

10 TIPS FOR RAISING HEALTHY EATERS

(and preventing picky eating)



YOU'RE DOING GREAT, MAMA.

the fact that you're here means you care about the health of your kiddos. Keep reading for 10 ways to put the kibosh on picky eating while making meal times a little more peaceful.

1. SCHEDULE MEALS AND SNACKS

By avoiding all-day “grazing” or snacking, kids are more likely to arrive to the table ready to eat. If kids are hungry, they are more likely to try new things.

2. DON'T BE A CONTROL FREAK

The division of responsibility means YOU (as the parent) can control what food is offered, when, and where. You control the environment, put food on the table, etc. Your kids get to decide WHAT from their plate they will eat. There is no forcing, and bribing to eat is NOT a battle you want to get into.

3. TRY AND TRY AGAIN.

Offer the same foods multiple times, even if they don't eat it. It can take 15-20 “tries” to develop a taste for a new food. It's also COMPLETELY normal for toddlers to love something one day, and not the next. Continue to offer.

4. SAME FOOD- DIFFERENT WAY

Offer veggies in different ways! Different seasonings, dips, and cooking methods can increase exposures to the same food without it getting boring. If you usually offer raw broccoli, next time roast it with garlic and salt and pepper and see how your kiddos like it.

5. DON'T NEGOTIATE WITH ~~TERRORISTS~~ TODDLERS

Don't engage in the hunger-strike battle. Your kids will ALWAYS have more willpower than you when it comes to having a food war. Instead of engaging, be sure to always put at least ONE thing on their plate they WILL eat. If they like any raw fruit add it to their dinner plate if you're sure they won't eat dinner.



YOU'VE GOT THIS.

Healthy eating is a process. By committing to offering healthy foods, you are already half way there. Kids get to exercise their own power and preferences (and they WILL), and your job is NOT to force them into anything, but to make it easy to be healthy without having to talk about it all the time. Just like sleeping or any other parenting battle, healthy eating gets easier with consistency!



6. YOU ARE NOT A SHORT ORDER COOK

Don't offer multiple meal options. Kids are smart and they will quickly get used to having a pb&j or mac and cheese for dinner if they don't like what you cook. You are NOT a short order cook. Offer one meal and if they don't like it, they can wait until the next meal. (but again, try and always have one thing on the plate they will eat.)

7. KEEP IT COOL.

If your kids aren't big into fruits and veggies, put out a fruit and veggie tray on your counter and then walk away. Chances are good, they will stop and try a few bites. It's a great method for avoiding the "eat your veggies" battle (which isn't recommended).

8. NO SCREENS WHILE EATING.

Avoid screens during meal time and while snacking. Watching screens while eating makes it harder to pay attention to hunger cues and your kids (and you!) will be much more likely to overeat while watching TV (or movie, phone, kindle, etc.)



9. NO SUGARY DRINKS

- Avoid sugary drinks at all costs! They are high calorie and don't provide any satiety meaning they are calories without helping to feel full. When you drink sugary drinks (soda, sports drinks, juice, etc.) your kiddos can more easily take in more calories than their body needs.

10. ASK FOR THEIR INPUT!

Ask your kids what foods they like, what their favorite fruit is and if they'll help you cook! Include your kids in cooking, meal planning, and taste testing whenever possible. More fun = less stress for everyone.