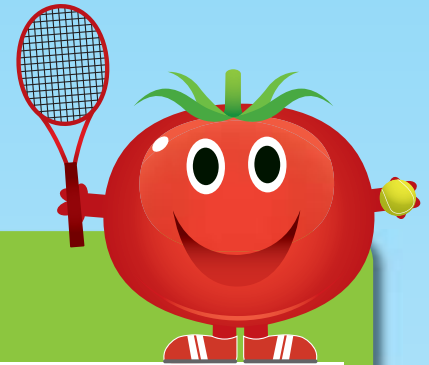


YOUNG CHILDREN AND FUSSY EATING

Feeding young children can be a challenging experience. Preschool aged children often have small appetites and very definite likes and dislikes.

Establishing healthy eating patterns is important to avoid problems such as obesity and eating disorders later in life.



Here are some tips to prevent (or minimise) fussy eating by young children:

Don't give up. Keep trying to offer healthy foods. A child might need to see a food up to ten times before they feel comfortable enough to try it. Try presenting new foods in different ways and with other familiar foods.

Reinforce. Encourage good eating behaviours in small children. When they do eat something healthy, congratulate them – even if it is just for trying one mouthful of a new healthy food.

Role Model. Let your children see you eating and enjoying healthy food. Involve young children in purchasing and preparing healthy food.

Consistency. Keep regular meal and snack times.

Stay Calm. If your child frequently resists food, mealtimes can become stressful. Avoid force feeding and do not feel resentful if your child refuses to eat.

Variety. Offer a range of healthy foods on the plate and allow your child to pick and choose what they will eat.

Take responsibility. Parents need to take responsibility for what, when and where children eat. Your child is responsible for how much they eat. If children don't eat what you have served then don't worry, just take the food away, cover it, refrigerate it (for a short time only) and offer it one more time later on when they are hungry.

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER...

- Children eat when they are hungry.
- Assess your child's food intake over the week, rather than daily.
- If you are worried about your child's diet – speak to your doctor or an Accredited Practising Dietitian.



For more information and ideas on healthy eating and physical activity go to www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

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