



Mealtime Minutes

Picky Eater

Picky eating behaviors have been identified by families as a major barrier to having regular shared family mealtimes. Parents serve as important role models in helping children develop healthy eating habits. This is especially important as food preferences are formed early and remain stable throughout childhood.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

- Try new foods yourself—parents and other adults serve as important healthy role-models for children.
- Help kids get out of a food rut by encouraging and offering new foods on a regular basis.
- Children need early and repeated exposures to healthy foods.
- It can take children up to ten times to accept a new food.
- Offer a wide variety of healthy foods.
- Try offering food served in different ways or cut up into different shapes.
- Let children help select new fruits and vegetables at the grocery store.
- Make healthy food accessible—have it stored in your cupboard and serve it at the table.
- Turn off the TV—parents serve as important gatekeepers to help children avoid unhealthy media messages.
- Avoid using threats, pressure or bribes to get your child to eat.
- Help your child learn to recognize when they are hungry or when they are full.
- Keep portion sizes appropriate to the age of your child.

