

Positive mealtime environments



It's best for mealtimes to be **positive, enjoyable** and provide **children with opportunities** to be exposed to a **variety of healthy foods choices**.



Tips for mealtimes:

- ✓ Safe and seated
- ✓ Educator sits with the children
- ✓ Relaxed and welcoming
- ✓ Positive language
- ✓ Minimise distractions
- ✓ Encourage social interaction

"Yum. This red apple is so crunchy."

It is best not to use food as a bribe or reward.

It's recommended to respect a child's hunger and fullness signals and appetite.

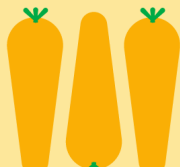


"How many different colours can you see on your plate?"



Tips for educators:

- ✓ Engage in conversations
- ✓ Show enthusiasm about the meal
- ✓ Eat with children and enjoy the same food
- ✓ Be patient with slow eaters
- ✓ Avoid a fuss over mess or uneaten food



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Supporting fussy eaters for educators



A **happy and relaxed mealtime** reduces stress levels and **helps children** develop good eating habits.



Prepare foods in various ways, for example cooked, raw and crunchy or grated.



Be a **positive role model** by sharing meals and eating the same healthy food with the children.



Grow fruit and vegetables as a fun way for children to learn about food.



Support children to be involved in **food preparation**.



Encourage children to **explore foods by looking, smelling, touching and licking**.

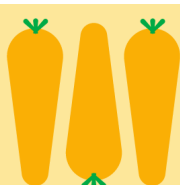


Promote **relaxed** and **enjoyable** mealtimes.

Encourage **discussion** about the colour, shape, flavour and texture of food.



Keep trying.
You may need to offer a new food up to **15** times for children to accept it.



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A whole of service approach



Taking a whole of service approach ensures that **staff, educators, families and the broader community** work together to support healthy eating.

Here are some ideas to encourage a **whole of service approach**.



Networking

- Encourage educators and cooks to work collaboratively towards the healthy eating goals of your service.
- Support educators and cooks to engage with the Munch & Move team to learn more about healthy eating.



Relationships

- For a coordinated approach to healthy eating, encourage positive relationships between staff and families.
- Support your cook to engage children in fun, collaborative cooking experiences.



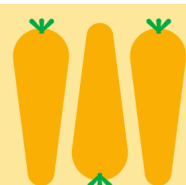
Community

- Connect with families and local community to build gardens, worm farms and composting at your service.
- Connect with local Aboriginal people and communities to create a bush tucker garden.
- Cook the food produce with children at your service or share with your community.



Orientation

- Communicate regularly with families and staff about the philosophy of your service regarding food and nutrition.
- Discuss the role of your service in supporting healthy child eating at orientation, in service newsletters or social media communication and during staff meetings.



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