

Mealtime Struggles in School-Aged Children: Building trust, confidence and feeding skills in children aged 6-12

Trust: Reducing power struggles and understanding both parent and child feeding roles will lessen stress, allow your child's internal motivation to emerge, and respect hunger and appetite cues.

Confidence: It may take time and many exposures until your child feels willing to try a new food. Encourage your child to explore foods with their senses.

Feeding skills: Meal and snack times are a chance to role model, help children learn about food, build their skills to accept more foods, and enjoy eating.

My hope for mealtimes: _____



Patience Pays Off!

Tips for Less Stress

- Respect feeding roles: you decide what, when, and where foods are offered
- Trust your child to decide if and how much they will eat from the foods offered
- Have a set meal and snack schedule
- Use mealtimes to connect: sit, eat, and talk together
- Avoid any form of pressure to get your child to eat
- Reassure your child that they don't have to eat what they don't want

Tips to Create More Comfort

- Encourage your child to explore foods with their senses
- Consider the foods your child eats and their sensory likes and dislikes
- Include 1-2 foods your child usually accepts at each meal and snack
- Let your child serve themselves at meals and snacks
- Prepare accepted foods in different ways
- Offer new foods that are similar to foods your child already likes

Tips for More Confidence

- Look for signs of growing confidence in the ways your child explores food
- Build on small changes to foods
- Involve your child in planning, preparing, and cooking meals and snacks
- If a new food is refused, keep offering it.
- Consider if there are different ways to offer foods
- Focus on improving feeding skills at home versus at school

After this workshop my goal is: _____

Additional Resources

To view online resources, click on underlined text or scan QR code using your phone or tablet.

1. Open the camera app
2. Focus the camera on the QR code by gently tapping the code
3. Follow instructions on the screen to go to the webpage

More Support

[Pediatric Eating And Swallowing \(PEAS\)](#)

[Tips for Success: Getting Through Mealtime Struggles Videos - AHS](#)

An Introduction plus four topics related to feeding and mealtimes:

- Child Development, Connections, Environment and Routine, and Nutrition



[Is Feeding a Struggle? – AHS](#)

[811 Health Link](#)

Call 811 to talk about your child's development or to talk to a dietitian



Tips for Healthy Eating

[Canada's Food Guide](#)



[Healthy Eating Resources - AHS](#)



[Peanut and Tree Nut-Free Meals and Snacks - AHS](#)



Positive Mealtimes

[Feed Your Child with Love and Good Sense – Ellyn Satter Institute](#)



[Tips to Support Positive Mealtimes - AHS](#)



[Connect with Conversation - AHS](#)



Recipes

[Canada's Food Guide Recipes](#)



[Cookspiration – Dietitians of Canada](#)



[Inspiring Healthy Eating Recipes - AHS](#)

