

# 10 Ways to Support a Child's Diverse Eating Habits

Encouragement, a positive atmosphere, and a child's development help them bravely try new foods. Changes in a child's eating habits don't happen overnight. These 10 tips can help expand a child's diet.



- 1 Serve new flavors alongside familiar favorites.**  
Don't hide food on the plate. Tell the child what's on it and encourage them to taste. Always include something the child likes at each meal.
- 2 Present foods in a way that makes them easy to recognize.**  
Food may taste better if different items aren't mixed together.
- 3 Encourage tasting without pressure.**  
Tasting is not mandatory. Don't pressure or guilt the child into eating. Comparing them to other children can reduce their appetite. Praise even small successes.
- 4 Serve small portions.**  
If possible, let the child serve themselves the amount they want. They can take more if they wish. A large portion may intimidate them at the start of the meal.
- 5 Eat together with the child.**  
Food tastes better when the whole family eats the same meal. You can use fewer spices in the child's portion. Shared mealtimes make eating a pleasant and anticipated moment. Children learn by watching others.
- 6 Create a calm mealtime environment.**  
Phones, games, and toys don't belong at the table. Give the child time to finish playing before eating. Set an example — don't answer your phone or watch TV while eating.
- 7 Cook together with the child.**  
A young child can wash potatoes, and an older child can make a salad. When chopping vegetables, they may taste them too. Encourage and praise everything they do.
- 8 Offer food regularly.**  
Regular meals are important, even if the child doesn't eat much every time.
- 9 Talk positively about eating.**  
Give positive feedback for small things, like sitting at the table. It can be frustrating if the child doesn't eat, but try to stay calm. Children notice if a parent is worried or upset.
- 10 Take a relaxed approach to food.**  
A positive and flexible attitude supports everyone's well-being. Don't overemphasize healthiness or label foods as "good" or "bad." Treats can be part of a balanced diet. Avoid using treats as rewards.

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