

## SELF CARE EATING MEALS

### CUTLERY EQUIPMENT INFORMATION SHEET

Mealtimes are an important aspect of family life. Children begin to develop self-feeding skills from birth. Self-feeding is a very complex task and it is common for children to have difficulty using cutlery to feed themselves. It usually takes until a child is 7 years old before they can successfully use cutlery to feed themselves without being too messy. There are a variety of tools that can be used to support children with mealtimes if they continue to find these skills challenging. Many of these are readily available and are not seen as specialist equipment.

### CUTLERY

There are a number of options in terms of cutlery. Spoons, forks and knives with thick and/or textured handles are easier to hold. A spoon, fork or knife with a short handle is easier to control. Encourage your child to try a variety of standard cutlery in the first instance. Consider the weight of the cutlery.



- If your child is having difficulty placing their fingers in the correct places on cutlery you can put a sticker or a dot of nail varnish on the back of the knife or fork to show where their index "pointer" finger should go.
- Caring Cutlery has an indentation where the index finger is to be placed and is ergonomically designed to fit the hand. This comes in junior and adult sizes and some other brands make something similar so shop around.

