



Mealtime

Children who are DeafBlind learn best when they can use many senses, especially touch. Based on a child's unique hearing and vision loss, they may not always see or hear what is happening around them and may miss important clues that other children notice.

Prepare your child by giving cues for what you are going to do **before** you do it.

Using tactile or sensory cues and a slow pace helps children feel safe and calm. When caregivers know what to watch for and are responsive to children's cues they build a trusting relationship. When children know what to expect, they can relax, communicate, and take part in mealtimes and other daily routines.



WHAT TO SAY AND/OR SIGN

"Time for your G-Tube feeding."

"Time to eat. You're hungry."

"Here's your spoon. We are eating yogurt."

"Do you want to eat or drink?"

"Do you want an apple or banana?"

"Your applesauce smells sweet, mmm."

"Your milk is on the right."

"All done."

WHAT TO TRY

Touch their tummy and sign "G-tube" hand-under-hand.

Touch their mouth to let them know it is time to eat.

Give the child their spoon to hold.

Let your child feel a spoon and cup to choose.

Let your child feel an apple and a banana to choose.

Let your child smell the item.

Touch their right arm to indicate where their cup is.

Sign "all done" hand-under-hand.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR

Child lifts their shirt for feeding.

Child moves towards where they eat.

Child may look toward spoon or turn their head.

Child looks at what they want.

Child may reach for what they want.

Child smells the food.

Child gets their milk.

Child pushes plate away.

End mealtime the **same** way each time so your child learns when they are done.

