

TINY BITS (BETTER INFORMED TOGETHER) FOR FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

DAUPHIN COUNTY MH/A/DP
OCTOBER 2020 TINY BIT

WHAT TO DO WITH A PICKY EATER

Dealing with a picky eater can be stressful! You face mealtime three or more times a day. You want to feed your child successfully, and when problems arise in this area, parents sometimes blame themselves. You may also worry about your child's health. Remember it's normal for toddlers to be picky eaters. Think of it as another small step toward independence. As long as your child is healthy and growing normally, they are getting enough nutrition, no matter how picky they seem, according to nutrition experts. However, the website, www.choosemyplate.gov offers some tips for getting your picky eater to taste something other than macaroni and cheese.

10 Tips to Get your Picky Eater to Eat

1. Let your child select which fruits and vegetables you buy at the supermarket.
2. Let your child help you cook.
3. Offer choices. Instead of "do you want spinach" try "would you like spinach or broccoli?"
4. Make one meal for everyone instead of serving "kid food" and "adult food".
5. Serve new foods first when little tummies are at their hungriest. Remember to introduce one new food at a time in case there would be an allergic reaction.
6. Expose your child to tastes like peppers and mushrooms by finely chopping them and "sneaking" them into child-friendly dishes like pasta and tomato sauce or pizza.
7. Be a good food role model. Research shows that children are more likely to accept a new food when others around them are eating it too.
8. Start with small portions. If that goes well, the next time, serve a bit more.
9. Stick to water between meals. Filling up on milk or juice decreases the appetite and your child may just not be hungry enough when mealtime arrives.
10. Keep trying. Believe it or not research shows that it might take 15 exposures to a new food before your child accepts it.

Excerpted from: <http://www.centralpennparent.com/2020/10-tips-to-get-your-picky-eater-to-eat> *and* <http://pediatricfeedingnews.com/picky-eating-understanding-stress-at-mealtimes/>

