



PICKY EATING

PRESENTED BY MEHLVILLE EC
PBIS



WHY IS MY CHILD PICKY?

- **sensory-** food is too hot, too mushy, too slimy, looks different
- **behavior-** inflexibility and/or wants to be in control
- **learned-** other kids or parents behavior
- **poor oral motor skills-** some textures are tricky to maneuver
- **eating environment-** too loud, wants to play, distracted

HOW CAN I INTRODUCE NEW FOODS?

At Mehlville EC, we approach picky eating by letting kids explore food before eating

-start with the child's preferred food

-slowly add in foods that are commonly seen on your table

-initially, try to keep foods that are similar in taste, color, and texture to preferred foods

1. child allows food to *be on plate*
2. child will *touch* the food
3. child will *smell* the food
4. child will *kiss* the food
5. child will put the food *in mouth*
6. child will *bite* the food
7. child will *chew* the food and *spit it out*
8. child will *chew and swallow* the food

Adapted from Kay Toomey's SOS Approach to Feeding

<https://sosapproach-conferences.com/about-us/the-sos-approach/>

QUICK TIPS

Be a good role model. If you're eating a food you don't like, explain how you're trying a food that isn't your favorite. Talk about how you'll try it again later.

Beware of saying "you don't like _____", when they ask to try a new food at a restaurant or grocery store.

Talk about the texture/color/taste of foods as you're eating foods. Overemphasize how to take a bite and how to crunch and chew.

Offer some preferred and some non-preferred foods at every meal. Be sure at least a small portion of the non-preferred food makes it on to your child's plate, even if you know they aren't going to touch it.

Take your child grocery shopping and have them help cook with you. The more they're involved, the more they'll want to try!

Use dips/sauces/soups/spices to introduce and/or mask flavors of new foods – and avoid the face you want to make when they ask for Ranch dressing with strawberries! Try ketchup, sour cream, yogurt, cheese sauce, cream of ____ soup, BBQ, salsa, marinara, etc, etc, etc!

Buy different brands/flavors/shapes of the same food, so kids get used to different presentations of the same food!

Use child friendly plates and utensils to keep mealtime fun!

Don't give up trying new foods! Remind your child that your taste buds change every few months.