





## FEED WITH CONFIDENCE



Eating habits of toddlers can be challenging. Some days your child has a big appetite, other days they may only eat favorite foods or nothing at all.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO WHEN YOUR CHILD REFUSES TO EAT?

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- Respond as little as possible to any refusal.
  - Pressuring your child to eat can make it worse.
  - Remember your toddler is not growing as fast as when they were a baby. It is normal for a toddler's appetite to change.

### TIPS FOR MEALTIME SUCCESS:

- Let your child help with meals. Children like to eat foods they help to prepare.
- Eat together and talk about what you are eating. This helps your toddler learn about food and the importance of eating healthy.
- Be a good example! Eat the same foods as your toddler. Your child will learn from your example – and the whole family benefits from eating healthy.
- Give your child small portions, so they are not overwhelmed. If they are still hungry, they will ask for more!



- Remember, a child may need to be offered a new food 10 or more times before taking a first taste. Stay positive and avoid forcing your child to take a bite. When a child feels in control, they will develop the confidence to try new foods.
- Bribes do not work. They teach kids to expect a treat or prize for eating. Bribes can make a child even more picky about eating!
- Stay at the table until your family is done eating. This can help your toddler focus more on mealtime.
- Allow some time for slow eaters.

## **PRACTICE PATIENCE**

Help your child learn to listen to their signs of hunger and fullness. If your child does not want to eat at mealtime, do not force them. Even if they are not going to eat, have your child sit with the family at mealtime and stick to your planned meal – avoid offering other foods. If your child does not eat now, do not worry. They can eat at the next meal or snack.

