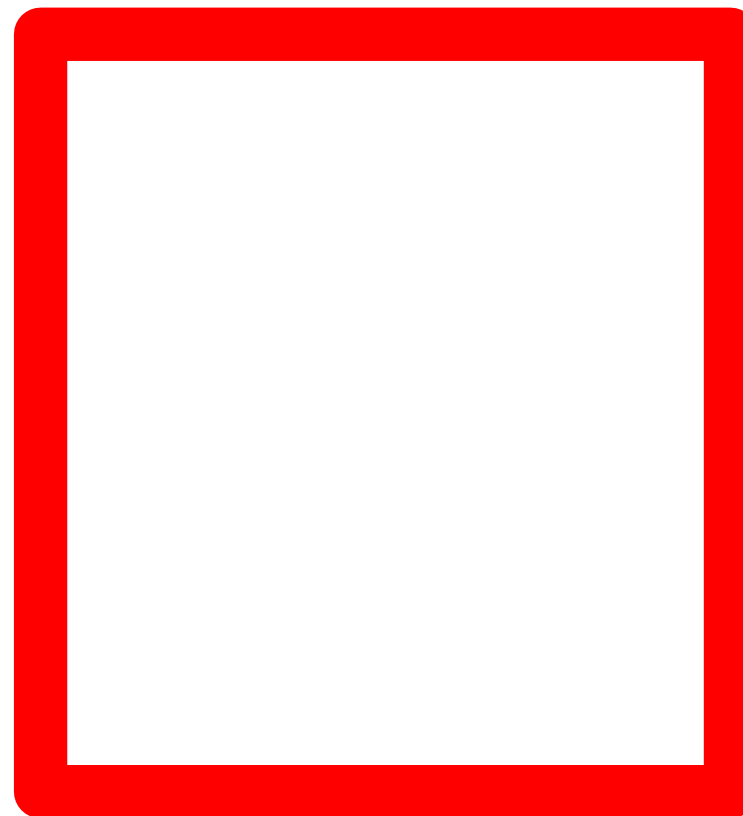
	<p>Junior Kura Care Cutlery can aid with finger placement:</p> <p>www.nrshealthcare.com</p>  <p>Nanas Manners cutlery can aid with grip.</p> <p>www.nanasmanners.com</p> 	
<p>Child has difficulty loading food onto the spoon/ fork, or bringing food to mouth.</p>	<p>Use a bowl with raised edges so the child has a surface to scoop against.</p> <p>For a spoon, practice with foods that are easier to use for example, yoghurt, mash potato, porridge etc.</p> <p>For a fork, practice with foods that are softer such as banana, or well-cooked vegetables. Children may find it easier to stab with a fork rather than load with a spoon at first.</p> <p>Adult can offer hand over hand support, to teach the movement needed for the task.</p> <p>Do not expect too much. Encourage the child to use the spoon or fork for the first three mouthfuls of the meal and then return to finger feeding / being fed if needed. Increase the amount of times they use the cutlery each mealtime as it gets easier for them.</p> <p>Adult to trial 'backward chaining' approach. The adult places their hand over child's hand, and takes their hand, holding a spoon to the bowl and brings to the child's mouth for at least 3 attempts at each mealtime, more if tolerated. As you begin to feel the child master the movement pattern, reduce adult level support used. Begin to let go of the spoon as the child brings it to his mouth once you feel confident, they will continue movement of spoon to mouth.</p>	

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	Phase back adult support as confidence in task increases.	
All.	Regular stress-free practice is best, when you and child are not in a rush. Practice using cutlery in play activities such as play doh and messy play. Use the sand timers or countdown chart to support motivation.	
Child lacks controls and spills liquid when lifting the cup to their mouth.	Try a 360 cup to prevent spillages. These can be purchased online from a variety of stores.	
Child struggles to tilt the cup so the liquid pours out.	Trial a Doidi cup. This can be purchased online from a variety of stores. www.doidycup.com www.onbuy.com	
Child struggles to grip a larger cup.	Smaller cups can be trialled to help grip the cup and to control it when bringing it to the child's mouth and tipping it: www.jojomamanbebe.co.uk www.babycup.com	
All.	Practice in play, and non-stressful situations for example: – Tea parties with feeding dollies and teddies. – Using a cup in the bath or paddling pool where it doesn't matter if the water spills. – Allow your child to choose a fun and exciting placemat to increase their motivation.	



NOW



NEXT