

Overcoming Feeding Aversion and Feeding Tube Dependency

Children thrive when feeding is safe, meaningful, and social

- Children are able to participate in mealtimes and can enjoy food
- Family meals become manageable and focus on togetherness
- Children eat enough over time to help them grow and develop



SUPPORT
SKILL
DEVELOPMENT

THRIVE

Eating skills emerge when a child is motivated to eat and feels comfortable around food and meals.

- The skills to eat develop best by actually eating
- Skills develop most effectively when eating is meaningful to the child
- Skills become automatic with repeated positive experience and success
- Responsive feeding professionals can help if skills aren't progressing



DISCOVER INTERNAL DRIVES TO EAT

Learning to listen to your body is a key to developing a lifelong healthy relationship with food

- The internal drives to eat are hunger, taste, comfort, curiosity and togethernes.
- Self-regulation is the process of listening to those drives to fulfill your body's need
- External cues to eat get in the way



CREATE RESPONSIVE FAMILY MEALTIMES

Positive family mealtime practices set the stage for lifelong healthy eating

- Focus on togetherness and enjoyment
- Engage in mealtime discussions that aren't all about food
- Minimize comments on what or how much people are eating
- Establish healthy roles and responsibilities for parent and child



BUILD TRUST

More trust now builds a foundation for better eating later

- Accept refusals of food
- Take a break from working on feeding
- Allow child-directed food exploration and play



FIRST DO NO HARM

Negative associations with food and feeding make learning to eat difficult

- Stop any therapies or mealtime strategies that cause stress
- Refrain from using external motivators to eat, like reward, coercion or praise
- Move away from one-size -fits-all medical approaches to feeding
- Move towards interventions that consider all aspects of health, wellness and growth

