

# SPEECH & LANGUAGE SKILLS DURING DAILY ROUTINES

## MEALTIMES AND SNACKS

- **Name** the foods that you are eating, and the things you are using, e.g., “plate”, “spoon”, “fork”, etc.
- **Comment** about what you are doing/what the foods feel/taste/smell like etc. E.g., “pour the juice”, “the milk is cold”, etc. If your child is not using many words, you may want to **comment using single words**, e.g., “spoon” or “cut” etc.
- **Copy** what your child has said and **add** another word on. E.g., if they say “milk”, you could say “I’m *pouring* the milk” or “the milk is *cold*”. If your child uses two words, you repeat them and add a third, etc.
- **Gestures:** Use signs and gestures for the foods you are eating, e.g. use the sign for cookie, milk, etc. if you know them. Do a gesture/sign for drinking/eating. Say the words at the same time that you sign/gesture.
- Offer your child a **choice** of what they want to have; e.g., “do you want cereal or muffins?” or “do you want milk or juice?”. Be sure to show your child the two choices as you say them, and to repeat their choice clearly to them. Your child may indicate their choice by pointing, taking the item, vocalizing or using a word.
- **Communicative Temptations:** Make silly mistakes when serving the food; for example, give them their bowl, but “forget” the spoon, or give the bowl and spoon, but “forget” the cereal etc. Your child may try to tell you this is wrong by laughing, gesturing, vocalizing or saying words.

## WASHING HANDS

- **Name** the things your child/you are looking at/picking up etc. E.g., “faucet”, “dirty hands”, “water” etc. **Name** the actions that your child/you are doing, e.g. “washing” or “washing hands”.
- **Comment** about what you/your child is doing, using simple words and phrases, for example, “turn the faucet on”, “get the soap”, “wash your hands” etc. If your child is not using many words, you may want to **comment using single words**, e.g., “water”, “soap”.
- **Copy** what your child has said and **add** another word on so they hear how to make their sentences longer. For example, if they say “water”, you could say “it’s *warm* water”.
- **Say it Again and Again:** While naming/commenting, be sure to say the words again and again, so your child hears multiple repetitions of the words, e.g. “Washing hands, wash, wash, wash”, or “wash your *hands*. Nice clean *hands*. Clean *hands*”.
- **Communicative Temptations:** *This strategy depends on your child’s age and how familiar they are with the hand washing routine.* You could “forget” what to do; **pause** to see if your child will try to show you what to do (i.e. turn on the faucet, or to get a towel etc.). You could also do the “wrong” thing, for example go to wash your hands and “forget” to turn faucet on. Your child may try to tell you this is wrong by laughing, gesturing, vocalizing or saying words.

## LAUNDRY

- **Name** the clothes you are putting in the washing machine (or taking out of the dryer), e.g. “shirt”, “socks” etc. **Name** the clothes and who they belong to, e.g. “daddy’s shirt”, “mommy’s socks” etc.
- **Comment** about what you/your child is doing while doing the laundry, e.g., “I’m folding the towels”, “there’s lots of socks” etc. **Comment** on what the clothes look and feel like, e.g., “wet shirt” or “fluffy socks”.
- **Copy** what your child has said and **add** another word, e.g., child: “daddy’s”, adult: “yes, daddy’s *shirt*!”. If your child uses two words, you repeat them and add a third, etc.
- **Reducing Questions:** Try to avoid asking lots of questions e.g., “what’s that?”, “what have I got?” etc. Your child may not have the words to answer you. It is better to focus on **naming** and **commenting** until your child is using more words.
- Encourage your child to help put the clothes in the washing machine/dryer. Offer your child a **choice** of what they want to put in the washing machine or dryer first, e.g., “do you want the **socks** or the **shirt**?”. Be sure to show your child the two choices as you say them, and to repeat their choice clearly to them. Your child may indicate their choice by looking, pointing, taking the item, vocalizing or using a word.