

# A Guide to Navigating Picky Eating



# Why Kids Resist New Foods



## It Feels Like a Test

Kids resist not because they're stubborn, but because mealtime can feel like pressure and work.



## "Just Try It"

Hearing "just take one bite" over and over makes eating feel stressful instead of fun.



## The Good News

Small, playful shifts can completely change how your child experiences food.

## Three Strategies to Try



### Explore Outside Mealtime

Let kids wash carrots or stir a bowl – hands-on food play builds curiosity that leads to tasting.



### Turn Food Into a Game

Pretend you're running a restaurant. Let your child be the chef or star-rating taste tester!



### Model Curiosity

Show, don't tell. Say "I love how crunchy this apple is" – sparking curiosity instead of resistance.



### Give Ownership

When kids feel in control of food, they feel safe enough to explore it on their own terms.



### Make It Fun

When food becomes part of play, it feels exciting instead of intimidating.

# What Changes When You Shift the Approach



## Connection Over Stress

Instead of mealtime battles, you create moments of warmth and shared experience.



## Discovery Over Resistance

Picky eating gives way to openness and a door to new foods and flavors.



## Adventurous Kids

Kids are naturally curious – give them the chance and they'll surprise you.



## Less Pressure

Stepping back from "one more bite" opens space for your child to feel safe with food.



## Healthy Relationship

Small shifts today build a joyful, healthy relationship with food that lasts a lifetime.

# Remember: Lead by Example



## Show Your Enjoyment

Say things like "I love dipping my carrot in hummus" – you model curiosity, not commands.



## No Pressure Language

The difference between "you have to try this" and "I enjoy this" is everything for a child.



## They're Always Watching

Your relationship with food quietly shapes theirs – make it a positive one.



## Be Patient

Progress with picky eating is gradual – celebrate small wins along the way.



## Stay Consistent

Returning to these strategies at every meal builds lasting trust and openness with food.

# Want More Support?

📅 Your Ollie team is here to help your child build a healthy, joyful relationship with food. Schedule an appointment to get personalized guidance for your family.

Talk to your **Ollie team** about your child's specific eating challenges

Schedule a **personalized appointment** to get tailored strategies for your family

Explore more **tips and hacks** to support healthy eating habits at home

Learn how **play-based approaches** can reduce mealtime stress for the whole family

Build a foundation of **joyful, stress-free mealtimes** that grow with your child