

Food Positivity

Chapter 18 Bonus Handout:

Food Positivity Mealtimes Message

How to Use This Letter

In Chapter 18, we covered how your child's teachers or staff at their school may not use the same feeding practices that you use at home and how to advocate for your child. On the next page, you'll find a letter you can share with school staff. Some helpful tips before you share it:

- When possible, start with a phone call or in-person conversation before sharing the letter to set a positive tone and open a line of communication.
- If it's helpful, share this letter by email or print it and give it directly to the staff member commenting on your child's food. You can also send the letter in your child's lunchbox for them to share with anyone commenting on their food.

If the issue reflects a broader school policy, this letter can also serve as a respectful starting point for a larger conversation. And of course, you might consider sharing a copy of *Food Positivity* with your school!

Dear Teachers and School Staff,

Thank you for the care and attention you give our child each day. We know that supervising meals is just one small part of your very full schedule, and we truly appreciate the role you play in their daily life.

In our family, we follow the Division of Responsibility in Feeding framework developed by the Ellyn Satter Institute. This evidence-based model supports children in developing lifelong eating competence by clearly defining the roles of adults and children at meals.

At meals and snacks, our child is allowed to decide:

- **Whether** to eat the food provided by the adults
- **How much** of each item to eat
- **In what order** to eat their food

Research on this approach shows that when children are trusted with these responsibilities, they are more likely to develop strong self-regulation skills, greater confidence around food, and more balanced eating patterns over time.

We kindly ask that adults supervising meals avoid directing our child to eat certain foods first, take additional bites, or categorize foods using terms like “healthy” or “unhealthy” or “growing foods” and “fun foods.” We choose our child’s food very intentionally, and we trust our child to navigate their meals and snacks in a way that supports their growing independence.

If there are ever safety concerns or school policies we should be aware of, we are always open to conversation. We value your partnership and appreciate your support in helping our child feel safe, confident, and respected during mealtimes.

With gratitude,

(Parent/Caregiver Name)

(Child’s Name)

(Parent/Caregiver Contact Information)

P.S. For more on this approach, we encourage you to visit ellynsatterinstitute.org and the book [*Food Positivity: How to Ditch Diet Culture Talk to Kids About Food*](#) by Diana Rice, RDN and Dani Lebovitz, MS, RDN.