

Dealing with Picky Eaters

Understanding Picky Eating...



WHAT IS PICKY EATING ?

Picky Eating: Noticing, and understanding the common behaviours.

Introduction:

- Many children go through phases of picky eating, which can be challenging for parents. In this short guide, we'll explore the reasons behind picky eating and offer strategies to encourage your child to try new foods.
- Picky eating is a common phase that many children go through as they develop their taste preferences. It's essential for parents to understand the reasons behind picky eating to differentiate between typical picky eating behaviours and more severe food aversions.

Common Picky Eating Behaviours:

Food Neophobia	Children may be hesitant to try new foods, especially those with unfamiliar textures, colours, or smells.
Limited Food Preferences	Picky eaters often have a limited range of foods they are willing to eat, sticking to familiar and often less nutritious options.

Underlying Causes:

Sensory Sensitivities	Some children have heightened sensitivity to certain textures, tastes, or smells, making them more selective about what they eat.
Development Stages	Picky eating can be a part of a child's developmental stage. As they grow and explore the world around them, their food preferences may change.
Control and Independence	Picky eating can sometimes be a way for children to exert control or assert their independence.

Create a Positive Mealtime Environment

Creating a positive mealtime environment is crucial for encouraging your child to be more adventurous with their food choices.

Techniques to consider:



Set a Good Example

Be a role model by eating a variety of foods yourself. Children are more likely to try new foods if they see their parents enjoying them.



Family Meals

Enjoy meals together as a family whenever possible. Family meals promote a sense of togetherness and provide opportunities for trying new foods.



Involvement in Meal Preparation

Involve your child in age-appropriate meal preparation tasks. When children participate in cooking, they may become more curious about trying the dishes they helped create.



Keep Meals relaxed

Avoid pressure or battles over food. Make mealtimes enjoyable and stress-free.



Offer Choices

Give your child some control by offering choices within healthy options. For example, let them choose between broccoli or carrots as a side dish.

Top Tips:

What can you do?: Understanding picky eating and creating a positive mealtime environment can help your child develop a more adventurous palate.

Patience is Key

Understand that picky eating is a phase for many children. Be patient and avoid power struggles over food.

Introduce New Foods Gradually

Introduce new foods slowly and alongside familiar favorites. This reduces the fear of the unknown.

Positive Reinforcement

Praise your child when they try new foods, even if it's just a small taste. Positive reinforcement encourages them to explore further.

Keep Healthy Snacks Available

Have a variety of healthy snacks readily available for your child to choose from between meals.

Consult a Professional

If your child's picky eating is causing nutritional concerns or is extreme, consider consulting a healthcare professional or a nutrition expert for more information.

Learn more at:
schoolhealthuk.co.uk/nourished