

Cooking and Communication

Cooking and eating are one of the only constants in what has become a very hectic time. Fortunately, this is an activity you can do as a family and can be transformed into a wonderful opportunity for communication! Here are some tips for language and communication in the kitchen:

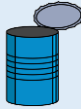
Spatial Concepts

Work on listening and following directions using basic spatial concepts with some of these tasks...

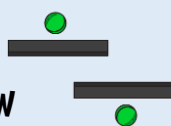
- Putting ingredients **IN** the bowl



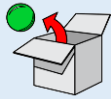
- **OPEN** containers



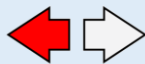
- Look for ingredients **ABOVE** or **BELOW**



- Take ingredients **OUT** of the fridge



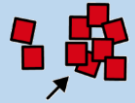
- Set the table (**LEFT, MIDDLE, RIGHT**)



Making Requests

Cooking and eating are the perfect time to work on the essential skill of asking for wants & needs

- Ask for **MORE** for a second helping



- Provide options, which one do you **WANT?**

- Keep some things out of reach, ask for **HELP**



- Accept (**YES**) or reject (**NO**) food

- Say when you're **DONE** eating



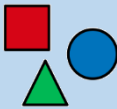
Model, Model, and Model Some More!

Don't make yourself feel like every task needs to be a test! Encouraging your child to communicate and/or practicing using a device will be beneficial but it can be cumbersome and chaotic if you're busy! You can provide low-stress support by modeling with your own words and actions. Narrate what you're doing and emphasize concepts or key words. If your hands are free and clean, highlight key words on your child's communication device. For example, if your child is having trouble with something you can say "let me help you with that" and press "help" on the device.

Describing

Talk about the look, taste, smell, and feel of what you're cooking!

- What **SHAPE** are the containers?



- What **COLOR** are the ingredients?

- Does it feel **STICKY? SOFT? WARM?**



- Does it taste **SWEET? SPICY? SOUR?**



- Do you **LIKE** it? Does it taste **GOOD? BAD?**



Cooking is of course a great way to target these functional skills...

Life Skills

- **Hygiene** (washing hands)



- **Safety** (using knives, ovens, etc.)



- **Chores** (washing/putting away dishes)



- **Independence** (feeding, opening, etc.)



- **Following routines/sequences** (recipe, cleaning up, etc.)

