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Picky Eaters

www.communitybridges.org

Nearly every child is a picky eater at one time or another, especially between the ages of two and six. Sometimes emotional issues get played out at mealtimes. A child may be trying to say, “I need more independence” or “I’m not getting enough attention.”

It is important to remember the basic rules of a good feeding relationship:

Adults are responsible for... what is presented to eat and the manner in which it is presented.

Children are responsible for... how much and even whether they eat.



Helpful Tips:

- Consider if the child is a picky eater or just a light eater.
- Don’t compare the amount of food eaten by one child to another.
- Focus less on what a child eats at a particular meal or snack and look at the foods eaten over several days. Recognize that appetites vary from meal to meal and day to day.
- Don’t pressure a child to take “just one more bite” to please you. Allow children to respect their own feelings of hunger and satiety.
- Do not beg, bribe or threaten a child to eat.
- Understand that some children may be extra sensitive to tastes, textures and smells.
- Serve small portions so a child will not be overwhelmed.
- Don’t make a big deal about a child’s picky eating. Calmly explain that this is the meal that is being served now and let them know when the next meal or snack will be served.

Making mealtime a battleground can affect a child’s relationship with food. Make peace with your picky eater. When a child

Chicken Taco Soup (From: www.atthetable.mdanderson.org)

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| Chicken breast, boneless, skinless..... | 1 pound |
| Canola oil..... | 1 Tbsp |
| Onion, chopped..... | 1 |
| Chili powder..... | to taste |
| Tomatoes, diced..... | 15 oz can |
| Celery stalks, chopped..... | 2 |
| Green chilies, diced..... | 4 oz |
| Corn, frozen..... | 2 cups |
| Chicken broth..... | 3 cups |

Cilantro, homemade tortilla strips, shredded cheese..... optional

1. Sauté chicken in oil, until cooked through. Remove from the pot and shred.
2. Add onion and celery to same pot and sauté until light golden brown. Add all other ingredients, including the chicken and simmer 10–15 minutes, until vegetables are soft and flavors are blended.
3. Sprinkle with cilantro, homemade tortilla strips and cheese, if desired.

Yield: 6 servings

Meets requirement for fruit/vegetable and protein/meat alternate.

Did you Know!

- A yearly influenza (flu) vaccine is recommended for everyone 6 months of age and older.
- Seasonal flu activity can begin as early as October and continue to occur as late as May, peaking in January or February.
- More than 23 million Americans, including 6.5 million children, live in food deserts—areas that are more than a mile away from a supermarket.
- Nearly 45% of children living in poverty are overweight or obese compared with 22% of children living in households with incomes 4 times the poverty level.

Source: President’s Council on Fitness, Sports and Nutrition, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Source: Child Care Food Program Roundtable

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