



## Fussy Eaters

It is very common for toddlers to go through phases of refusing to eat certain foods or eating only a small selection of foods. Here are some tips on encouraging your child to begin eating a wider variety of foods if they are fussy eater:

- Offer meals and healthy snacks at regular times
- Have meals with the rest of the family or with a social group, making mealtimes enjoyable
- Eat the same meals as your child at mealtimes
- Offer two courses at mealtimes, one savoury and one sweet
- Avoid distractions such as television during mealtimes, and ensure a calm eating environment
- Limit mealtimes to 20-30minutes
- Offer finger foods so that your child feels like he/she is in control
- Don't put too much food on to your child's plate, offer toddler sized portions
- Avoid your child filling up on snacks or drinks such as milk or juice before mealtimes
- Don't put pressure on your child to eat new foods or punish them if they do not eat a new food, but do praise good mealtimes
- Allow your child to decide when he/she has had enough to eat
- Be sensitive to your child's eating preferences, e.g. keep foods separate if preferred
- Involve your child in food shopping / preparing meals / setting the table, without pressuring them to eat the food served
- Avoid using food and drink as a reward
- Don't put a new food on your child's plate unless they agree to it
- Allow your child to try new foods from their parents plates, they may be more likely to accept it
- Take away uneaten food without comment
- If food is not eaten, wait for the next meal or snack to offer a new food
- Present meals and snacks in fun and attractive ways, e.g. by using colourful foods and plates
- Limit choice, don't ask your child what they want to eat but offer them 2-3 options
- Vary the way that you prepare and present new foods to see if they prefer it in other ways, and offer a variety of tastes and textures
- Present new foods 2-5 times a week, but remember it may take over ten tastes for your child to like a new food

Stick to your plan of action to tackle your child's fussy eating, progress will be slow, but be persistent!