

Playing with Food

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Being playful with food is a great way to get kids of all ages (and grownups) to relax about novel foods that might otherwise appear daunting and lead to a refusal to try a food or even stick around for dinner. Try some of these ideas and see which seem to help your children interact with food most.

1. Create 'art' with food. Whether you're making a face on a plate with spaghetti noodle hair, bean eyes, and a tomato wedge mouth or making a DIY stamp out of half an apple dipped into yogurt 'ink', creating a fun purpose to food outside of simply eating it can help entertain children and increase their comfort levels with new foods. Here's a link with some very creative food presentations if you're looking for new things to try: <https://onelittleproject.com/adorable-kids-snack-ideas/>



2. Use food to learn. Using food as a tool for learning can be another fun way of getting familiar with foods. Stacking cheese cubes, sorting veggies in a frozen vegetable medley, and counting the number of segments in an orange are great activities for younger kids. Older children may enjoy being 'food scientists' and exploring adding food coloring to different foods, trying to guess what a food is by a sense other than vision (start with safe, familiar foods before

moving to more adventurous options), or even watching a fun cooking program on Netflix and trying out a recipe from the show.

3. One of the biggest ways to have fun with food is to simply enjoy being with your family and focusing on the social interaction, stories, giggles, and even 'see-food' games more than worrying about what is actually eaten. Easier said than done, I know. One of the ways I encourage families to try to remove the stress from mealtime is to make sure at least one food that's presented is a food that you are 99% sure your child will eat. That way you can be more confident that they'll eat something and can have fun and interact with whatever they're not yet ready to chew and swallow.

Book Idea to read with your kids: [I Will Never Not Ever Eat a Tomato](#) by Lauren Child!

Alright families, go have some fun with food and with your kiddos!