

Trying New Foods

A free printable social story for ages 3-8

Food refusal and mealtime battles are common in picky eaters and children with sensory-based feeding challenges. This story lowers the pressure by framing exploration, looking, smelling, touching, as real progress. Feeding therapists recommend celebrating any interaction with a new food, and this story is built around that approach.

At mealtime, there is food on my plate.

Some foods are my favorites. Some foods are new.

New foods can look, smell, and feel different.

It is okay to get to know a new food before tasting it.

I can look at it, smell it, or touch it with my finger.

When I feel ready, I can try a tiny taste, as small as a pea.

I might like it. I might not like it. Both are okay.

If I do not like a food, I can calmly say, "No, thank you."

Trying counts, even if it is just one small lick or bite.

Tastes change as I grow. A food I skip today might taste good later.

My grown-ups are proud of me every time I try.

Eating different foods helps my body grow strong.

I can try new foods at my own speed.

Tips for Reading This Story Together

- Always serve one accepted food alongside anything new so the plate never feels like a threat.
- Praise interaction, not consumption: touching, smelling, or licking a new food is a genuine win worth naming.
- Offer the same new food 10 to 15 times across weeks; familiarity, not pressure, is what changes minds.
- Involve your child in shopping or cooking the new food, which builds comfort before it ever reaches the plate.

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