

Behaviour Strategies to Support Feeding

Learning to be more independent: How to build routines

Building routines gives your child consistency and structure to their day. This helps them know what to expect and makes transitions easier. When children know what to expect, they can begin to learn how to do tasks by themselves (within the structure that you've set up). Children will be working towards a level of independence that is achievable for them - it's just a matter of finding the right task to work on.



Even if building routines doesn't seem connected to feeding, it will help to build your child's skills. Building routines with your child will take time, and require repetition and consistency. To support feeding skills, you can create a mealtime routine by having consistent pre-meal tasks:



Independence can be incorporated by helping your child do parts of these routines. For example, a small part might be asking your child to get forks out of the drawer:



Over time your child will need less support from parents and caregivers, making mealtime a more enjoyable part of the day.



This handout is part of the NDD Restrictive Eating Clinic Information Series:
www.hollandbloorview.ca/RestrictiveEatingInfo

References

Child Mind Institute. (2024). *Complete Guide to Managing Behavior Problems*. <https://childmind.org/guide/parents-guide-to-problem-behavior/>
Raising Children Network (Australia) Limited (2024). *Encouraging positive behaviour: tips*. <https://raisingchildren.net.au/toddlers/behaviour/encouraging-good-behaviour/good-behaviour-tips>