

Personal Placemat Activity

A Personal Placemat serves as a tool to reduce the risk of choking and promotes safe eating. Direct support professionals (DSPs) can complete this person-centered activity with the person they support.

Materials Needed

The following materials will be needed to complete this activity:

- Personal Placemat Kit
 - Personal Placemat Activity Step-by-Step Instructions
 - Five Tips for Personal Placemat Activity
 - Personal Placemat Template and Example
 - Personal Placemat Cut-Outs
- My Dining Profile
- Plastic placemat (or paper)
- Clear placemat cover (or a clear covering for the paper to avoid damage like rips, tears, liquid stains, etc.)
- Tape/glue
- Scissors
- Binder (optional)

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Read the Five Tips for the Personal Placemat Activity before starting.
2. Complete My Dining Profile with the person you support to better understand the needs of the individual.
3. Prepare the placemat (with the person you support) on a flat surface.
4. Using the Personal Placemat Cut-Outs document, go through each section (with the person you support) and identify which pictures/words/phrases match the needs of the person you support.
5. Cut out each picture/words/phrase that fit the needs of the person you support.
6. Glue/tape to the placemat. Use the Personal Placemat Template and Example as a guide to where you should be pasting each item.
7. Review with the person you support.

Five Tips for the Personal Placemat Activity

1. Complete My Dining Profile before completing the Personal Placemat Activity.

Review any dietary guidelines and medical information related to food consumption and digestion from medical professionals.

2. Customize the placemat to fit the needs of the individual.

The Personal Placemat Cut-Outs do not contain all the needs of every individual. If an individual has needs not listed in the kit, make sure to include those needs on his or her personal placemat.

3. Create a personal placemat for individuals at high-risk for choking.

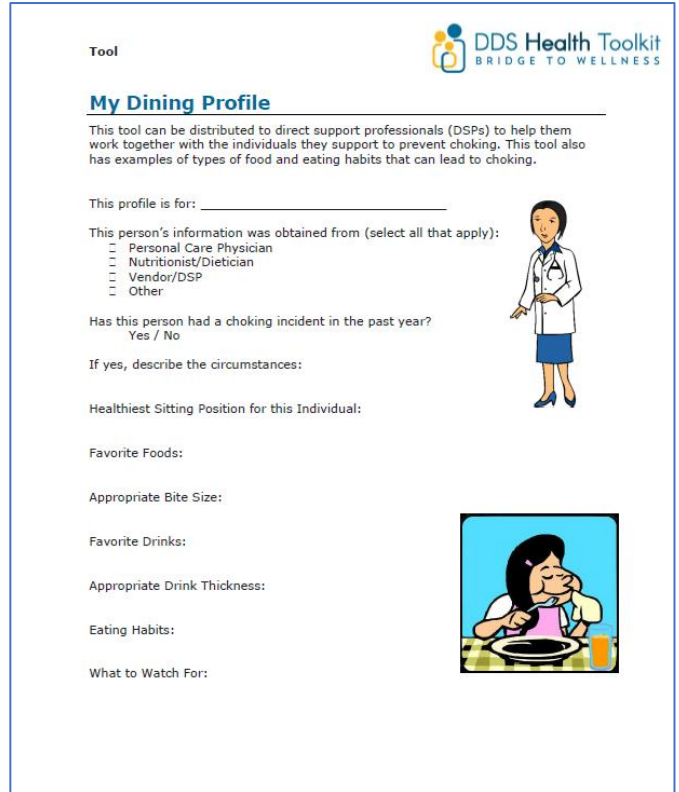
Any individual can have a placemat, but individuals with a high risk of choking or with particular eating/food needs should have a placemat.

4. Complete the Personal Placemat Activity with others.

This activity can be done by the individual on their own, with their DSP, or with other members of their support team.

5. Keep the Personal Placemat in a safe place.

It may be helpful to keep the Personal Placemat in the kitchen or in the dining area for easy access when dining with the individual you support. If you support multiple individuals, it may be helpful to keep the Personal Placemats in a binder or folder.



The image shows a screenshot of a digital form titled "My Dining Profile" from the DDS Health Toolkit. The form is designed for direct support professionals (DSPs) to use in gathering information about an individual's dining habits to prevent choking. It includes a header with the toolkit logo, a title "My Dining Profile", and a brief introduction. The form contains several sections for data entry: a field for the individual's name, a checklist for the source of information (Personal Care Physician, Nutritionist/Dietician, Vendor/DSP, Other), a question about choking incidents in the past year with a "Yes/No" response, a field for describing circumstances if applicable, a field for the healthiest sitting position, fields for favorite foods and drinks, fields for appropriate bite and drink thickness, a field for eating habits, and a field for what to watch for. There are two illustrations: one of a female healthcare professional in a white coat and stethoscope, and another of a person sitting at a table eating a meal.

Tool

DDS Health Toolkit
BRIDGE TO WELLNESS

My Dining Profile

This tool can be distributed to direct support professionals (DSPs) to help them work together with the individuals they support to prevent choking. This tool also has examples of types of food and eating habits that can lead to choking.

This profile is for: _____

This person's information was obtained from (select all that apply):

- Personal Care Physician
- Nutritionist/Dietician
- Vendor/DSP
- Other

Has this person had a choking incident in the past year?
Yes / No

If yes, describe the circumstances:

Healthiest Sitting Position for this Individual:

Favorite Foods:

Appropriate Bite Size:

Favorite Drinks:

Appropriate Drink Thickness:

Eating Habits:

What to Watch For:

Activity

Personal Placemats Template and Example

The personal placemat aims to prevent choking and promote safe eating. Below is a description of each section of the personal placemat. Use the template on the next page to start creating your personal placemat. Use the “Personal Placemat Cut-Outs” to fill in each section (either by copy and pasting electronically or printing out and cutting & pasting your responses to each section). Examples are also included on the page after.

Who will prepare and serve the food to the person?	Who will feed the person?	What consistency should food be?	What consistency should liquids be?
What utensils does the person need?	What kind of plate will the person be using?		What kind of cup does the person need (i.e. cup with lid and straw)?
Does the person have any food allergies? Are there foods that they are more likely to choke on? Does the person have caloric/nutritional/medical needs?			
What are some safe eating behaviors the person should follow?			

Activity

Personal Placemat for _____

[Food prepared/served by]

[Fed by]

[Food consistency]

[Liquid consistency]

[Utensils]

[Plate]

[Cup]

[Cup Add-Ons]
(i.e., straw, lid)

[Label for Utensils]

[Label for Type of Plate]

**[Label(s) for Cup
and Cup Add-Ons]**

[Food choking hazards]
[Food allergies]
[Caloric/nutritional/medical needs]

[Safe eating behaviors]

Personal Placemat for Jane Doe

**Prepared/served
by staff**

**Fed by self and
monitored by staff**

Pureed Food

Honey Thick Liquids



Spoon



**Plate with Divided
Sections**



**Plastic Cup with
Spouted Lid**

Do not eat (choking hazard): Hot dogs, Grapes, Whole hard fruits
Allergic to: Nuts

Alternate bites/sips of water, Give small bites, Sit upright during meal and 30 minutes after

Personal Placemat Cut-Outs

For each section, choose the picture and words that match the person's needs. Cut along the dotted lines and paste/tape onto a personal placemat.

Tools to Use - Plates

Choose one plate and corresponding label or create your own.

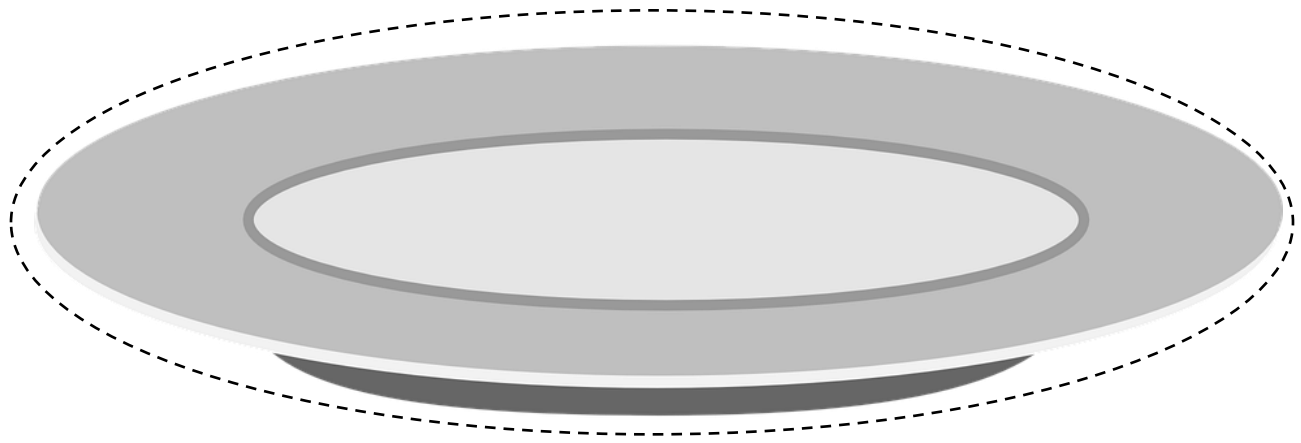


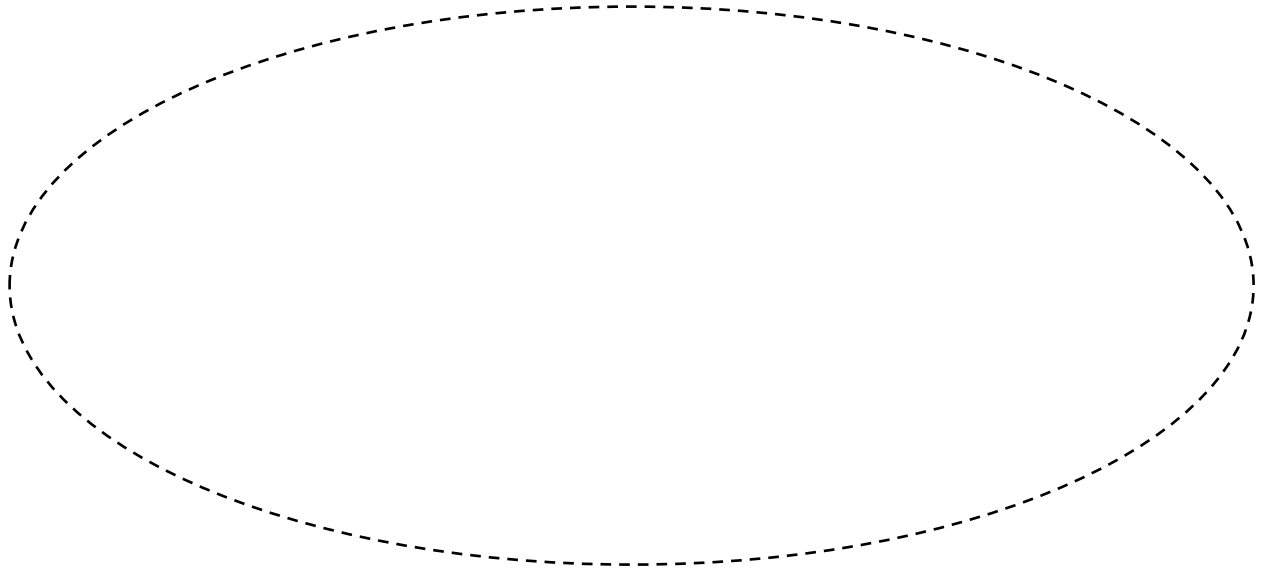
Plate with Divided Sections

Tools to Use - Plates

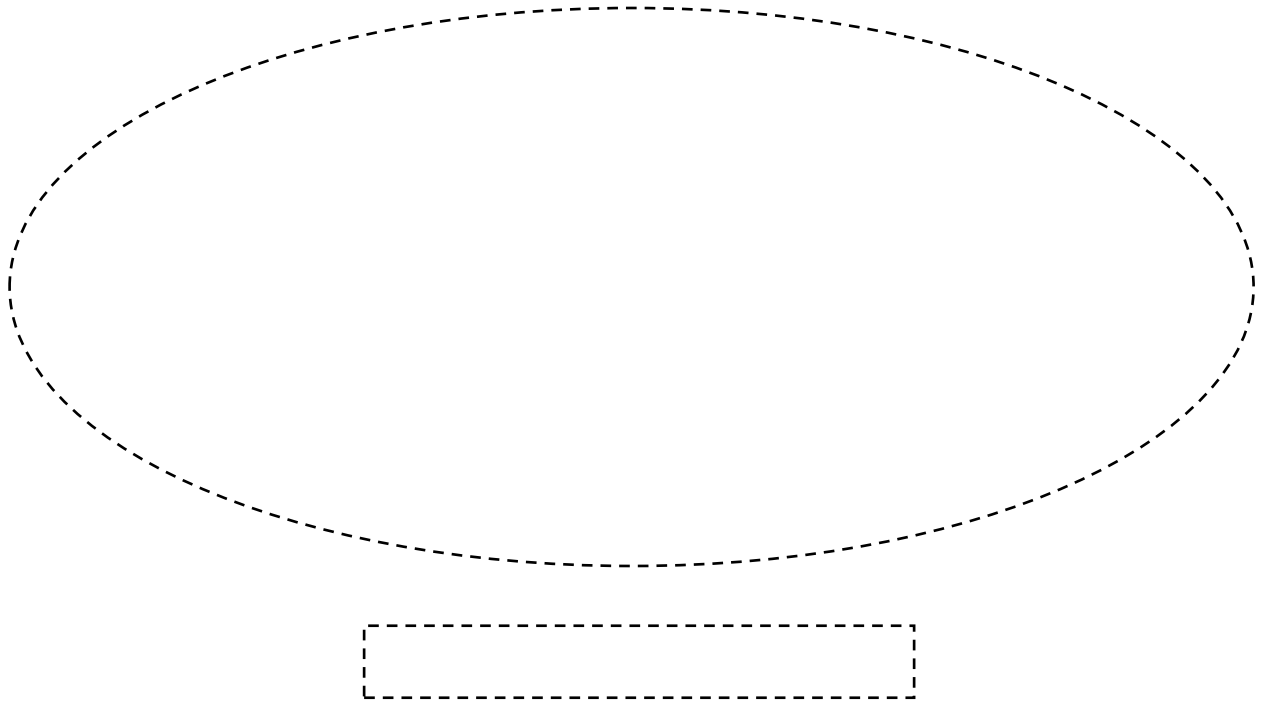


FabLife Scoop Plate from School Specialty

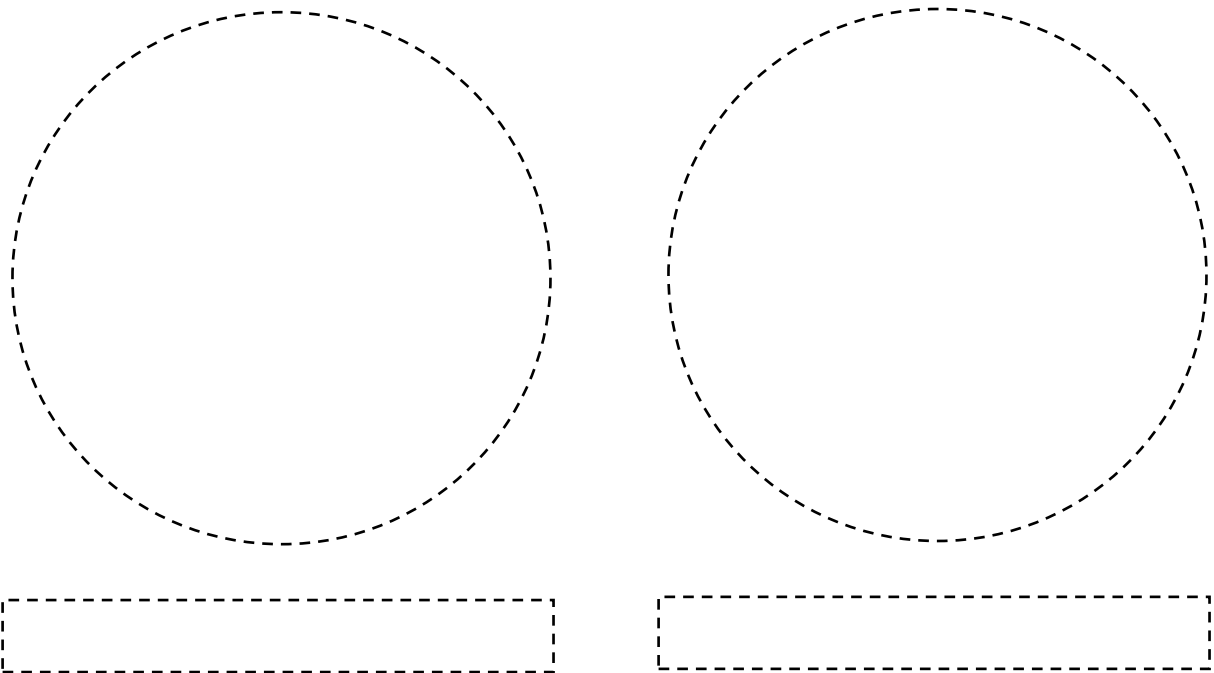
Scoop Plate



Tools to Use - Plates



Tools to Use - Plate Add-Ons



Tools to Use – Cups

Choose one cup and one label or create your own.

Any Cup



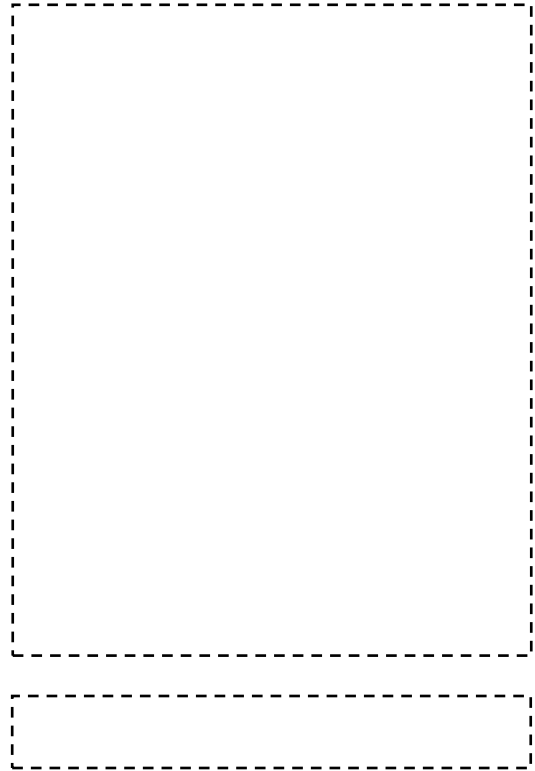
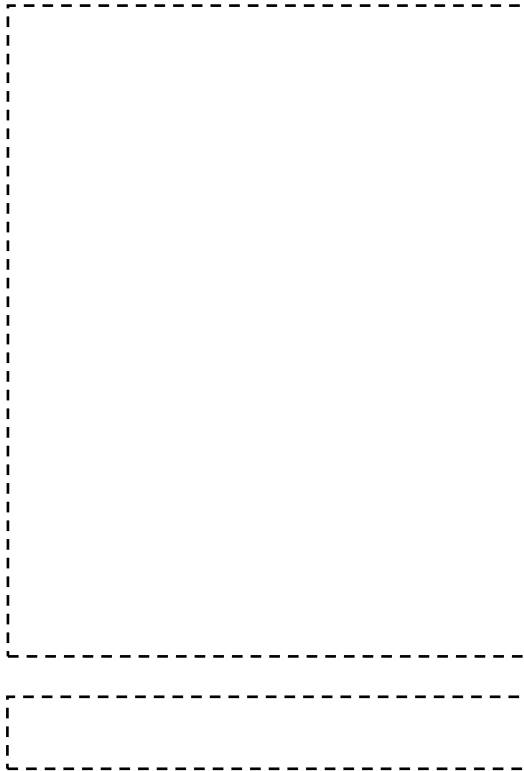
Standard Cup

Cup with a Handle



Cup with Straw in Handle

Tools to Use – Cups



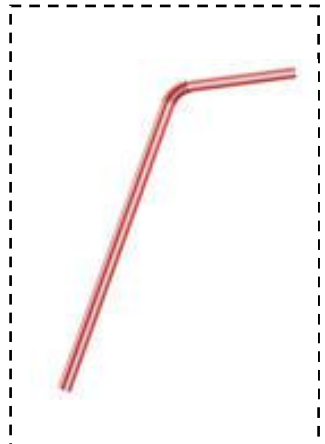
Tools to Use – Cup Add-Ons



Lid for Cup



Spouted Lid



Straw

Tools to Use – Cup Add-Ons

Tools to Use – Utensils

Choose utensils as needed or create your own.

Standard Utensils



Fork

Knife

Spoon

Modified Utensil



Spork

Tools to Use – Utensils and Napkins

Modified Utensil



White Handled Fork

White Handled 3-Prong Fork

White Handled Bowled Spoon

White Handled Spoon



Napkin

Food Consistency

Choose one food consistency.

Pureed

Smooth, pudding-like, moist

Ground

Moist, cohesive, no larger than a grain of rice and relish-like in appearance, must be served with low fat gravy, sauce, or condiment

1/4" Pieces

Moist, tender pieces of food that are approximately the width of a number 2 pencil

1/2" Pieces

Moist, tender pieces of food that are approximately the width of a butter knife

1" Pieces

Pieces of food that are approximately the width of a fork

Whole (no changes)

No changes to food preparation

Liquid Consistency

Choose one food consistency.

Thin Liquids

No changes to liquid

Nectar Thick Liquids

Liquid is slightly thickened

Honey Thick Liquids

Liquid is as thick as honey

Pudding Thick Liquids

Liquid that requires spoon for eating

Food Modifications – Foods to Avoid

Choose food restrictions and create as needed.

Do not eat (choking hazard):	
Peanut butter	
Hot dogs	
Thick chewy bread	
Meat on the bone	
Raw vegetables	
Grapes	
Whole hard fruits	
Marshmallows	
French fries	
Nuts	

Food Modifications – Caloric/Nutritional/Medical Needs

Create your own as needed.

Standard caloric intake

Safe Eating Behaviors

Choose or create your own as needed.

Alternate bites/sips of water

Give small bites

Sit upright during meal and 30 minutes after

Verbal prompts to take smaller bites

Chew thoroughly

Cue to slow down

Additional Support Needed

Choose one or create your own as needed.

Prepared by staff

Physically prompt for serving

Independent server

Choose one or create your own as needed.

Fed by staff

Fed by staff

Create your own as needed.