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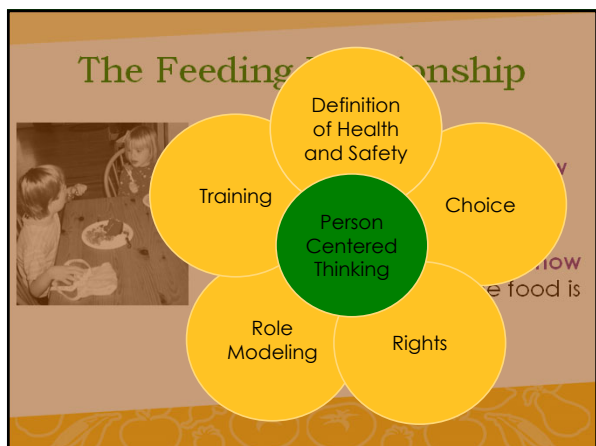
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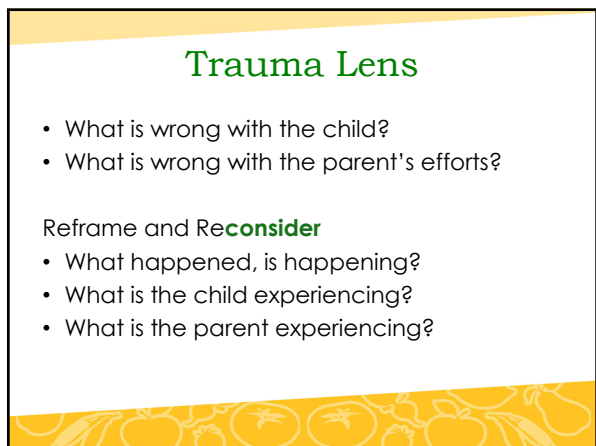
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## The Feeding Relationship



Parents are responsible for **what, where, when,** and **how** food is presented.

Children are responsible for **how much** and **whether** the food is eaten.

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## Support Persons

(nurse, social worker, dietitian, early intervention teacher, babysitter, respite worker, speech pathologist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, behavior consultant, grandmother, aunt, neighbor, and lady at the grocery store...)



Are responsible for **what, where, when,** and **how** food is presented within the parameters of the **family's values**, as long as it does not do harm to the child.

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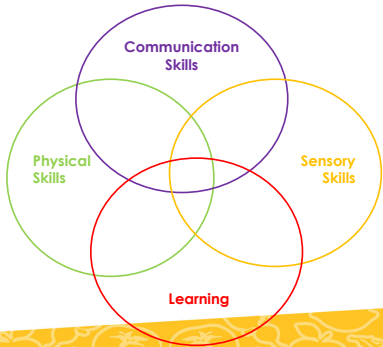
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## What's going on at mealtime?



© 2000 Therapy for Autism

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Building Trust:  
**Responsibilities of the Adult Role**

- Communicating.
- When it is eaten.
- What is eaten
- Where it is eaten.
- How much is available.
- How it is presented.
- Setting up for success.

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Building Trust:  
**Responsibilities of the Adult Role**

- Communicating family values.
- When it is eaten.
- **What is eaten**
- Where it is eaten.
- How much is available.
- How it is presented.
- Setting up for success.

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## What is eaten

- Texture progression
- Sensory-related challenges
- Introduce new foods.

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**Moving Ahead with Food: Matching Oral Motor Skills and Food Textures**

Food Type	Pre-Solids	Purée	Thick Purée	Ground	Chopped/finely	Table Foods
<b>Chewing stages or Oral Motor Skills</b>	Sucking (present at birth)	Sucking	Strong sucking or early mouthing	Mouthing	Begins to move tongue to follow foods. Starts to move things down.	Mature rotary chew
<b>Developmental Feeding Skills to Note</b>	Rooting (present at birth)	Attempts to hold bottle. Decrease in gag reflex. Moving food front-to-back with tongue. Begins to sit with support.	Infant vessels should look like a "leaky, thick liquid" or applesauce. Introduce blended, strained, lumpy foods (homemade or commercial).	Shows interest in "spilling" open and watching others eat.	Decrease in gag reflex. Use spoon more often. Use spoon and food for sensory play, an important part of learning to eat textures.	Many when feeding self. Swishes back-and-forth between utensils and fingers.
<b>Foods to Offer</b>	Breast milk or formula	Infant vessels should look like a "leaky, thick liquid" or applesauce. Introduce blended, strained, lumpy foods (homemade or commercial).	Gradually increase the thickness of purée or strained foods by adding baby cereal, wheat germ, mashed, flax, etc. Introduce hard "merchables."	Mashed, cooked vegetables, scrambled egg, mashed soft bread, etc. Introduce "malleable hard solids."	Chop regular table foods in small, fine pieces. Introduce finger foods that are easily chewed. Introduce cereal foods such as cheerios.	Maintain easy-chew foods for safety. Modify the list of foods to watch as needed. Introduce crunchy and chewy foods such as raw broccoli to build jaw strength.
<b>Indicators for Next Step</b>	The beginning of a sucking motion.	Strong, well-developed sucking motion. May still have trouble keeping puréed foods in mouth.	Learns to keep thick pieces in mouth. Begins to use an up-and-down chewing motion.	Side-to-side movement of food with tongue.	Individualize foods for fine and dexterous feeding abilities.	
<b>Cautions</b>	Pay attention to choking precautions. Babies who have lower muscle tone and lower oral motor tone may need specialized supports for breast and bottle feeding.	Pay attention to choking precautions. Do not add cereal to bottles. Always hold on to one end of infant-hand bottle-feeding.	Pay attention to choking precautions. Allow for suctioning. Scraping food off face with feeding spoon can be unusually offensive.	Pay attention to choking precautions. Do not mix textures such as spaghetti with meat sauce or merchables, peas in mashed potatoes, and so on.	Pay attention to choking precautions.	Pay attention to choking precautions. Provide a safe and acceptable way for your child to remove foods from mouth if they find it offensive.

The Down Syndrome Nutrition Handbook 2ed, page 83. Also available as a handout Creating Successful Mealtimes in Spanish and English from Phonesis Publishing.

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## The "Crunch" Theory

- What do most "soft" foods have in common?
- What do fresh fruit and vegetables have in common?

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### Picky Eater?



A young boy in a blue shirt is looking at a plate of various vegetables and fruits. He has a skeptical expression and is touching his nose. The plate contains a variety of colorful vegetables and fruits, including tomatoes, cucumbers, bell peppers, and corn. The background is white, and the slide has a yellow decorative border at the bottom with a pattern of fruits.

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### The Power of “No, thank you” or “You’re kidding, right?”



- Builds self-confidence
- Promotes control over lifestyle
- Is traditionally discouraged through teaching techniques.

A young boy in a striped shirt is making a 'stop' hand gesture. The background is white, and the slide has a yellow decorative border at the bottom with a pattern of fruits.

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### Detective Work



Behavior = Communication  
What is the message being sent?  
The two things that can overcome the urge to eat are....

A woman in a green top and black hat is looking at a smartphone. The background is white, and the slide has a yellow decorative border at the bottom with a pattern of fruits.

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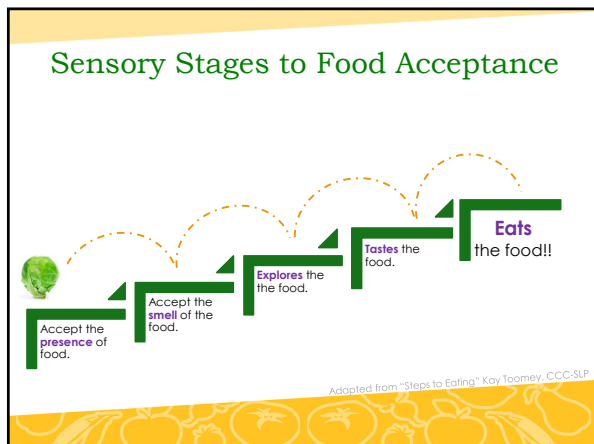
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### Taste Testing?

Coach parents to try tasting rather than strong-arming children to try new foods.

- Must be done in a "safe" environment. (It's OK not to try something.)
- Done as a group activity with others, away from family or living situation and pressure of mealtime.
- What is learned?

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### Be Sense-able

- Is it hot? cold? Just right?
- What color is it?
- How does it look?
- Does it make a sound?
  - When you are making it?
  - When you eat it?
- How does it feel?
  - As you make it
  - In your mouth?
- How does it taste?
  - Bitter?
  - Sour?
  - Spicy?
  - Sweet?
  - Salty?

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### Is he really a "picky eater?"

1. Make a list of all the foods the child eats.
  - Is it less than 50?
  - Is it less than 25?
2. List similar foods to the ones the child eats:
  - Food item
  - Preparation
  - Temperature
  - Color
  - Texture

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Available from Phronesis Publishing  
www.DownSyndromeNutrition.com

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### The Environment

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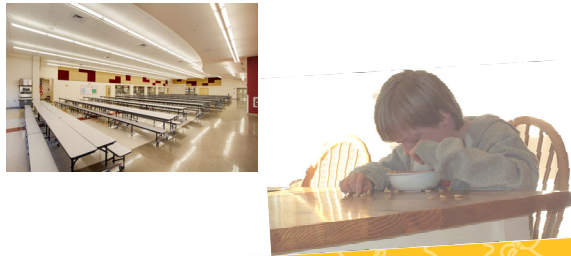
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## Seating Scenarios



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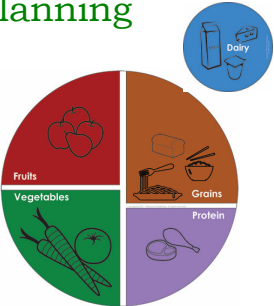
## Meal Planning

- Choice...

Choice...

Choice!

Meal planning is an inclusive activity.



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## Choices, Choices, Choices!

The early choices:

-  - More
-  - All done!
-  - No way!!!



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## Display the Menu Choices



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## Food and Literacy

**OFF THE PAGE: WHAT'S COOKING?**

Read about food and choose one of the activities below to do with the book throughout the year.

- Cut and Match: What's Cooking? Cut out the pictures and match them to the words.
- Match a picture to the word.
- Cut and Match: What's Cooking? Cut out the pictures and match them to the words.
- Match a picture to the word.

**La Comida**

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## It's my choice!

*"The real issue is not so much choice as power. Most ordinary people are not "allowed" choices; they just make them."*



Herb Lovett in *Learning to Listen*

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### Making Food Choices

cracker

popcorn

Apple

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### Turning Choices into Decisions.

- Broaden the options
  - Choosing between categories
  - Filling in the empty spots on a menu
- Explore the meaning of "more"
  - Are you hungry?
  - Are you enjoying the food or experience?
  - Are you filling time?
  - Do you want my attention?

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**I Quit!**

**Be Temerarious!**  
**the Food Police!**

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## Red Flags

Do you....

- ✓ Control every bite your child eats?
- ✓ Keep track of what your child is eating in your head?
- ✓ Hide "good" foods or supplements in other foods?
- ✓ Remove food from your child's plate once they're at the table?
- ✓ Ask your friends and family to make "special" foods for your child?
- ✓ Find yourself saying "no, no, no!" every time food is involved?
- ✓ Hide food from your child?
- ✓ Feel like food is controlling your life?
- ✓ Worry about your child's weight?
- ✓ Use "food tricks"?
- ✓ Bribe your child to eat green things?

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## Division of Responsibility AKA: The Feeding Relationship

High Demandingness		Tip: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listen to understand family life and stress</li> <li>• Improvement of support in these areas could positively influence feeding behaviors.</li> </ul>
<b>Authoritarian</b>	<b>Authoritative</b>	
Low Responsiveness	High Responsiveness	
<b>Neglectful</b>	<b>Permissive</b>	
Low Demandingness		

Portals et al. Journal of Pediatric Nursing: The Influence of a Developmental Disability on the Child's Weight-related Behaviors: A Parent's Perspective. 2019, 47, 121-130.

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## Resources

- Growth charts for children with Down syndrome: <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/birthdefects/downsyndrome/growth-charts.html>
- Health care guidelines for children with Down syndrome: <https://www.dsmig-usa.org/resources/Documents%20Healthcare/Health%20Supervision%20for%20Children%20with%20DS.%20AAP%202011.pdf>
- LAWN Presentation: Courageous Conversations, May 2019
- Medlen, J. *The Down Syndrome Nutrition Handbook: A Guide to Healthy Lifestyles*. 2006. Phronesis Publishing.
- The Down Syndrome Medical Interest Group – USA. [www.DSMIG-USA.org](http://www.DSMIG-USA.org)

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**Contact Information**

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[www.FaceBook.com/JoanGuthrieMedlenRD](https://www.FaceBook.com/JoanGuthrieMedlenRD)

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