

Does your dinner table become a battle ground?

Planning every meal around a picky eater can be frustrating and does not help create an inviting family table. Plus, your child's limited food choices may rob them of consuming various vitamins and minerals.

Here are some suggestions from "Today's Parent" to help create a more positive family meal time environment and encourage a picky eater to expand their taste buds:

- 1. Concentrate on creating a pleasurable dinner table that focuses more on time together than what and how much your child eats. The family table is an opportunity to connect with each other.
- 2. Encourage your child to help plan meals and participate in grocery shopping for those meals. Suggest that your child pick one new food to try. It might be helpful if you suggest three new foods and your child pick one of them.
- 3. Reintroduce a new food at least 10-15 times. Allow your child to taste, handle and smell the food. Remain calm if your child refuses to eat the food.
- 4. Practice what you preach. Model healthy eating habits. You can also take a turn at trying something new.
- 5. Allow your child to help with meal preparation. The time spent together in preparation will help expose the child to the food and the child can gain a sense of pride knowing that they helped with the meal

I hope these suggestions help you and your family to have a more relaxed mealtime gathering. Persistence, patience and praise will go a long way to encourage your picky eater to be a more adventurous eater.

*Nurse Farley*

*Walton, K (2017, December 5). 5 science-backed ways to get your picky eater to try new food. Today's Parent. Retrieved from <https://www.todayparent.com/toddler/picky-eaters/5-science-backed-ways-to-get-your-picky-eater-to-try-new-foods/>*