

# Introducing New Foods

Children are often reluctant and sometimes even stubborn when it comes to trying new foods. Experiment with some of these ideas to help the little ones you serve be courageous and try that mysterious green vegetable.

## EAT IT UP!

Creativity is a great way to help introduce new foods to skeptical children.



- ◆ Use “food art” (such as a face or flower) to create something fun with the new food.
- ◆ Have a food of the week and try cooking it in different ways. Ask the children which preparations they prefer.
- ◆ Make it fun by having the children taste the new food using a blindfold. Often children gauge the food by what it looks like.
- ◆ Research the food with the child. Find out where and how it grows and interesting facts about the food.
- ◆ Let the children pick which food they want to try.
- ◆ Have everyone put their hands behind their back and try to eat the new food without their hands. This is a fun way to try new foods.
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- ◆ Eat with the children to encourage good eating habits. Make positive comments about the way the food smells, looks, and tastes.
- ◆ Try the food at a time of day when the child is most likely to accept the new food. The child may be sleepy or unpleasant in the morning, so try the new food at lunch time.
- ◆ Have children make up a name for a certain food or dish. For instance, peas become power balls and carrots are rocket ships.
- ◆ Allow the child to help prepare the food.
- ◆ Let the children be the enforcers of you trying a food you don't like or have never tried.
- ◆ Pair new foods with old favorites.
- ◆ Try dips or cutting the food into fun shapes.
- ◆ Mix unfamiliar flavors or foods with familiar ones and talk about what you are eating.
- ◆ Try it again. It takes several exposures to new foods for a child to accept and enjoy the food.
- ◆ Make mealtime stress-free. Talk about fun and happy things. Children are more likely to try something new in a safe, happy environment.



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