

## Feeding & Meals

**Description:** Food-related times of the day such as breakfast, lunch, dinner, and snacks are an integral part of children’s daily routine. A Feeding & Meals activity provides opportunities to observe children performing such skills as pouring liquids, drinking from a bottle or cup, using utensils to eat, picking up various foods with their fingers, washing hands, taking in and swallowing liquids, biting foods, and even solving problems (e.g., determining how to get into a container of raisins or how to reach a desired piece of food).

**Suggested Materials and Procedures:** Materials needed include foods of different textures (e.g., soft, crisp, chewy), foods of different sizes (e.g., pea-sized pieces to pick up with fingers, larger food such as breadsticks to hold and bite), liquids in a variety of containers (e.g., bottle, sipper cup, small glass), eating implements (e.g., fork, spoon, chopsticks) and containers for food (e.g., plates, bowls, trays). Team members should carefully consider cultural, family, or medical dietary restrictions (e.g., kosher, vegetarian, allergic) when conducting a Feeding & Meals activity. If possible, team members should plan a menu that uses specific utensils and foods to maximize the opportunities for the observation of targeted *AEPS Test* items. It may take more than a single observation to assess all of the *AEPS Test* items noted in this assessment activity depending on the availability of foods, utensils, and a child’s interests.

The Feeding & Meal activity can take place in various locations (e.g., at the kitchen table, on the living room floor, outside on a picnic table). The *AEPS Test* items that can be observed during this activity will vary greatly depending on the child’s developmental stage. For example, a 2-month old baby who does not sit independently will not demonstrate as many skills as a 2-year old toddler who is using a cup to drink and fingers to self-feed. The procedures for this activity will need to be adjusted accordingly.

When appropriate, this activity should start with hand-washing. Caregivers or other team members can provide assistance as needed. The various foods and drinks can then be introduced to the child, and team members can observe targeted *AEPS Test* items (e.g., use tongue and lips to take in and swallow foods or liquids, bite and chew hard or chewy foods, grasp pea-sized object, eat with fork and/or spoon, transfer food and liquid between containers). In addition, placing things out of a child’s reach will allow the child to show his or her ability to solve problems.

Center-Based Activity: Feeding & Meals – Level 1				
Child Name:		Caregiver Name:		
Child DOB:		Activity Date:		
Area: Fine Motor	IEP	Score	Notes	Comments
<b>A. Reach, Grasp, and Release</b>				
4. Grasps pea-sized object with either hand using tip of the index finger and thumb with hand and/or arm not resting on surface for support				
4.1 Grasps pea-sized object with either hand using tip of the index finger and thumb with hand and/or arm resting on surface for support				
4.2 Grasps pea-sized object with either hand using side of the index finger and thumb				
4.3 Grasps pea-sized object with either hand using fingers in a raking and/or scratching movement				
<b>Area: Adaptive</b>				
<b>A. Feeding</b>				
1. Uses tongue and lips to take in and swallow solid foods and liquids [N]				
1.1 Uses lips to take in liquids from a cup and/or glass				
1.2 Uses lips to take food off spoon and/or fork				
1.3 Swallows solid and semi-solid foods				
1.4 Swallows liquids				
2. Bites and chews hard and chewy foods				
2.1 Bites and chews soft and crisp foods				
2.2 Munches soft and crisp foods				
3. Drinks from cup and/or glass				

Center-Based Activity: Feeding & Meals – Level 1				
Child Name:		Caregiver Name:		
Child DOB:		Activity Date:		
Area: Adaptive	IEP	Score	Notes	Comments
<b>A. Feeding</b>				
3.1 Drinks from cup and/or glass with some spilling				
3.2 Drinks from cup and/or glass held by adult				
4. Eats with fork and/or spoon				
4.1 Brings food to mouth using utensil				
4.2 Eats with fingers				
4.3 Accepts food presented on spoon				
5. Transfers food and liquid between containers				
5.1 Pours liquid between containers				
5.2 Transfers food between containers				
<b>B. Personal Hygiene</b>				
2. Washes and dries hands				
2.1 Washes hands				
<b>Area: Cognitive</b>				
<b>E. Problem Solving</b>				
4. Solves common problems				
4.1 Uses more than one strategy in attempt to solve common problem				