



## Learning Services

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### **General meal-management tips to promote safe eating where students have been identified at risk for overstuffing without supervision:**

- Encourage upright and stable posture while eating. Avoid having the head/neck tilt back while eating/drinking as this opens the airway. Consider using a foot stool to ensure feet are well supported.
- Provide 1:1 supervision to ensure small bites of food at a time and to slow down the pace of the meal to prevent complications from overstuffing.
- Some children cannot have their entire meal in front of them as they may have a hard time focusing and eating at a safe pace. If so, pick two snacks, offer a choice to the student and then the EA can hold the food item while providing small bites to the student to ensure a safe pace of eating.
- Offer drinks of liquids throughout meals but ensure food is well chewed and swallowed prior to doing so.
- If children have difficulty following instructions from the EA to ensure safe eating practice in their classroom, consider a quieter area of the classroom or the hallway until routines and expectations are established. The classroom can be a busy place; though it offers benefits of socialization, we want to ensure safety first.
- Ensure communication between home and school on appropriate food/textures where applicable. Some students have strong reactions to nonpreferred food (eg. Gagging or vomiting); this is important information for parents to share with school staff so that they can ensure the student is only offered food items sent by family.