



Empowering parents to navigate the childhood feeding journey with confidence

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What do you find confusing or frustrating about feeding your children?



Shifting Expectations

Good eater vs. competent eater

Persuading vs. demonstrating

Today's intake vs. a week/month's intake

Good enough vs. perfect

The 'what' of eating....(average range of serves not age specific)

1.5 - 2 Fruit

4.5 – 5.5 Vegetables

4 - 7 Grains (age/size/Physical activity dependent)

2.5 – 3.5 Dairy/alternatives (age dependent)

1.5 – 2.5 Meat/alternatives

Fun foods enjoyed in small portions in social settings

SERVE SIZES

Vegetables and legumes/beans

Serves per day	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Boys	2½	4½	5	5½	5½
Girls	2½	4½	5	5	5

Fruit

Serves per day	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Boys	1	1½	2	2	2
Girls	1	1½	2	2	2

Grain (cereal) foods, mostly wholegrain and/or high cereal fibre varieties

Serves per day	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Boys	4	4	5	6	7
Girls	4	4	4	5	7

Lean meats and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu, nuts and seeds, and legumes/beans

Serves per day	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Boys	1	1½	2½	2½	2½
Girls	1	1½	2½	2½	2½

Milk, yoghurt, cheese and/or alternatives, mostly reduced fat

Serves per day	2-3 years	4-8 years	9-11 years	12-13 years	14-18 years
Boys	1½	2	2½	2½	2½
Girls	1½	1½	2	2½	2½

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION GO TO [WWW.EATFORHEALTH.GOV.AU](http://www.eatforhealth.gov.au)

ELLYN SATTER'S DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY IN FEEDING

Children have natural ability with eating. They eat as much as they need, they grow in the way that is right for them, and they learn to eat the food their parents eat. Step-by-step, throughout their growing-up years, they build on their natural ability and become eating competent. Parents let them learn and grow with eating when they follow the Division of Responsibility in Feeding.

The Division of Responsibility for infants:

- The parent is responsible for *what*.
- The child is responsible for *how much* (and everything else).

Parents choose breast- or formula-feeding, and help the infant be calm and organized. Then they feed smoothly, paying attention to information coming from the baby about timing, tempo, frequency, and amounts.

The Division of Responsibility for babies making the transition to family food:

- The parent is still responsible for *what*, and is *becoming* responsible for *when* and *where* the child is fed.
- The child is *still* and *always* responsible for *how much* and *whether* to eat the foods offered by the parent.

Based on *what* the child can *do*, not on how *old* s/he is, parents guide the child's transition from nipple feeding through semi-solids, then thick-and-lumpy food, to finger food at family meals.

The Division of Responsibility for toddlers through adolescents

- The parent is responsible for *what*, *when*, and *where*.
- The child is responsible for *how much* and *whether*.

Fundamental to parents' jobs is trusting children to determine *how much* and *whether* to eat from what parents provide. When parents do their jobs with *feeding*, children do their jobs with *eating*:

Parents' feeding jobs:

- Choose and prepare the food.
- Provide regular meals and snacks.
- Make eating times pleasant.
- Step-by-step, show children by example how to behave at family mealtime.
- Be considerate of children's lack of food experience without catering to likes and dislikes.
- Not let children have food or beverages (except for water) between meal and snack times.
- Let children grow up to get bodies that are right for them.

Children's eating jobs:

- Children will eat.
- They will eat the amount they need.
- They will learn to eat the food their parents eat.
- They will grow predictably.
- They will learn to behave well at mealtime.

Division of Responsibility of Feeding – by Ellyn Satter (Ellyn Satter Institute)

The PARENT is responsible for:

WHAT - food is served

WHEN – timing of the meal

WHERE – the meal/food gets eaten

The CHILD is responsible for:

WHETHER (IF) – they eat anything at all

HOW MUCH – the amount of food that fills them

Note: Trusting a child to know their own hunger and fullness is one of

the most important things you can do to raise a competent eater

Practical Tips

- ▶ Role model the eating behaviour you want to see
- ▶ Provide a predictable, sit down, meal & snack routine (same time window each day)
- ▶ Let the child determine when they are full (from dinner not dessert)
- ▶ Let the child serve themselves from a shared plate in the middle of the table
- ▶ Let go of the power struggle – Take a ‘No pressure approach’ (positive or negative)

(A child will try a new food when they feel safe, curious and ready to do so)



Practical Tips

- ▶ Always serve an new/unfamiliar food alongside familiar foods (with no pressure)
- ▶ Serve dessert predictably, with or after dinner, 1 small serve, no seconds (if the child is still hungry they can have more dinner)
- ▶ Always make extra dinner so a hungry child can fill up on dinner (not dessert or cupboard snacks)
- ▶ Try not to talk about the food in front of you or your child's eating habits (that will feel like pressure)
- ▶ Use positive language when talking about food, bodies, movement

Language tips (Story: I only like white bread!)

- ▶ **But I want X for dinner.....**Sorry that's not on the menu tonight, should we add it one night this/next week?
- ▶ **I don't want to eat broccoli....**You don't have to eat it, it's on the table/plate because it's part of dinner. Just eat what you can.
- ▶ **Can I have some more dessert please?....**I'm glad you enjoyed dessert but we only have one serve. If you're still hungry you can have some more dinner.
- ▶ **(30mins before dinner) I'm hungry can I have a snack....**Dinner will be ready at 6pm, if you can't wait until then you can have some of these veggie sticks while your waiting.

Lunch Box Formula Idea (Example only)

Fruit & Veggie	Dairy	B&C (or nuts)	Fun food
B&C + protein + Veggie		Fruit	

Child 5-18yrs daily intake (average lunch box serves)

Breads & Cereals = 4-7 (2-4)

Protein = 1-2.5 (1)

Dairy = 2-3.5 (1)

Veggies = 4.5-5.5 (2)

Fruit = 1.5-2 (1-2)



What about ARFID...

Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) is an eating or feeding disorder characterised by a persistent and disturbed pattern of eating that leads to a failure to meet nutritional/energy needs (DSM-5).

Individuals with ARFID restrict or avoid food intake due to one or more of the following:

- **sensory** characteristics of food:
concerns about the texture, taste, appearance or smell of food
- **aversive consequences** of eating:
concern of choking, gagging or vomiting
- **lack of interest** or low appetite for food or eating

<https://insideoutinstitute.org.au/resource-library/what-is-avoidant-restrictive-food-intake-disorder-arfid>

What do you find confusing or frustrating about feeding your children?



Resources

Where can I go to read more information about this topic?

- ▶ <https://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/>

What is the Division of Responsibility of Feeding?

- ▶ <https://www.ellynsatterinstitute.org/how-to-feed/the-division-of-responsibility-in-feeding/>

Healthy Eating for Children Brochure https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/2022-09/n55f_children_brochure_0.pdf

Who might I see to get some professional help navigating feeding concerns?

- ▶ There is a local Paediatric Dietitian Outpatient service at Coffs Harbour Base hospital – ask your GP to be referred if you have concerns about your child eating/feeding behaviours
- ▶ If feeding concerns are linked with another (possible) diagnosis (i.e autism, sensory processing) psychology/OT input is recommended
- ▶ Private telehealth options are also available at <https://kidsdigfood.com.au/>