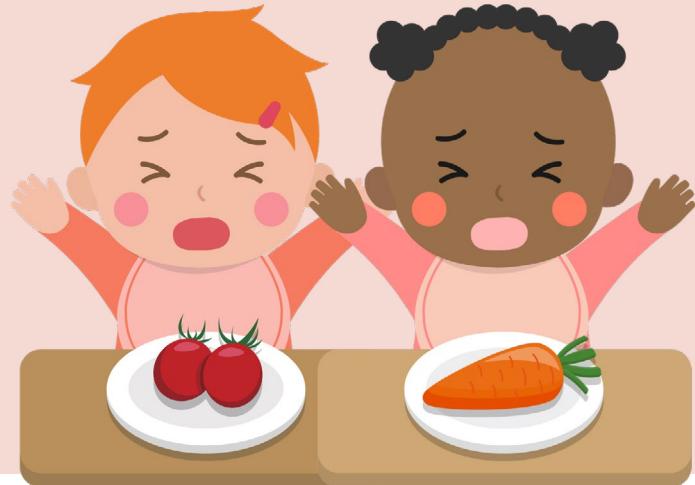


Provider Perspectives

How do you encourage choosy/picky eaters to try foods in your program?



Our community of CACFP providers has amazing ideas! In this resource, we're sharing their insights on how they encourage choosy eaters to inspire and support you in your own programs.

“ Our child care garden gives kids a **hands-on way to explore food**, and they love tasting what we grow. We also do taste tests with foods they don’t usually eat, encouraging just a **small bite each day** and reminding them they won’t know if they like something unless they try it first.”

“ We **take pictures of the food being prepared** in the kitchen and share them with the children, explaining how the cooks made each item. Seeing the process often encourages kids to try the foods and have **more of an interest** in the process.”

“ We read **books about foods and picky eaters** to make learning about healthy eating both engaging and playful. Books spark curiosity and conversation, helping **children feel more confident** to try new foods while making nutrition education a fun, interactive part of their day.”

“ We encourage children to **make their own plates** with options like English muffin pizzas or build-your-own taco bowls, letting them choose foods that look and smell appealing. Family style dining helps picky eaters **see friends and teachers trying new foods!**”

“ **Family style meals** work especially well for picky eaters because they can see and try what their friends and teachers are enjoying. I’ve also found that **involving children in menu planning** makes them feel included and excited about mealtime, giving them a sense of ownership and curiosity about the foods they are eating.”

“ Children are actively involved in the cooking process from start to finish. **Measuring, stirring, and portioning their own food** builds pride and excitement, while taste tests and demonstrations encourage even the pickiest eaters to try something new.”