Cooperative Extension
San Carlos Apache Tribe

HELP YOUR CHILDREN GET READY TO READ
DURING MEALTIMES!

TRY THIS AT HOME

- Mealtimes are a great time to talk and laugh with your children.
- Talking with your children is a great way to teach them new words and about the world around them. It's also a lot of fun!

- **Find a time to eat together.** Whether it is lunch, an afternoon snack, dinner, or Sunday breakfast, try to find a regular time to sit down and share food with your child. Even if you are not eating, sit and talk with your child while they are eating.

- **Take a break from screens.** Try turning off and putting away phones, TVs, tablets, and video games during mealtimes. This will give you more time to talk. If this is hard to do, try doing it just once a week to start.

- **Let your children take the lead.** Talk about what your children are interested in. Ask them questions, listen to their answers and respond.

- **Talk with children of all ages.**

  If your child is not talking yet, you can still talk with them during mealtimes.
  - If you are nursing or bottle feeding: make eye contact and smile while you are feeding.
  - Tell them what they are eating: "You are having peas."
  - Tell them what you are doing: "I am putting carrots on the spoon."
  - Describe the food: "You are eating mashed bananas, they are yellow."

  If your child has started speaking, try to have back-and-forth conversations where you say something, then your child says something and you continue talking back-and-forth for a little while.
  - Ask your child questions about what they like, what they did during the day, what they want to do after the meal.
  - Talk about the food you are eating. Ask your children to name the food's color, shape, size and texture. Talk about where food comes from and who made it.

Gowa

Gowa: Teachable Moments for Apache Children

This program provides free early literacy materials, activities, and events to San Carlos Apache families with children ages 0 – 6.
Learn more: **https://extension.arizona.edu/gowa** or email **GowaTeachableMoments@arizona.edu**

This project is funded by a CYFAR grant from USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture.