



**Trust me.
Trust my tummy.**

You decide:

- **What foods to offer**
- **When to offer meals and snacks**
- **Where your child will eat**

Trust your child to decide:

- **Which foods to eat**
- **How much to eat**



**Healthy eating habits
start with a spoonful of
trust and a slice of patience**

For more information about
feeding your family visit
www.hnhu.org/nutristep



For fun videos on
feeding your preschooler
visit our YouTube
channel at <http://www.youtube.com/hnhucommunications>

To speak to a registered dietitian
for free call EatRight Ontario at
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Do's and Don'ts of Feeding Your Young Child

*Follow these feeding Do's and Don'ts to help
your child have healthy eating habits for life.*





Exclusive breastfeeding is recommended for the first 6 months of life. Breastmilk is the only food your baby needs to grow and be healthy until 6 months. At 6 months of age you can start feeding your baby solid foods while continuing to breastfeed up to two years and beyond.



Do's

- **Do schedule meals and snacks regularly throughout the day.** Offer 3 meals and 2 to 3 snacks per day. Space meals and snacks about 2 to 3 hours apart.
- **Do offer healthy foods from the four food groups in Canada's Food Guide.** Meals should include foods from at least 3 out of the 4 food groups. Snacks should include foods from at least 2 out of the 4 food groups.
- **Do sit around the table as a family, free from distractions to enjoy meals and snacks.**
- **Do allow your child to decide which foods to eat from the healthy choices you offer.** It's ok if they say "No thank you" or "Can I please have more."
- **Do allow your child to decide how much to eat.** A child's appetite can vary day to day or even meal to meal.
- **Do offer only water in between meals and snacks.**
- **Do keep offering new foods or foods that you offered before but your child refused.** It can take up to 15 tries of a new food for them to like it!
- **Do encourage your child to help with meal prep.** Children can help set the table, wash vegetables, etc.

- **Do watch out for foods that may cause choking.** Hard vegetables such as carrots should be cut into narrow strips or grated and grapes should be cut in half. Do not offer popcorn and hard, round candy.
- **Do offer food for 20 to 30 minutes.** If they are not eating after 30 minutes, remove the food from the table without making an issue out of it.
- **Do be a good role model and follow these guidelines yourself.**



Don'ts

- **Don't encourage grazing on foods throughout the day.**
- **Don't allow your child to eat with distractions like TV, toys and books.**
- **Don't force, beg or bribe your child to eat – this will make them want it less.**
- **Don't use food as a reward.** Instead use a hug or a few kind words.
- **Don't offer food, juice, milk or any other beverage besides water in between regularly scheduled meals and snacks.**