

1. Surround them with healthy food messages

- Read books that convey healthy food messages. Some classics are: *Jasper McFlea will Not Eat his Tea* by Lee Fox, *Vegetable Glue* by Susan Chandler and *I only like Toast* by Greg Knagge.
- Provide healthy art and craft activities, e.g. healthy food colouring in pages or books, puzzles. Set up a play kitchen with small plates, cutlery, oven mitts and toy foods.
- Hang bright healthy food pictures in the kitchen.
- Always have a stocked fruit bowl in easy view and within reach on the kitchen table or bench. Put the biscuit jar out of sight! Keep healthy choices available in the fridge and pantry and place these items within eye view of children.



2. Role model healthy habits



- Children learn from those around them. If you eat healthy foods regularly with and in front of your children, then they will be more likely to eat the same foods. Encourage other family members and close friends to do the same.

3. Think variety

- Ensure meals and snacks contain food from the 5 food groups. Offering a variety of foods from each of the 5 food groups will help to ensure children receive a greater range of nutrients.
- Also offer variety within each food group. Different coloured fruits and vegetables contain different vitamins and antioxidants.

4. Don't make a fuss

- It is the parent's responsibility to provide children with food and the opportunities to eat it. Children should decide how much to eat and whether to eat at all.
- Allow children to eat according to their appetite, keeping in mind that it's normal for children's appetites to change dramatically from day to day. Trying to find a possible reason for a low appetite can help parents understand why their children may not want to eat. If children have large appetites, then ensure their appetite is satisfied with healthy food options.
- As long as healthy foods are offered regularly, then it doesn't matter if children decide not to eat particular at meals. They will make up for it at their next meal.



5. Include them – in the kitchen, garden and at the shops

- Children who are more actively involved in food choices are more likely to be interested in the food they eat.
- Allow children into the kitchen to watch and help with cooking. Set kitchen rules early and ensure children are aware of the dangers within the kitchen. Set simple tasks for children such as mixing salad, cracking eggs or pouring ingredients.
- Set up a vegetable patch or pot with some easy to grow vegetables. Fun and easy vegies that kids love to grow are snow peas, beans, carrots, cucumber and zucchini.
- Take children grocery shopping and allow them to place fruits and vegetables in the trolley.

