

# DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY & HAPPY FEEDING



## Become a mealtime partner

- Feeding your child takes team work!
- Parents decide **what**, **when** and **where** to feed and your child will decide **whether** and **how much** to eat.
- Include your children in planning and preparing family meals.
- Prepare all foods using the same herbs and spices.



## Encourage family mealtimes

- Family mealtimes are a time for sharing stories, daily events and coming together to eat and spend quality time.
- Focus on healthy habits during mealtimes.
- Act as a role model for your children. If they see you enjoying trying new foods, they are more likely to as well.

## Schedule meals and snacks

- No grazing.
- Eat all meals and snacks with your child seated in a high chair or seated at the table.
- Make a mealtime and snack schedule and routine. Stick to your schedule!
- Do not offer food in between meal and snack times, even if your child does not eat much.



## Minimize distractions

- Minimize distractions: Turn off TV, computer, tablet and phones during mealtimes.
- Separate mealtimes from playtime.



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## Do not play games!

- Do not entertain or play games to get your children to eat more.
- Do not pressure, bribe or sneak food into your child's mouth.
- No eating or feeding while walking around or in the car seat or bath tub.
- Avoid emotional eating. Do not use food to calm down an upset child. Do not praise your child for eating or show disapproval when they don't eat.

## Embrace Messiness

- Focus on foods they can hold in their hands or feed themselves with a spoon.
- Let your child self-feed, even using their hands!
- Allow your child to feel in control when it comes to food and eating.



## Learn and trust your child's cues.

- Stop feeding if your child starts to throw food or becomes disinterested.
- NEVER chase your child with food.
- Picky eating is normal behavior. Prepare the same meal or snack for everyone.

## Don't stress!

- Focus less on what your child is eating and more on how they feel and behave at meal times.
- Children will balance themselves by eating more at one meal and less at one another.
- Children need to learn how to enjoy a variety of foods.
- Respect that your child will learn to know when they are hungry and when they are full.

