

ChildFriendly Lunch & Learn Resource

High-Quality Mealtime Documentation

Using ChildFriendly Pro to Elevate Your Program

Why This Matters

Strong mealtime documentation is more than record-keeping—it:

For Parents:

- Builds trust and transparency (“they really see my child”)
- Shows you understand their child’s individual needs and behaviours
- Provides meaningful insights they can’t see at home (peer influence, group setting, regulation)
- Reduces concerns around eating, picky behaviour, or nutrition

For Your Program:

- Makes your centre look professional, intentional, and high-quality
- Demonstrates individualized care (important for licensing + quality frameworks)
- Supports consistent communication across staff
- Protects your program with clear, objective records

For Educators:

- Moves staff from “tracking food” → to understanding children
- Makes documentation easier because it’s specific and observable

The Shift: From Basic → Meaningful Documentation

Basic (Low Value)

- “Ate lunch”
- “Didn’t eat much”
- “Picky eater today”

These don’t tell parents anything useful and don’t reflect professional practice.

High-Quality (What to Aim For)

Focus on 3 things:

1. What was offered
2. What the child did
3. What it might mean (neutral, not diagnostic)

Example 1: Trying New Foods

Instead of: "Ate some vegetables"

Write: "Tried cucumbers for the first time—initially hesitant, then tasted after watching peers."

Shows:

- Social learning
- Exposure (not pressure)
- Progress

Example 2: Food Refusal

Instead of: "Refused lunch"

Write: "Did not engage with mixed food (stew); ate bread and carrots separately."

Shows:

- Pattern (texture preference)
- Still met needs
- No negative language

Example 3: Sensory/Regulation

Instead of: "Was difficult at lunch"

Write: "Appeared overwhelmed by full plate; engaged more once smaller portions were offered."

Shows:

- Educator response
- Problem-solving
- Regulation support

Example 4: Strong Appetite

Instead of: "Ate a lot"

Write: "Requested additional servings of pasta and ate quickly; remained calm and engaged throughout."

Neutral, not judgmental, still informative

How This Connects to ChildFriendly Pro

Educators can use:

- Daily logs → brief, meaningful summaries
- Observations → track patterns over time
- Reports → identify trends (e.g., always avoids mixed textures, eats more on certain days)

Over time, this creates a clear picture of the child's relationship with food, not just isolated moments.

Pro Tip for Teams

Keep it simple:

- 1–2 meaningful sentences per child is enough
- Focus on patterns, not perfection
- Stay objective, not emotional