

TIP SHEET: Picky Eating

What is Picky Eating?

Picky eating, also known as “selective eating” is when a child may eat during mealtime, but only eats small amounts of food **OR** may not have a healthy/balanced diet because they only eat a few or certain types of food (Bachmeyer, 2009).



Here are some evidence-based strategies to help with picky-eaters at home:

Food Presentation	Offer Choices	Model	Positive Reinforcement
 <p>Present non-preferred food at the SAME TIME you provide your child with preferred food that they like! Both foods can be on the same spoon, blended together, or have the non-preferred food inside or covered by the food that your child likes (i.e. Nutella on apples, sprinkles on yogurt)</p>	 <p>Provide your child with CHOICES on how he/she would like to eat the non-preferred food. For example: allow them to pick the plate, type of utensil, type of food, or where they want to eat it.</p> <p>Make it fun! (i.e. use a giant serving spoon to eat a yogurt.)</p>	 <p>Sit with your child while eating and MODEL how to eat the non-preferred food appropriately. Have one plate for you and the other for your child with the same food item to demonstrate eating the food appropriately. Be enthusiastic!</p>	 <p>AFTER your child eats more food than he/she typically does or tries new foods that he/she hasn't before, provide them with their favourite item such as a toy, food, or drink with positive statements such as “way to go!”</p>

Make it a positive, fun and enjoyable eating experience **WITH** your child!

Families can contact a Bethesda Service Coordinator by calling 905.684.6918 ext. 170 or by emailing serviceinfo@bethesdaservices.com to book an individual consultation.

Note: This resource is provided for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for professional advice, diagnosis, or treatment from a qualified ABA clinician.