



## Ten Ways to Encourage Your Child to Eat More Fruits & Vegetables

1. **Avoid labeling your child a “picky eater.”** Labeling your child can lower your expectations and prevent you from encouraging your child to try new foods. Similarly, a child who hears he is a picky eater may assume he can't be anything other than a picky eater.
2. **Use food bridges.** Expand your child's palate by building from what they already like. Go from carrots to sweet potato. Or from mashed potatoes to mashed cauliflower.
3. **Be a role model.** If you want your children to eat more fruit and vegetables, make sure you eat a wide variety of them. Eat meals with your children and let them see you eating – and enjoying – fruits and vegetables.
4. **Maximize meal times.** Serve veggies at the start of the meal, when children are hungriest. Offer up a dip and raw veggies while they are waiting for dinner. Or put out the veggies before the other food.
5. **Involve your child in what they eat.** Take your children with you to the grocery store or farmers market. Ask them to pick out the apples or select the cucumbers. Take them to the produce section and let them pick any fruit or vegetable to try.
6. **Make food fun.** Give your children a mix of cut up raw veggies and let them make pictures or faces on their plate. Use cookie cutters to make fun shapes in slices of watermelon or use Kotobuki vegetable cutters to cut out stars and hearts with cucumbers and peppers.
7. **Close the restaurant.** Make and serve one meal for everyone, with vegetable and fruit options. Your child can eat as much as they want of whatever is on the table, but don't make other food. When you want to try something new, make sure there is at least one “staple” your children will eat for dinner on the table, like rice.
8. **Snack smart.** Commit to one small morning and afternoon snack a day and offer whole fruits and veggies. Minimize the mindless eating or eating out of boredom and make sure to snack at least a few hours before mealtime, so everyone comes to the table hungry.
9. **Taste.** Children, like adults, eat what tastes good. Instead of serving plain, steamed veggies, roast them with some olive oil and salt at 375 degrees for 45 minutes.
10. **Healthy eating, like learning to read, is a skill that takes time.** Don't get discouraged if it takes a few weeks (or months!) for your children to adapt. Research says it can take upwards of 20 times for a child to like something new.

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