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**For  
Immediate  
Release!**

**Ninth Addition to Our Award-Winning  
Toddler Tools™ Board Book Series**

**Praise for the Toddler Tools™ series:**

**“Practical, positive tools for building and maintaining the supportive care environment that toddlers need.”—Dan Gartrell, Ed.D., director of Child Development Training Program, Bemidji State University, “Guidance Matters” columnist in *Young Children*, the journal of NAEYC**

**“There is no such thing as a quick fix. However, if you’re beleaguered by the baby battles, these books could serve as a life preserver.”—*The Post & Courier***

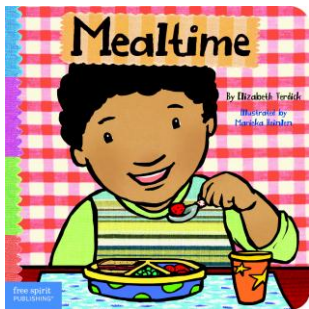
Minneapolis, MN—Free Spirit Publishing presents **MEALTIME** (\$7.95), the ninth book in the award-winning Toddler Tools series of board books by author Elizabeth Verdick and illustrator Marieka Heinlen. In this book, kids learn about healthy nutrition and table manners. **MEALTIME** makes yummy-in-the-tummy time simple with phrases kids will remember and repeat, like “We eat our fruits and veggies to grow up strong and healthy.” The book covers important mealtime routines from washing hands to trying new foods to sitting still until “Mealtime’s done . . . time for more FUN!”

Toddlers are the ultimate multitaskers, moving in several directions at once as they play, experiment, explore, and learn. When it’s time to stop for necessary daily routines, like putting away or politely sharing toys, saying good-bye, listening, sleeping, and eating, it can be hard for toddlers to break stride and focus. Books in the Toddler Tools series are meant to be read before or during the desired “time,” or whenever little ones need positive reinforcement for new routines.

Playfully written by Elizabeth Verdick and whimsically illustrated with Marieka Heinlen’s signature style of using vintage fabrics, **MEALTIME**, **BEDTIME**, **CALM-DOWN TIME**, **MANNERS TIME**, **SHARING TIME**, **NAPTIME**, **LISTENING TIME**, **BYE-BYE TIME**, and **CLEAN-UP TIME** (Free Spirit Publishing, \$7.95 each) give toddlers the tools they need to grow and learn in a positive and nurturing environment.

Each book also contains helpful tips for parents and caregivers, such as:

- **From *Mealtime*: Practice praising your child.** Did she taste a new food? Or remember to use a napkin? Or get through a whole meal without spilling her drink? Notice each small triumph and remember to say, “Good job.”
- **From *Bedtime*: Create a routine.** Young children need 10 to 12 hours of sleep each night, so set an early, regular bedtime. An hour before, help calm down your child by turning off the screens and avoiding roughhousing.
- **From *Calm-Down Time*: Teach calming skills.** Show your child how to take deep breaths in and out, find a quiet place, or use a comfort object like a blanket or doll.



**TODDLER TOOLS™ SERIES**

by Elizabeth Verdick

Illustrated by  
Marieka Heinlen

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## The Toddler Tools™ Series Features These Board Books:

**CLEAN-UP TIME**  
ISBN 978-1-57542-298-5

**BYE-BYE TIME**  
ISBN 978-1-57542-299-2

**LISTENING TIME**  
ISBN 978-1-57542-301-2

**NAPTIME**  
ISBN 978-1-57542-300-5

**SHARING TIME**  
ISBN 978-1-57542-314-2

**MANNERS TIME**  
ISBN 978-1-57542-313-5

**CALM-DOWN TIME**  
ISBN 978-1-57542-316-6

**BEDTIME**  
ISBN 978-1-57542-315-9

**MEALTIME**  
ISBN 978-1-57542-366-1

● \$7.95 ● board book ● 24 pp. ● color illust. ● 7" x 7" ● for toddlers

Author Elizabeth Verdick, Illustrator Marieka Heinlen



### About the Author

Elizabeth Verdick is the author of more than 30 highly acclaimed books for children and teenagers, including books in the Toddler Tools series, the Best Behavior™ series for young children, and the Laugh & Learn™ series for preteens. Her most recent titles include *Don't Behave Like You Live in a Cave* and a bilingual version of *Germs Are Not for Sharing / Los gérmenes no son para compartir*. Elizabeth lives with her husband, daughter, son, and five pets near St. Paul, Minnesota.



### About the Illustrator

Marieka Heinlen received her BFA at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and also studied at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design in London. She launched her career as an award-winning children's book illustrator with the best-selling *Hands Are Not for Hitting*, part of the Best Behavior series. As a freelance illustrator and designer, Marieka focuses her work on books and other materials for children, teens, parents, and teachers. She lives in St. Paul, Minnesota, with her husband and two children.



**About Free Spirit Publishing ([www.freespirit.com](http://www.freespirit.com))**  
**Meeting kids' social, emotional, and educational needs since 1983**

Headquartered in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Free Spirit is the leading publisher of learning tools that support young people's social-emotional health and their educational needs. Free Spirit's mission is to help children and teens think for themselves, succeed in life, and make a difference in the world.