




AUTISM CLINIC LONDON

Help! My child won't eat An Introduction to Selective Eating

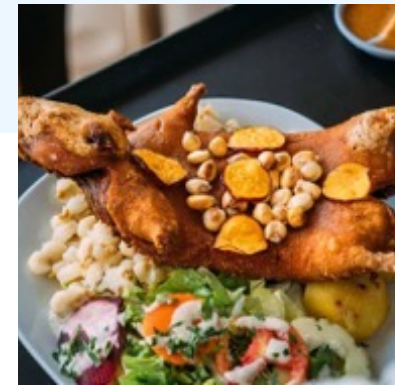
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Registered Dietitian
6th July 2023

What is Fussy Eating, ARFID, Selective Eating?

 A spectrum of feeding difficulties


- ARFID: Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder
- Unwillingness to eat familiar foods
- Inability to try new foods
- Strong food preferences

How fussy are you?





Introduction

 The format of this session

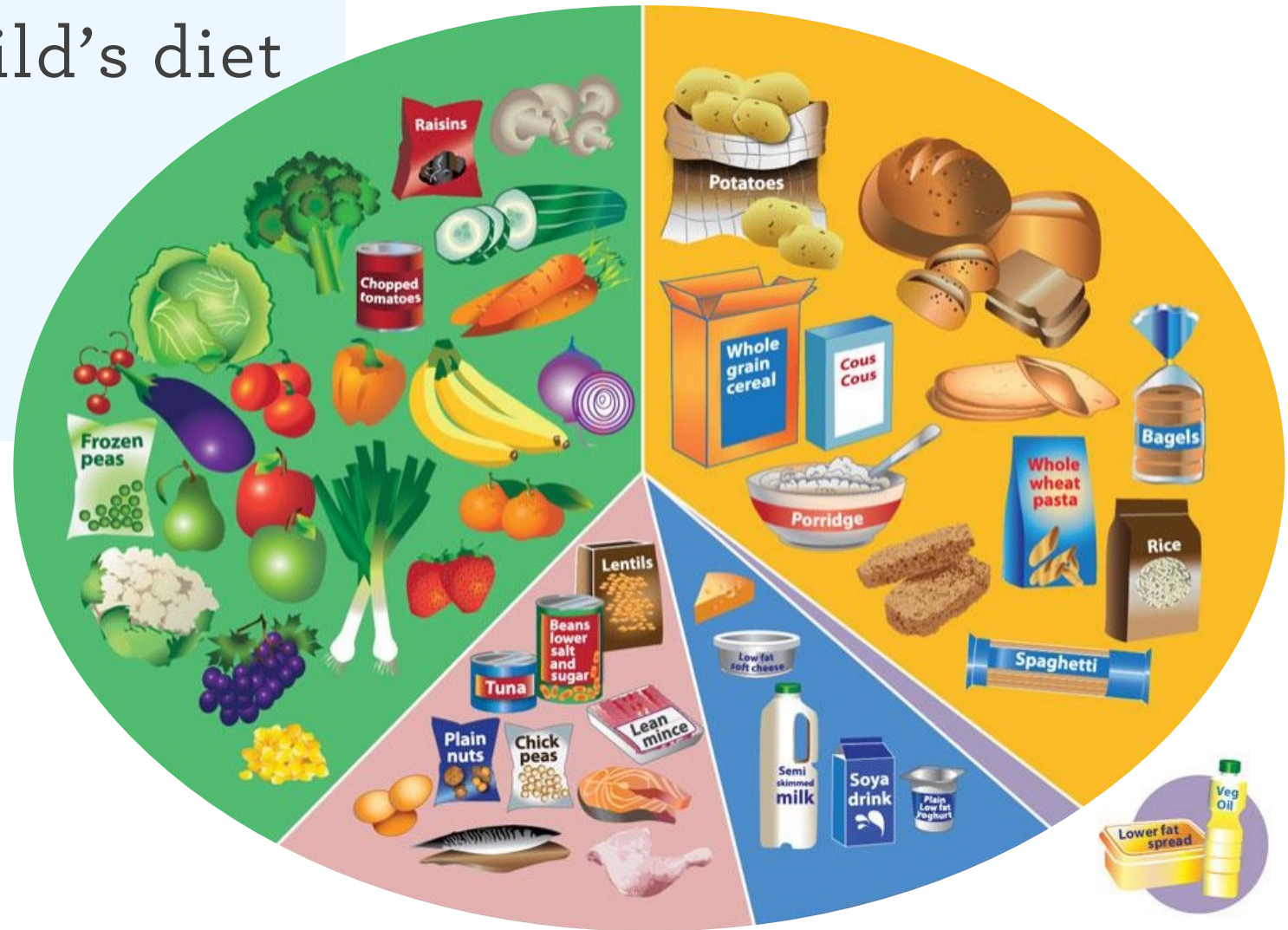
Step 1: Assess your child's diet

Step 2: Assess your readiness to implement changes

Step 3: Decide on what changes to make

Assessing your child's diet

Is your child getting enough calories/energy to grow well? Is your child eating from all the food groups?






Food Groups

Fruit & Vegetables	Carbohydrates	Meat & Proteins	Dairy & Alternatives	Oils & Spreads
Bananas Sweetcorn Carrots Peas Sweetcorn Apples Raisins Pears Pineapple Cucumber Courgette Aubergine Spinach	Bread Cereals Pasta Rice Potatoes Porridge Oats Couscous Noodles Cassava Yam Plantain Millet Sorghum	Chicken Turkey Fish & Seafood Beef Lamb Pork Eggs Pulses Lentils Beans Nuts & nut butters Tofu	Milk Cheese Yoghurt Plant based milks with added calcium	Butter Margarine Oils

Fortified foods

 Foods with added vitamin and minerals



Vitamin and Mineral Supplements



If your child isn't eating a range of foods from each food group they may benefit from a vitamin and mineral supplement.

Vitamin D: All children from 1 to 4 years and those at high risk of vitamin D deficiency should take a 10ug (400IU) supplement throughout the year and everyone else should take a supplement during Autumn & Winter.

Multivitamin and minerals

Examples of iron containing vitamin and mineral supplements available in the UK for children.



Iron

Not all multivitamin and mineral supplements contain iron, below are some of the iron supplements available in the UK



Calcium

■ Example of calcium supplements available in the UK



Making Changes



Are you ready?

- Assess your own readiness to make changes
- How important is make changes to your child's diet to you?
- How confident are you to try to make changes?

Division of Responsibility



Your role as a parent/carer vs. your child's role at meal times

Parent/carer:

- Provide regular meals and snacks
- Provide a balanced diet
- Be a good role model
- Make mealtimes/eating pleasant and avoid pressure.

Child:

- Decide whether to eat or not
- Decide how much to eat
- Decide which foods to eat (from what is offered by you)
- Learn appropriate mealtime behaviours from others



Steps to Eating



Eating isn't just as simple as putting something into your mouth, chewing and swallowing.

TOLERATES

1. being in the same room
2. being at the table with the food on the other side of the table
3. being at the table with the food ½ way across the table
4. being at the table with the food just outside of child's space
5. looks at food when directly in child's space

INTERACTS WITH

6. assists in preparation/set up with food
7. uses utensils or a container to stir or pour food/drink for others
8. uses utensils or container to serve self onto own plate/space
9. uses utensils/napkin/tool to manipulate food in own space
10. uses another food to interact with the food

SMALLS

11. odor in room
12. odor at table
13. odor in child's forward space
14. leans down or picks up to smell

TOUCH

15. one finger tip
16. fingertips, fingerpads
17. whole hand
18. arm, trunk/chest
19. shoulder, neck
20. top of head
21. chin, cheek
22. nose, underneath nose
23. lips
24. teeth
25. tip of tongue, top of tongue

TASTE

26. licks lips or teeth, tongue tip taste
27. full tongue lick
28. bites off piece & spits out immediately
29. bites pieces, holds in mouth for "x" seconds & spits out
30. bites piece, chews "x" times & spits out

EATING

31. bites & chews, swallows some and spits some
32. chews and swallows whole bolus independently

Environment

These are all the things around the mealtime, which you may be able to change and can have an impact on whether your child may be ready to start learning about new foods.

- 90-90-90 seating
- Movement breaks
- Holidays/eating out ('not learnt not to eat')
- Noise, smells, sights etc.
- Distractions



Strategies

Things to do at mealtimes

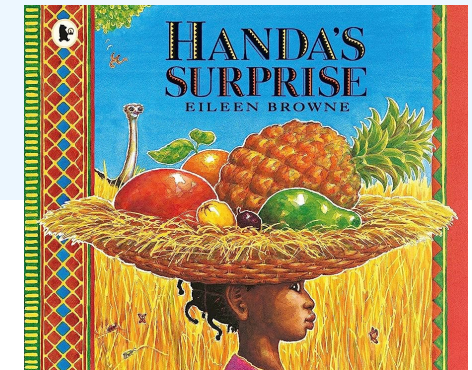
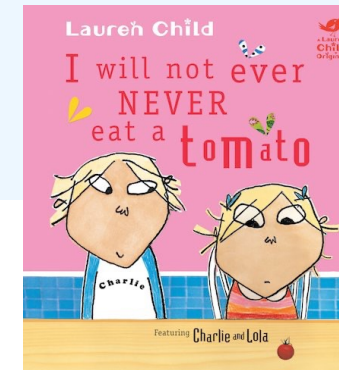
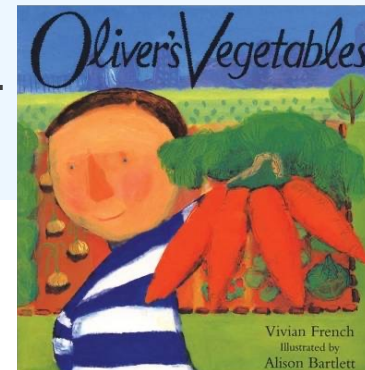
- Shared family mealtimes
- Introduce a meal and snack routine
- Always presenting a preferred food alongside new foods
- Avoid pressuring your child to eat/try foods, instead talk about the sensory properties of the food.
- Give specific praise to your child for any interactions with food.
- Food Chaining
- Use your child's interests
- Offering as much variety within their preferred foods to prevent food jaggging.



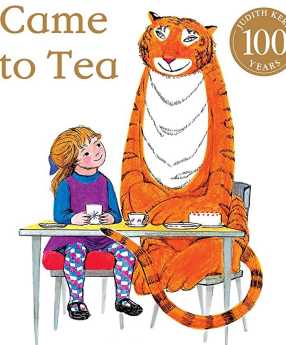
Strategies

■ Things to do away from mealtimes.
Learning about food through play.

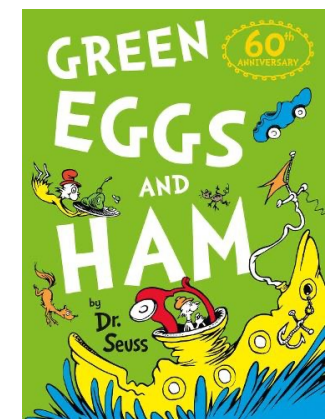
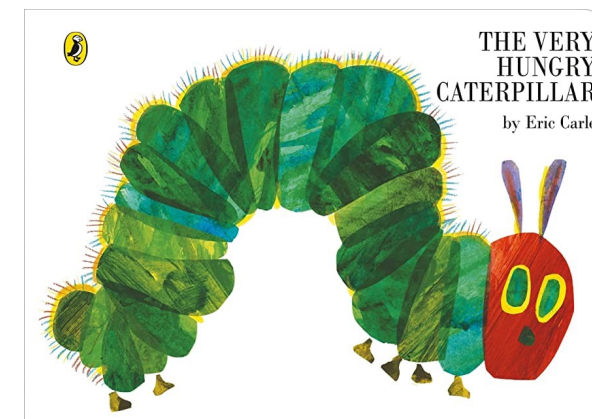
- Messy play
- Reading stories about food and eating
- Food scrap books
- Pretend play/role play with plastics/wooden food and kitchen items.
- Food shopping
- Involving your child in food preparation



The Tiger Who Came to Tea



Judith Kerr



Pica



Eating non-food items e.g. sand, paint, dirt etc

What to do:

- Check for nutritional deficiencies e.g. iron and zinc
- Check for lead poisoning especially if your child has been eating paint with lead in it
- Dental check up
- Where possible try to limit your child's access to the non-food items.

Alternative Diets



Approach with caution

- There is currently no strong evidence/research to support the use of special diets.
- Red flags to be wary of:
 - Claims to improve autism symptoms
 - Selling of products e.g. supplements, 'detoxifying' aids etc.
 - Restrictive diets
 - Unproven 'food intolerance tests'



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L O N D O N

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