Raising happy eaters

Supporting children to learn, enjoy and behave well at mealtime can start when you introduce solids. This will set them up to be happy eaters for life and help prevent fussy eating behaviours.



POSITIVE MEALTIMES

- Carers decide what foods to offer, the child chooses how much to eat.
- Talk about the colour, texture and taste of food, e.g. "mushy green peas".
- If your baby throws food, they may be full. Calmly remove the food and say, 'it looks like you are finished'.
- Avoid offering other foods if your child is not interested in the meal provided.
- Avoid using bribes, pressure, or rewards to get your child to eat.

BE A POSITIVE ROLE MODEL

- Eat together whenever possible.
- Explore new foods together.
- Serve the same meal to the whole family. Adapt meals for your baby's age and stage.
- Try not to react if your child rejects a food. You could say 'That's okay, you don't have to eat it today'.
- Enjoy drinking water in front of your children.



CREATING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS WITH FOOD

- Involve children in food preparation. Children are more likely to try foods they have explored.
- Encourage them to smell, touch, and play with food, without the pressure to eat.
- Encourage children to feed themselves – it's okay if they make a mess!
- Involve older children in setting the table and taking their plate to the sink/dishwasher.

CREATE A FEEDING ROUTINE



- Always seat your baby in a highchair, with a 5-point safety harness and footrest.
- Wash baby's hands before and after the meal.
- Provide meals and snacks every 2-3 hours.
- Give baby their own soft spoon to hold and practice using at each mealtime.

AVOID DISTRACTIONS

Turn off the television, put away devices and toys during mealtimes. This is a chance to talk and interact.

PORTION SIZES

- Give small amounts of food to begin, offer more if they are still hungry.
- A big plate of food can overwhelm a child.



Child portion



Adult portion

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT

- www.karitane.com.au
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