

**Family Living
Focus**

by
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eating sandwiches which are cut in triangles, only eating a certain type of cereal or only drinking from a certain cup. This is normal.

When feeding toddlers and preschoolers, consider what a plate full of food looks like to a little one. Serve children food on a child size plate and offer small servings of food (1-2 table-spoons). They can always ask for more if they are still hungry.

Remember that children have small stomachs and can't hold enough food to keep them going from one meal to the next. Regular meals and snacks give children the energy they need to keep them going during the day. Plan snack time for 1-1½ hours after a meal.

Trying New Foods

Trying new foods is "no sweat" for some children but for others it is a monumental job!

It is important that children are given chances to try new foods. It's up to the child to decide if he/she will try a new food. It is ok if they do not want to try the food but remember that a child needs to be offered a new food many times (8-10 times) before they may eat it. Preschoolers are generally more willing to try new foods than toddlers.

With spring upon us, consider

letting your young child become involved in gardening. Some parents think a child's place is definitely not in the garden due to the number of plants that get stomped to death by the pattering of little feet! Conversely, the garden is a great place for a child to learn about food. Young children are fascinated by how things grow and often are more willing to try new foods if they have helped plant, care for, and pick the food.

Besides growing things like cherry tomatoes, potatoes, and squash, let the children try to grow some things that they probably won't eat. Growing

such things, eggplant, broccoli, pumpkins and okra give them the opportunity to see other vegetables they may eventually eat. Sunflowers are always a hit as they grow quickly and the seeds can be roasted and eaten in the fall. Allowing little ones the opportunity to "garden" might even spark their interest in tasting something new.

When all else fails, remember that a child will eat what they like and leave the rest! Your job is to offer children new foods and food experiences and to encourage healthy eating but you cannot force a child to eat certain foods!

**Kids & Food
Yuck!**

How many parents of preschoolers and toddlers hate to hear a child utter this lovely word?

I will admit, with three young children in our household, I have heard that word uttered just a few too many times! The effect of this word is magnified even more when a group of children are together in a child care center or at a family picnic.

When caring for infants, we pretty much feed them upon demand and get relatively little resistance to the foods we offer them. As children move from infants into toddlerhood, often times the child that once ate everything now eats very little or only certain foods.

Between the ages of 10 and 12

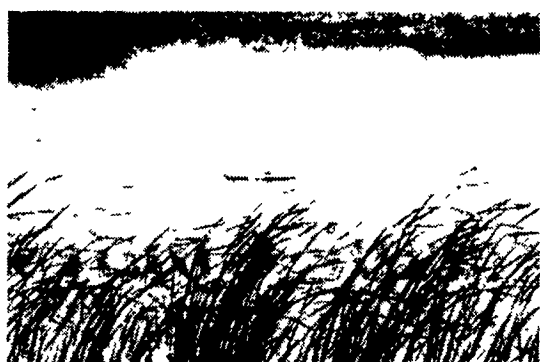
months, toddlers slow down in their growing and that means they may not eat as much as before. This is ok. As long as the child is growing adequately and is healthy, there is no need for alarm. At this age, children become very interested in the things around them and not as interested in food.

They are also learning to be independent and say "No." Not eating certain foods may be their way to be in control. Young children are also very good at eating as much as needed. Self regulation as it is known, is a natural skill.

Preschoolers are learning to eat with forks and spoons. When they are really hungry, they may go back to eating with their hands. You may find they are fussy about things, such as only

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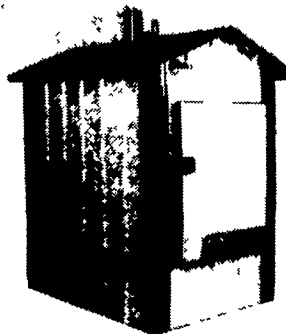
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(Adapted from a quiz by Dr Eigi Noguchi)

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 - I sleep restlessly, waking up frequently
 - I suffer from chronic fatigue
 - I have poor physical endurance
 - I tend to be moody and irritable
 - I am susceptible to colds and flu
 - I suffer from allergies
 - I frequently feel tense and on edge
 - I am frequently constipated
 - I have frequent pain in my shoulder and/or back
 - I have weight problems
 - I crave sweets, alcohol or soda

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