



TIPS FOR 'CHOOSY' EATERS

School administrators and teachers play an important role in helping children learn healthy habits that will last a lifetime. With over 10 years' experience bringing our healthy, made-from-scratch meals to kids, we know a thing or two about getting children to try nutritious and varied foods – and enjoy them! Read on for some useful tips to ensure a successful meal time filled with abundant learning opportunities.

IMPLEMENT A LUNCH TIME ROUTINE

Try including a daily song or hand washing break before meal time. Children respond well to routine and trying a new food can easily become a fun activity the children look forward to.

SCHEDULE RECESS BEFORE LUNCH

Hungry children are much more likely to try new foods.

MINIMIZE DISTRACTIONS DURING MEAL TIMES

Put away toys, games and any other items that may interrupt meal time so children can focus for the duration of the meal.

EAT IN A FAMILY STYLE SETTING

Encourage teachers to sit and eat with children. Eating the same foods together encourages discussion and allows us to lead by example. When children see adults enjoying new foods, it sparks their curiosity to try something new.

START SMALL

Serve small portions of new foods so your students can try a taste without feeling overwhelmed.

DISCUSS THE FOOD'S COLOR, SHAPE, AND TEXTURE WITH YOUR STUDENTS

Exploring and understanding a new food will give a tentative child the confidence to try it.

"DON'T YUCK A YUM"

Encourage students to use descriptive language when talking about foods they don't like. Explain that everybody likes different foods and flavors, and when we say "yuck!" it can discourage others from trying. Motivate students to be specific when they do not like an item by asking questions like "Which part didn't you like? Was it the flavor or the texture? Was there any part you did like?"

INITIATE A "FOOD CENTRIC" DISCUSSION

Ask students how they might make a particular dish at home or what they ate for dinner the night before. If adults are actively focused on food and the meal, students will be too.

REPETITION IS KEY

It can take 8-10 exposures to a new food before children feel fully comfortable. Be patient and encourage children again and again.

If you notice a child with extreme avoidance to a food, it's always best to contact a parent or caregiver to find a solution.