



CELEBRATE Feeding Newsletter

**Coaching in Early Learning Environments to Build
a Responsive Approach to Eating & Feeding**

February 2023

Thank you to all the educators and directors who participated in the Nourishing Beginnings program from Dairy Farmers of Canada. We hope you found the information useful and applicable to your practice!

*Thank
you*

Recap

Educators provide

Adults decide what, when and where food is offered.

Children decide

Children decide what and how much to eat from the foods offered.



CELEBRATE Mealtime:

Establish consistent and responsive feeding routines

- Plan for predictable transitions before and after meals and snacks. This helps with emotional regulation as children move from one activity to the next.
- Have consistent mealtime routines and expectations. Some children, especially more cautious eaters, can feel anxious about mealtime. Predictability can help ease some of their anxiety.
- Minimize the amount of time children are waiting at the table to eat. Hunger makes waiting even harder for children.
- Allow children to leave the table when they are finished eating. Help them transition to another activity away from the table.



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Putting Knowledge into Practice

If children do this:

Try this response:

Don't eat a meal
or snack

- Tell children they don't have to eat if their belly doesn't feel hungry.
- Remind them when the next meal or snack will be and what foods will be offered.

Eat only one of the
foods offered.

- Offer extra helpings of the preferred food.
- If there is no more of that food, offer the other available foods without pressure. Allow them to leave the table if they don't want the other foods.

Refuse a new food
or texture

- Describe the food using neutral language.
- Avoid pressuring children to try the food.
- Ask if they would like to explore the food by smelling or touching it.

Try a food for the
first time.

- Avoid praising or cheerleading. Children may eat to get praise instead of because they are hungry.
- Either make no comment or ask a neutral question, such as "is it sweet or sour?" or "is it soft or crunchy?"