



What You Say Really Matters!

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Conversation at the table gives children a variety of messages. What adults say at the table is powerful. Comments have short-term consequences for helping children have a successful or disappointing meal. In time, comments accumulate to give children messages about how much control they have over hunger and satisfaction. Think about how you may influence children's mealtime experiences. Listen to what is said at the table and decide if it is a *phrase that helps* or a *phrase that hinders* the child's choices at the table.

Phrases That Help

Look at the phrases below. Can you tell why these help?

- Yes, these radishes are crunchy!
- This is kiwi fruit. It's sweet like a strawberry
- Do you like that?
- Would you like more?
- Is your stomach telling you that you're full?
- Use your napkin
- Move the serving bowl closer to your plate

Phrases That Hinder

Look at the phrases below. Can you tell why these hinder?

- Eat that for me.
- You're such a big girl; you finished all your peas.
- See, that didn't taste so bad, did it?
- You have to take one more bite before you leave the table.
- Carli, look at Maria. She ate all of her bananas.