Family Style Dining

Tips for a Successful Meal Service
Why Family-Style?

- Develops fine motor skills
- Promotes self-regulation of eating
Why Family-Style?

- Teaches manners and social skills
- Encourages children to try new foods
Why Family-Style?

- Learning opportunity
  - Nutrition
  - Colors
  - Numeracy
Why Family-Style?

- Allows for independence and decision-making
- Builds self-esteem
Planning for Family-Style

- Appropriate utensils
- Teach
- Practice
- Allow plenty of time
- Create routine
- Minimize distraction
Set-Up

• Engage older children in preparation

• Ensure food safety
  – Wash hands
  – Wipe tables

• Have everything ready
  – Have extra gloves, utensils, paper towels available

• Place enough food on the table
  – Minimum portion of each component
  – Extra to account for spills and seconds
About Gloves

- Gloves should be used when:
  - You prepare or touch ready-to-eat food
    - Ex. making a sandwich
    - Ex. placing apple slices on a plate

- Gloves are not needed when:
  - The food will be cooked before it’s eaten
  - You use a utensil to serve food

- Wash hands before & after using gloves

- Change gloves when you touch your hair or face or a child, or they become ripped or dirty
Serving and Eating

- Adapt to ages and skills of children
- Serve and pass in the same direction
- Encourage tasting
  - Prompt children to take full portion
- Allow polite decline
  - Never force a child to eat
  - Allow a child to try a food later if desired
- Eat with children
- Talk to children while eating
• Teach clean-up routine
• Plan a quiet post-meal activity for children who finish early
Family-Style Resources

• Starting Family Style Dining Part 1: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRBzCMGzSvs
• Starting Family Style Dining Part 2: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FsoapIAslpk
• Family Style Meals in the Childcare Setting: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nj_s89ydnBs
Thank you!