

# Translating Research for Practice

## Using Family Style Dining to Increase Social Interactions in Young Children

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# Overview



## What is the purpose?

To examine the effects of family style dining on social interactions between children during meal times.

## Who received instruction?

Three preschool children who rarely engaged in social interactions, and six of their peers.



## Where did Family Style Dining (FSD) take place?

FSD took place in three inclusive preschool classrooms at a university-affiliated early childhood center.

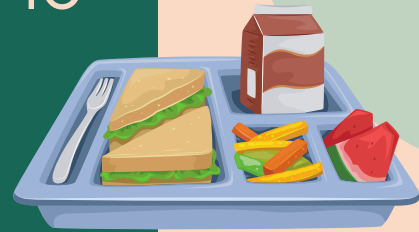


# Family Style Dining



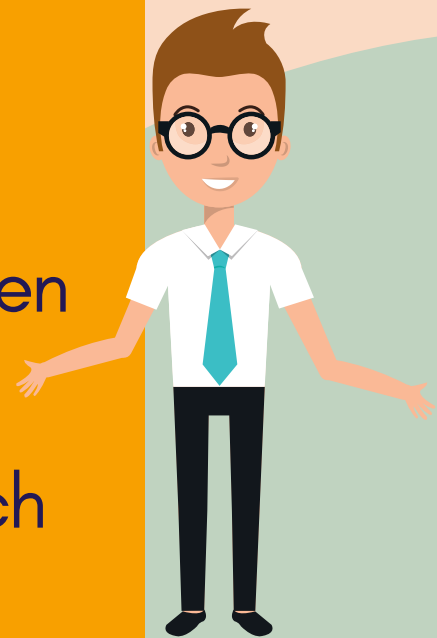
## What is FSD?

- FSD is a way to serve food that can be used to facilitate social interaction at meal times.
- It involves placing food and drinks in serving dishes and pitchers, and teaching children to serve themselves with the support of teachers.



## Teacher Praise and Directives

- Praise may include reinforcing desired behavior and verbally responding to children to increase their verbal behaviors.
- Directives are instructional statements, such as "Pick up your fork," or "Pour the milk."



# Key Findings

Social interactions increased for children when FSD was used



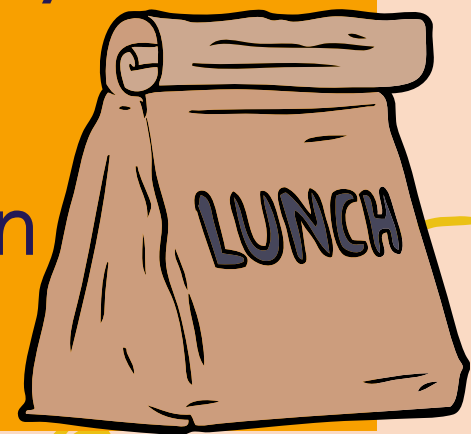
Teacher praise increased when FSD was implemented while the number of directives used remained the same

# Take Aways

Use of FSD increased social interactions for target children and teachers' use of praise.

## STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS

- Find trainings for teachers to implement FSD with performance-based feedback.
- Embed FSD into children's everyday routines (e.g. snack, lunch).
- Use behavior-specific praise when teaching children FSD.



# Citation

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