FAMILY LIFE AND WELLBEING

Low-Pressure Mealtime Planner

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A planner for making mealtimes more manageable, including sensory needs, limited diets and family stress around food.

This is general information and a planning tool, not medical, mental-health or social-care advice. If you are in crisis, contact emergency services or a local crisis line. A checklist cannot measure how good a parent you are. This is not dietetic or medical advice and it does not treat eating disorders. Seek professional help if you are worried about nutrition, weight, or a child's relationship with food.

Who this is for

Families who find mealtimes tense, short, sensory-heavy, or built around a limited set of accepted foods.

What is inside

- A low-pressure approach
- A mealtime audit
- A weekly ideas page
- A "what we will try" plan

Please read this first

This is a free starting-point resource from My SEND Friend. It is general information, not legal, medical or benefits advice, and it is not an official or government form. It does not guarantee an assessment, plan, adjustment, payment or any other outcome. Check current official guidance (for example GOV.UK) and get individual advice from SENDIASS, IPSEA or a suitably qualified adviser when you need it.

Connection before a clean plate

Pressure, bargaining and long sit-downs can make eating harder. A calmer meal might mean accepted foods being available, a shorter table time, lower noise, or a separate start for someone who cannot yet join. You do not have to perform a “normal” family meal for it to be a good enough meal.

What mealtimes are like now

What already works, including accepted foods and useful routines

What makes meals hard (noise, smells, sitting, new foods, other people's comments, time pressure)

Health, dental, or professional advice we already have, if any

A light meal plan I can actually keep

Write accepted options, not an ideal menu. Repeats are allowed.

	Breakfast	Lunch	Evening	Snack if needed
An option that is usually okay				
A possible add-on, if any				
Notes (where, who, noise)				

One or two changes

What we will try for a week (for example: shorter table time, no commenting on intake, a quieter seat)

When we would seek advice from a GP, dietitian, or other professional

Useful next steps and sources

Use what helped in this pack and leave the rest. You can come back to it when you need to. Live tools on mysendfriend.co.uk remain free, including Help Me Now, the SEND Letter Builder, the Reasonable Adjustments Builder, the DLA and PIP Claim Planners, and the free resources hub. Saving work to My SEND Plan is optional.

Where to check official or independent information

Guidance and benefit rules can change. Check the current official position, and get individual advice when you need it.

- mysendfriend.co.uk family life and wellbeing resources
- Your GP, a local carers' service, or social care, if you need support
- Your local SENDIASS or short-breaks / local-offer pages, if relevant

A reminder about this free pack

This is a free starting-point resource from My SEND Friend. It is general information, not legal, medical or benefits advice, and it is not an official or government form. Using it does not start a statutory process or guarantee a particular outcome. Adapt every page to your situation.

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