

Transforming Autism Workshop 2.0: A Live, Interactive Event

10 Strategies to End Picky Eating

By Luminara Serdar



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1

Bring your child with you to the grocery store or farmer's market and have them help you put fruits and veggies into the cart, possibly teaching them why they would want to eat the item.

For example, carrots make your eyes strong and help you see, celery helps keep the inside of your body clean, etc.



2

Have your child help you in the kitchen, even if it is to just help you move vegetables from the fridge to the counter.

Even the smallest of children can help with this.



3

To the degree they are able, have your children wash, peel, chop, or get their hands on vegetables.



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4

Keep putting the vegetable on their plate each time you eat. Put a small side plate nearby.



If they refuse to eat the food, or want it off their plate, have them move it over to the side plate. But first require them to smell, lick or taste it. This gives another sensory exposure.

The more exposures your child has to smelling, touching and tasting a food, the more familiar they become with it and more likely they are to be curious and taste it.

5

Hide vegetables in soups by pureeing with a hand held mixer or blender.

Cut a straw in half and let them sip the soup (not hot!) through a straw (if they are able), which helps them to ingest more of it.



6

Often it's easy to hide nutritious foods in smoothies. Think about different fruits and even greens like lettuce (which provides little in the way of taste, but lots of fiber!).

You can even add things like collagen, bone broths, vitamins.



7

Make popsicles or frozen blends in ice cube trays. Picky eaters often like the cold feeling and the flavor of what's inside will be less important.



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8

Instead of saying “Eeww!” or “Yuck!” or making a horrible face, teach your child to say “It’s not my favorite” about a particular food, if verbal enough to express this.

Or teach them a hand signal to express this. In doing so, you are giving your child agency and choice. They may feel like they have more control over their life.

It’s their choice to not like it, but they might continue to eat it!



9

Make sure your children are hungry when they come to the table to eat. It makes their first bites taste better!

Leave a window of 1 ½ to 2 hours between the previous snack and mealtime, as well as the post-meal snack.

If kids know they can come and get a snack a half hour after dinner, they are less likely to eat what they are served.



10

Put vegetables on the table first, like a first course. They may be in a blended soup or a raw veggie and dip platter.

Your children may be hungry enough to try a new thing and it’ll taste better if they haven’t eaten in a while!



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