



Ten Tips for Rolling Snack Bar

The rolling snack bar provides a language rich environment where staff can actively support children's speech, language and communication.

1. Plan the rolling snack bar as an adult directed activity and have one member of staff timetabled to support it each day. **REMEMBER:** It is important to consider the table size and position. Make sure there is enough room to seat 4-6 children and 1-2 adults in comfort. Position the table away from the wall so children and adults can sit round the table and don't forget the table cloth.
2. Prepare the snack with the children, so that they have an opportunity to talk about and experience the food preparation process. You might wish to choose two or three children each day who help with this duty. Or allow children to prepare the snack as they come to the table to eat. Ensure that you have all the ingredients that you need for snack ready before the start of the session, so that you do not have to leave the table to replenish supplies.
3. Make use of the children's name cards from self registration to identify who has/has not had snack and talk to the children about the registration process. If at registration the children place their names on a board (using magnetic tape or Velcro) as well as acting as a visual register, this can be moved to the snack table and as children have their snack they can take their name off the board and place it in a basket/box ready for self-registration the following day (or for another activity).
4. Limit the number of children at the snack table to a specified number eg 6 children. You can monitor this by using your registration board. So instead of the names going from the board into the basket/box, have a space on the board that says 'Snack Time' with space for 6 name cards. By limiting the number of children you can ensure that all the children have an opportunity to talk.

Snack Time – there are 6 spaces at the snack table put your name in a space on the board before you sit down:



Annie	Max	Gurdeep			
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From the example above the children would know that there are 3 free places at the snack bar

Children might also have their own placemats, which indicate any allergies. When a child has finished their snack they can clear away their plate, cup, mat and take their name from the board placing it in the basket/box.

5. Encourage the children to select their own snack by placing the prepared food on plates in the centre of the table. Use jugs that are child-friendly so they can choose and pour their own drinks. All of these tasks provide excellent opportunities for the adult to extend and support children's speech, language and communication development, as you talk to them about what they are choosing and doing.
6. The adults in the setting can use this as an opportunity to have their snack too, so adults might choose to spend 5 - 10minutes at the snack table, talking to the children.
7. Use this time to enable the children to talk about things that interest them. Allow the children to spend as much or as little time as they want at the table. The overall time the snack bar is open will depend on 1) the number of children in the setting; 2) the time the children take to eat their snack; 3) the time the children want to spend talking. This is not a time to be rushed but a time to enjoy listening to and talking with the children.
8. Remember the Traffic Lights: **Stop, Observe/ Listen, Respond** (see separate sheet: Follow the child's lead). Give the children an opportunity to lead the conversation and use your skills to respond appropriately by repeating, commenting, extending, explaining. **Use choice** to develop vocabulary, especially useful for children with language delay or EAL. (See example below.)
9. Have a trolley, separate table or a washing up bowl for the dirty plates and cups so that the children can clear away independently. Remember to extend and support their language through the use of modelling and commenting and **ALWAYS** praise them for a job completed. *'Well done for putting your cup and plate on the trolley'*.
10. Remember that this is also an opportunity to reinforce positive language for behaviour management.

Have fun and enjoy talking to the children.



Offering Children Choice

E.g. Child indicates he would like some fruit e.g. by looking at it or pointing; adult 'You want fruit! Want apple or banana (indicating each item as the word is said); **wait** for child to indicate which one, this can be through looking at the fruit he wants, pointing or talking. As soon as the child has indicated his preference adult models again 'You want **apple!**' Try to take the opportunity to model the word several times e.g. 'here's your **apple**.....mmm I love **apple** too!' Praise any attempts the child makes to say the word. Always remember to return to the traffic light system when you've offered a choice! There is opportunity to offer choice in many ways e.g. big piece vs. little piece; red cup vs. blue cup; milk vs. water – look out for these opportunities but try and find a balance between offering choices and letting the child lead – too many choices can be baffling