

Getting your Child to Eat their Veggies

MOST children have no problem with bright colours such as orange or green -- until it comes time to eat their fruits and vegetables.

A number of parents can attest to this, as their children will throw temper tantrums and shed tears, in an effort to avoid eating fruits and vegetables. But getting your child to eat them does not necessarily have to leave you frustrated. The key is to make the experience fun, and this can be achieved by utilising some of the following tips.

- * Be creative. Rename vegetables to make them seem more appealing. A vegetable could be named after a favourite cartoon or fictional character that your child absolutely loves. Linking the vegetable with something they already know would be more effective than just telling them to come and have some cabbage.
- * Raw is best. Most vegetables wilt during the cooking process, making them seem less attractive to your child. So, other than just being more nutritious, raw vegetables are tastier, crunchier and looks better.
- * Let them go shopping with you for vegetables. Most parents allow their children to select their snack at the supermarket, but not the vegetables. If you have not been doing so, allow your child to select their vegetables when you take them to the produce aisle. You will find that they would be more willing to eat it when they played a part in choosing it.
- * Get them to help out in the kitchen. Have them assist in preparing healthier snacks in the kitchen, especially on weekends when you have more time on your hands. It will not only give you the opportunity to bond with them, but it will also help to make them more responsible. Plus, most children just love to get their hands dirty, so they won't mind juicing and cutting vegetables with their little craft kid scissors.
- * Make smoothies. The great thing about fruits and vegetables are that they make great smoothies that even the pickiest of eaters won't want to pass up. So have fun with your child as you mix and blend to find that perfect combination of fruits that will keep them wanting more. There is no limit to the amount of smoothie recipes you can create; just make sure you remember to add some milk for calcium.
- * Don't bribe or reward them to get them to eat. Bribing seems like the easiest way to get a child to do something, and unfortunately, some parents feel the need to do so when trying to get them to eat their veggies. It's even worse when you bribe them with sweets to get them to eat healthy. Doing so only confirms their belief that vegetables are something bad.
- * Play veggie games. Turn eating vegetables into a challenging game, which you and your child can partake in. A great game to play is to challenge your child to eat a fruit or vegetable, beginning with a particular letter of the alphabet per day.
- * Use stories. Make up crazy story ideas about the vegetables you are about to feed your child. Hopefully they will be so captivated that they will forget that they are even eating something they don't like. You can even borrow from the classics and add your own touch to them.
- * Jazz it up. You would be amazed at the things your child will eat if it is presented in a fun way. So when preparing those veggies, remember to present them in unusual designs and shapes. There are a number of utensils on the market that will enable you to make your food presentations much more appealing.
- * Make it more accessible. If you want your child to eat their vegetables, then you have to make it easy for them to reach it. Ensure that you place fruits and veggies in the sight of children, so that when they cannot find anything else to eat in the house, they can find them.