

Difficulty Using Cutlery and Feeding

Quick reference
SHEET #13

Some children are not always ready to use a knife and fork compared to others of a similar age and experience and may be messy eaters. Meal times can become stressful.

This may be due to:

- ☹️ Weaker hand strength
- ☹️ Poor hand-eye co-ordination
- ☹️ Difficulties seeing what needs to be done
- ☹️ Difficulties using two hands together
- ☹️ Difficulties maintaining a conversation at the table
- ☹️ Difficulties turn-taking



Tips to help

- ✓ Play games with
 - ★ Squeezy bottles
 - ★ Sponges
 - ★ Playdough
 - ★ Wooden fruit and vegetables / knife
- ✓ Make sure the child is in a stable position with feet on the floor or on a step
- ✓ Table at waist height
- ✓ Don't make the child sit too long at the table
- ✓ Stop the plate moving around by using non-stick matting underneath or a damp tea-towel
- ✓ Use a bowl with a lip rather than a plate
- ✓ Use specialist cutlery with spoon and fork bent to ease usage
- ✓ Check the child understands the conversation and is included, and has time to respond to questions
- ✓ Play a game like 'I Spy' at the table to encourage participation
- ✓ To encourage conversation skills, ask specific questions to the individual child

