



Table Manners

Autism & ABA Therapy Social Skills

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Activity Title:

"Mindful Meals: Practicing Table Manners"

Objective:

To help the child with autism understand and practice appropriate table manners, making meal times more enjoyable and socially engaging.

Materials Needed:

- Miniature Dining Set: A toy dining set or a small table setup to simulate a dining environment.
- Manners Scenario Cards: Cards depicting various dining situations, each requiring specific table manners (e.g., using utensils, not talking with a full mouth).
- Reward Chart: A chart to track the child's progress in practicing good table manners.

Activity Setup:

Prepare the Miniature Dining Set:

- Set up a small table with plates, utensils, cups, and napkins to mimic a real dining environment.

Create Manners Scenario Cards:

- Develop cards that illustrate different aspects of table manners.

Activity Steps with Examples:

Introduction to Table Manners:

- Start with a simple discussion: “Table manners are the polite things we do when we eat with others. They help everyone enjoy their meal.”

Role-Playing with the Dining Set:

- Engage in role-play using the miniature dining set.
- Example 1: Demonstrate how to use utensils properly.
- Guide the child to practice: “Let’s use the fork to eat our pretend meal. Can you show me how you do it?”

Using Manners Scenario Cards:

- Present a scenario card and discuss the appropriate manners.
- Example 2: A card showing someone speaking with food in their mouth.
- Discuss why it’s important to wait until we’ve finished chewing before speaking.

Practicing and Reinforcing Manners:

- During actual meal times, gently remind the child of the manners practiced.
- Add a sticker to the reward chart for each successful demonstration of good manners.

Reflection and Discussion:

- Regularly review the reward chart with the child.
- Discuss how practicing these manners makes meal times better for everyone.

Skills Targeted:

- Using Utensils Appropriately: Practicing proper use of forks, spoons, and knives.
- Speaking Politely: Learning to talk with an empty mouth and listening while others speak.
- Understanding Social Expectations: Recognizing the social rules associated with dining.
- Patience and Turn-Taking: Waiting patiently for their turn to serve or speak.