

Supporting Healthy Eating Choices



We all make choices when it comes to eating. Individual food choices and appetites vary significantly, especially for children between the ages of 1-6 years. Here are some strategies for families and carers to support children in making healthy food choices.

How to support healthy eating choices

Families and Carers

Families and carers can support children at mealtimes by deciding:

1. **What type of food is provided**
2. **What time to eat**

This is particularly important for children who are exploring different food and eating choices. This process gives children access to a variety of foods, and provides a regular eating routine.

Children

Once the food is provided, children can then decide:

1. **If they want to eat**
2. **How much they want to eat**

Allowing children to make these choices supports their natural ability of knowing how much food their body needs, and helps them to learn when they feel hungry or full.

Handy hints about child eating behaviours

- Children often balance out how much they eat over a few days (e.g. if they aren't hungry today they'll likely make up for it tomorrow).
- Children may use food as a way of exploring their independence (e.g. liking a food one day and refusing it the next).
- A lot of options on the plate can sometimes be overwhelming and cause children to eat less.



A useful tip:

To understand how much a child is eating, track their appetite over a full week rather than over one day or meal.



For easy ideas and tips on packing healthy lunchboxes visit: www.goodforkids.com.au

How can I tell if my child is eating enough?

If your child is happy, energetic and tracking well on their growth chart, they are likely eating enough.

What to do if you are concerned

If you are concerned about your child's diet or growth speak with your doctor or Child and Family Health Nurse.



Artwork: 'The Heart of a Child'
Worimi Artist Lara Went

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