

## Fussy Eating

It is very common for children aged 1-6 years to be fussy eaters. They may eat a certain food one day and not the next. Children have different taste preferences compared with adults.

Children are often interested in playing and exploring rather than wanting to eat. Children can be strong-willed about eating or not wanting to eat but this is all a part of their development.

Children will usually become less fussy the older they get.

# How to manage Fussy Eaters

- Make mealtimes regular, happy, calm and a family occasion
- Do not worry about spilt foods or a mess on the floor
- Do not force your child to eat a food
- Do not offer bribes to your child as this sends a message that healthy food is a chore
- Do not react to fussy eating as this may encourage your child to keep behaving this way
- Make foods fun and colourful, cutting them into shapes
- Turn off the TV and other screens so you can focus on each other
- Set a time limit of 20 minutes, if the food is not eaten, take it away and do not offer more food until the next snack or mealtime
- It is the parent's responsibility to provide the healthy foods and calm environment and the child's responsibility to decide how much they will eat
- Get your child to help prepare foods including getting foods out of the fridge, washing fruits and vegetables, picking herbs/vegetables from the garden



# Foods and Fussy Eaters

- Traditionally parents have been taught to introduce solid foods starting with soft pureed foods, grading up to mash using a spoon and then to soft finger foods.
- Baby-Led weaning is an approach to introducing solid foods, developed by Gill Rapely and Tracey Murkett. The guiding principle of this approach is to skip giving purees/mash using spoons and to allow your child to finger feed soft foods themselves from the beginning.
- Baby-Led Weaning is not recommended for babies who have a developmental delay or slowed growth.

