

## **Transcript: Overcoming Pick Eating for Preschool Children**

### **Welcome to Overcoming Pick Eating for Preschool Children.**

#### **About this course**

If your child is a picky eater you have likely experienced frustration at meal times. Especially if your child insists on eating the same foods over and over again. Picky eating can be a passing phase, but if you consistently give in to your child's demands it can quickly become a habit. This course will provide tips for helping your child overcome picky eating.

You will learn:

- Tips for encouraging your child to try new foods.
- Ideas for involving your child in meal preparation and serving.
- The importance of parents and guardians serving as role models.

#### **Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 1**

Tip 1: Do not force your child to eat all of the food on his or her plate.

- Although we want to encourage children to try new foods, we do not want to force them to eat everything on their plates if they are not hungry.
- Forcing children to eat everything on their plate may override these feelings and encourage them to eat past the feeling of full.

Click on the red apple at the bottom left of the screen for healthy tips.

*Healthy Tips:*

Allow your child to decide when he/she is full, but avoid fixing a snack for the child immediately after the meal is over.

#### **Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 2**

Tip 2: Set small obtainable goals for your child.

- Encourage your child to take at least two bites from all of the foods on the plate, but do not require your child to clean his/her plate. This demonstrates the importance of trying different foods without overwhelming into feeling he or she has to eat it all.
- To help with this, serve your child small portions on child-sized plates.

Click on the red apple at the top left of the screen for healthy tips.

### *Healthy Tips:*

Try reading the book called “The Two Bite Club” with your child. The focus of the book is to encourage a child to try at least two bites from each food group. This children’s book is available for download in English & Spanish through the United States Department of Agriculture. Click on the link at the bottom of this page to access the book.

### **Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 3**

Tip 3: Stay positive at meal times and avoid turning the dinner table into a battle ground.

Be patient and don’t give up!

It may take 10-15 tries for your child to accept a new food. Keep providing the new item and encourage your child to try two bites each time.

Click on the food to see more tips.

#### *Salad bowl*

Even if your child chooses not to eat, have him/her stay at the table while the family eats and join in the conversation.

#### *Oatmeal bowl*

Try not to make comments to your child about being a “picky eater” – this may only reinforce the behavior.

#### *Egg*

Avoid begging your child to eat, as this may reinforce his/her unwillingness to eat.

### **Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 4**

Tip 4: Do not prepare separate meals for your child from what the family is eating.

Offering your child a different meal when he/she refuses what is offered to the family tends to encourage the picky eating to continue.

Instead Try:

Including at least one or two items you know your child will eat at each meal along with a new food you want your child to try.

Introducing only one new food at a time – children may feel overwhelmed when their plates are full of items they do not recognize.

### **Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 5**

Tip 5: Do not use food as a reward or punishment.

As tempting as it might be, do not use ice cream, candy, or other treats as a reward for eating vegetables, fruits, or other foods your child does not want. This reinforces to the child that these foods are less desirable.

Find ways other than food to reward your child.

Click on the foods to view alternative ways of rewarding your child.

*Bagel*

Having a friend over to play.

*Broccoli*

Picking out a new toy that encourages activity.

*Bananas*

Going outside to play and instead encourage your child to be active.

### **Mix it up!**

Click on the mixing icons to view some ideas for making food new and exciting for your child.

### *Purple mixing bowl*

When possible, allow your child to make choices for what will be served with the meal, but control the choices they have.

### *Red mixing bowl*

Let your child taste the difference between steamed, grilled, roasted, and raw vegetables. Roasting brings out the natural sweetness in vegetables.

### *Teal mixing bowl*

Offer your child choices, but control the options they have to choose between. For example, offer your child green beans or broccoli for dinner. Your child can then choose between two vegetable options that you selected.

### *Orange mixing bowl*

Serve breakfast foods at dinner – children love to be surprised with familiar foods at unfamiliar times!

### *Green mixing bowl*

Raw vegetables are ideal for dipping. Try low-fat salad dressing, honey mustard, or salsa for different tastes.

## **Mix It Up**

Consider topping new items with a healthy dip or condiment your child knows and likes, such as low-fat ranch, yogurt, shredded cheese, honey mustard, or catsup.

Click on the toppings below to see which foods they can be added to.

Click on the red apple at the bottom left of the screen for healthy tips.

### *Tomatoes and beans*

Add additional tomatoes or beans to spaghetti sauce.

### *Strawberries and raisins*

Add sliced fruit or raisins to oatmeal and breakfast cereals.

### *Broccoli*

Add broccoli to macaroni and cheese, now you have broccoli with cheese sauce!

### *Healthy Tips:*

#### Greek Yogurt Dip:

Combine low-fat, plain Greek yogurt and dry ranch dip mix – stir it up for a great tasting dip that is high in protein and calcium.

Serve this dip with whole grain crackers, baby carrots, cherry tomatoes, snap peas...or any item that your child likes to top with ranch!

### **Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 6**

Tip 6: Make sure your child is not filling up on drinks during the day instead of eating.

Sometimes children fill up on milk, juice, lemonade, sports drinks, or soda and then do not have the desire to eat because their stomachs feel full.

- Make water the “Go To” choice for your child.
- Otherwise, provide your child with 1% or fat free milk and 100% fruit juice.

Click on a beverage to see the daily recommendation

Click on the red apple at the bottom left of the screen for healthy tips.

#### *Juice*

4-6 oz. per day for children ages 1-6.

#### *Milk*

2 cups per day for

children ages 2-3

2.5 cups per day for children ages 4-5

### *Healthy Tips:*

- Encourage your child to drink water throughout the day so he/she is not filling up on drinks that contain added sugar.
- If your child is not eating well at meal times, consider serving water with meals and milk/juice at other times during the day.

## Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 7

Tip 7: Involve your child in shopping and meal preparation.

When shopping allow your child to select fruits, vegetables, and different types of whole grain breads, pasta shapes, and healthy breakfast cereals.

Make your child the “Taste Tester” and allow them to sample the items before getting to the table.

Click on the red apple at the bottom left of the screen for healthy tips.

Click on the yellow check below to go to the “MyPlate Kitchen Helper Handout”.

### *Healthy Tips:*

When preparing food give your child small tasks such as:

- mixing the salad in the bowl
- placing the paper muffin liners into the pan
- measuring flour, sugar, and other dry items for recipes
- serving fruit on the plate
- setting the table

## Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 8

Tip 8: Plan healthy snacks as part of your child’s day.

- Children have smaller stomachs than adults and cannot eat as much at meal times as adults can. Healthy snacks can be used to help fill in any gaps in their nutrient requirements not provided by meals.
- Plan on serving your child 3 nutritious meals and 2 balanced snacks per day so that your child is eating every 2-3 hours.

Click on the red apple at the bottom left of the screen for healthy tips.

### *Healthy Tips:*

Be aware of what your child is eating outside of scheduled meal and snack times.

- For example – if your child is munching on chips while watching TV or eating an extra snack after school this could be the reason why he/she is not hungry at meal time.

### **Tips for Picky Eaters**

Kids like finger foods – try to incorporate food items they can eat with their hands into meals and snacks. To ensure snacks are well balanced and contain the nutrients your child needs to grow, aim to include 2 items at each snack from different food groups.

Click on a food below to see what food group(s) they belong to.

Click on the recipe card at the bottom left of page to learn how to make a healthy trail mix.

- Mini Pretzels
- Dried Fruits: Raisins, Cranberries, Pineapple, Mango
- Nuts and/or Seeds: Peanuts, Cashews, Almonds, Sunflower Seeds, Pumpkin Seeds

\*For added sweetness your child will love, include a few dark chocolate chips.

#### *Watermelon and Cantaloupe*

Fresh sliced fruit belongs to the fruits food group.

#### *Cheese sticks*

Cheese sticks belong to the dairy food group.

#### *Trail mix*

Trail mix belongs to the fruits, grains, and protein food groups.

#### *Mini muffins*

Mini muffins belong to the grains food group.

#### *Tortillas*

Tortillas rolled with sandwich meat and cheese belong to the vegetables, grains, and protein food groups.

#### *Healthy Trail Mix Recipe*

Mix your favorite combination of the following items:

- Whole Grain Cereals: Chex, Cheerios (any flavor variety), Oatmeal Squares

### **Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 9**

Tip 9: Change up the presentation of food.

Consider letting your child pick out a favorite plate and cup for meal time (i.e. favorite color or cartoon character).

If your child does not like their food to touch, consider buying plates with divided compartments.

Use a cookie cutter to cut sandwiches into unique shapes. Let your child choose the cookie cutter shape and help with cutting out the sandwich.

Click on the red apple at the bottom left of the screen for healthy tips.

#### *Healthy Tips:*

Other ideas to make the plate more eye appealing

Use catsup, mustard, or another sauce to make a smile, arrange orange slices to look like a flower, use raisins to make a zig-zag line between the different items on the plate.

### **Tips for Picky Eaters**

Serve the food on the plate so that it is appealing to the child. We eat with our eyes first, if the food does not look appealing, children will be less likely to try the food served.

Click on the plates below to learn more.

#### *Purple plate*

Choose brightly colored fruits such as oranges, strawberries or grapes. Serve the food on the plate so that it is appealing to the child.

#### *White plate*



When serving meals avoid having foods that are the same color and/or texture on the plate, as this does not look appealing and may result in your child not having interest in the meal.

### **Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 10**

Tip 10: Talk with your child about the different foods on the plate.

What the food looks like, feels like in your hands, tastes like, smells like, and the texture and temperature. Tell your child what you like about the food.

Click on a highlighted word to see more information.

Click on the red apple at the bottom left of the screen for healthy tips.

#### *Texture*

Is the food crunchy, chewy, smooth, or sticky in your mouth?

#### *Temperature*

Is the food hot, warm, or cold when you are eating it?

#### *Looks*

What is the shape of the food?

What is the color of the food?

#### *Smell*

Does the food smell like another food you like to eat?

Does the food smell good or bad?

#### *Question.....*

Does the food taste sweet, sour, or salty?

#### *Questions.....*

Does the food feel hard or soft?

Does the food feel rough or smooth?

#### *Healthy Tips:*

Share “Fun Facts about Food”.

- For example: Carrots are a good source of Vitamin A.
- Do you know why we need Vitamin A?
- Vitamin A is good for eye sight.
- We want to keep our eyes healthy, that's why we are having carrots with dinner tonight.

Drag a nutrient to the correct food below for more information.

### *Fiber*

Helps move food through our bodies, promotes proper bowel function, and reduces constipation. In addition, fiber may help reduce the risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and obesity.

Food sources: Whole grains, vegetables, fruits, beans.

### *Calcium*

Important for the growth and development of strong bones.

Food sources: Milk, yogurt, cheese, low-fat dairy.

### *Iron*

Component of red blood cells that helps transport oxygen throughout the body.

Food sources: Meat, fish, turkey, chicken, spinach, beans, whole grains, enriched cereals.

### *Vitamin C*

Needed for the development of connective tissue, skin, and blood vessels, helps wounds to heal, important antioxidant that helps the body stay healthy.

Food sources: Oranges, grapefruit, strawberries, kiwi, broccoli, green and red peppers, tomatoes.

### *Vitamin A*

Important for normal growth and development, promotes good eye sight and healthy skin.

Food sources: Watermelon, cantaloupe, sweet potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, pumpkin.

## **Tips for Picky Eaters**

Eat meals together as a family – use this time to discuss the day's activities, ask about school, and make plans for future activities.

Even if your child chooses not to eat, make sure he/she sits at the table and does not play during the meal.

If your child tends to play with his/her food instead of eat, consider setting time limits on meals. This will help reinforce to your child that meal time is for eating.

### **Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 11**

Tip 11: Limit any distractions that would take your child's attention away from eating.

Click on the distractions below. From top to bottom: screens, homework, and toys.

#### *Homework*

Do not use meal time to complete school work. Make eating and talking the only activities allowed at the table!

#### *Screens*

Make sure TVs, cell phones, and video games are turned off during meal times. Make your table a "No Screen" Zone - meaning no TV screens, no cell phone screens, and no video screens! Be a role model and turn off your cell phone during the meal as well.

#### *Toys*

Do not allow your child to bring toys or games to the table. Playing at the table will only serve as a distraction from eating.

### **Tips for Picky Eaters – Tip 12**

Tip 12: Model the healthy behaviors you want your child to engage in.

Click on a fork to see more information.

Click on the red apple at the bottom left of the screen for healthy tips.

*Avocado on a fork*

Eat the same healthy foods you offer your children at meal times.

*Carrot on a fork*

Have a positive attitude when it comes to eating healthy – children are perceptive and can quickly pick-up on their parent's opinions and feelings towards a particular food.

*Tomato on a fork*

Focus on developing healthy habits for eating and physical activity that will last a lifetime.

*Steak on a fork*

Try to remember that picky eating is often just a passing phase.

Although it may be frustrating, continuing to offer a variety of foods to your child is important.

*Healthy Tips:*

If you have concerns about your child's growth and development or if his/her intake is extremely limited, make sure to discuss this with your child's pediatrician.

## **Resources for Additional Information**

For additional information on how to help your child overcome picky eating, visit the websites below.

United States Department of Agriculture – WICS Works Resource System

ChooseMyPlate.Gov – Picky Eaters

Mayo Clinic – Children's Nutrition: 10 Tips for Picky Eaters

## **Congratulations!**

You have successfully completed this course.

In this course you learned ideas for helping your child overcome picky eating. Ideas were provided for involving your child in meal preparation and serving and ways to make food and meal time more fun. You also learned the importance of setting small goals, staying positive, and serving as a role model for your child. We hope the information you learned in this course will be of assistance as you work with your child to overcome picky eating.

We hope the information learned in this course will be beneficial in helping your child gain weight.

Stop!

Follow the instructions on the next page to print your Certificate of Completion.