

Tips for Caregivers – for Module on ‘Buying Food at the Food Court’

Title of Video	Tips for Caregivers
Buying Food Independently	Give positive reinforcements - “Good Queuing”, “Good buying of food”, “Good search for seat”. Praises need to be clear, concise and consistent. Be specific so that your child understands what he/she is being praised for and hence the desired behaviour can be shaped. They might not understand general praises such as “Good job” as it does not pinpoint the action they are being praised for.
Episode 1: What if someone joins the queue in front of you?	Reassure your child - “It’s okay”. Give positive reinforcement - “Good wait for your turn”. If your child gets agitated, try calming strategies such as giving stress balls or slow breathing exercises while counting 1, 2, 3. Different calming strategies may work well with different children and it is important to know which strategy is effective before going out.
Episode 2: What if someone cuts your queue?	Reassure your child - “It’s okay”. Redirect your child - “Let’s continue queuing”. Look out for signs of discomfort by the child. If the crowd is rowdy, it might be better to choose another stall or even buy food for the child in some instances.
Episode 3: What if the food is sold out?	Prepare in advance (this may prevent an escalation in your child). Prepare pictures of ‘what to do’ if food choice is unavailable. E.g. • Choose another stall • Buy other types of food • Locate other stall alternatives Reaffirm that food is sold out - “No more food”. Provide another choice - “Let’s choose another stall”.

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Episode 4: What if the store is closed?	Prepare in advance (this may prevent an escalation in your child). Prepare pictures of 'what to do' if food choice is unavailable. E.g. • Choose another stall • Buy other types of food • Locate other stall alternatives Reaffirm that food is sold out - "Stall is closed". Provide another option - "It's okay! Let's buy something else". Depending on the child, it may also be good strategy to always have a preferred food item (e.g. chocolate/mints) or object (e.g. photo) handy so that it can be used to alleviate his/her stress.
Episode 5: What if the queue is long?	Reaffirm that the queue is long - "There is a long queue". Provide calming or waiting tools, e.g. squeeze ball or tablet to keep your child occupied while waiting. Provide another option - "Do you want to continue queuing or buy something else?"
Episode 6: What if you are sitting at someone's reserved seat?	Prepare in advance (this may prevent an escalation in your child). Prepare your job in advance how to look for seats. E.g. • Look for an empty table. • If the table is occupied, request before sitting. If person says "No", look for another table. Reaffirm that table is reserved - "There is someone at this table". Redirect your child - "Let's go to another table".
Episode 7: What if you cannot find a seat?	Prepare in advance. Teach your child to look for a table which is empty or mostly empty even before the community outing. Prepare sensory tools such as ear muffs to reduce noise levels for your child if it affects them. Reaffirm that seat is taken - "There is someone at this seat". Redirect your child - "Let's change to another seat".

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Episode 8: What if someone asks to share the table with you?	Prepare in advance. Run through a scenario of what your child should say if someone asks to share a table. If your child has issues with space due to sensory issues, politely explain the situation to people asking to share the table. Reassure your child - "It's okay, people may ask to share the table". Give positive reinforcements - "Good sharing of table".