

# Division of Responsibility in Feeding

## Summary

The Satter Division of Responsibility in Feeding (DoR) helps parents and caregivers support children to have a healthy relationship with food and their body and to reduce stress at mealtimes.

Parents and other caregivers have four jobs. You are responsible for the *what, when, where* and *emotional environment* around food. Your child is responsible for the *if* and *how much* of eating.

### Parent Jobs

**WHAT:** You decide what you are offering at each snack or meal. Your child is not in charge of choosing the menu. Aim to be considerate of their preferences, without catering to their every wish. This means making sure there's at least one component that they can comfortably eat.

"There are popcorn and strawberries for morning tea today."

If your child doesn't want those options then that's fine. They choose not to eat at that mealtime. You might say "*You're in charge of your eating. If you're not hungry then you don't need to eat.*"

If they want to eat lots of these two foods then that's ok as well. You might say "*You can have as much as you need for your tummy to be full*". It's important that you don't comment on the amount though, or try to talk them into eating more or less of any components.

**WHEN:** You decide when to offer food. As a general rule, allow around 20 mins for eating and 2-3 hours between each meal and snack.

"*It's morning tea time now. Come and sit at the table for morning tea.*"

If your child asks for food/tries to help themselves between meals you can let them know when the next meal is. You might say "*It's not time for eating just yet. We'll have lunch after we've hung out the washing and been to the park*". If your child tries to help themselves to food you need to be firm, but stay neutral. "*It's not time for eating just yet. I'll let you know when it's lunch time*" (and follow through with that).



## Join us!

family  
Mealtimes

If you want to learn more about this approach, join us over at Family Mealtimes, a membership program for families with school-aged children. Packed with meal and lunchbox inspiration, recipes, advice and support, Family Mealtimes aims to take the stress out of feeding your whole family.

➤ [www.mealtimes.com.au](http://www.mealtimes.com.au)

If you have younger children, check out Baby Mealtimes and Toddler Mealtimes for age-appropriate support.

➤ [www.babymealtimes.com.au](http://www.babymealtimes.com.au)

➤ [www.toddlermealtimes.com.au](http://www.toddlermealtimes.com.au)



**WHERE:** You decide where you are eating. It can be at the table, on the couch, on a picnic rug, wherever. You can tell your child calmly that they need to sit with you for that meal or snack.

"*You need to sit with me while I eat my snack. You can get down/watch the iPad/go play after that.*"

**NO PRESSURE:** Your job is to make sure that eating or mealtimes DO NOT involve emotions.

This means managing your frustration levels, keeping calm and just focusing on your jobs described above. If your child chooses to only eat one part of the meal, or eat a large portion of something that's ok. Do your best not to comment on the eating at all.

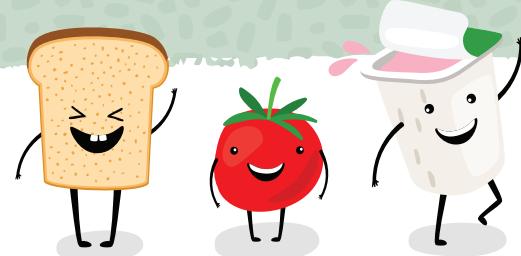
Make sure you don't add emotion to this e.g. it's not helpful to remind your child that they ate a big morning tea etc. It's also not helpful to talk about food while eating. This is important for all caregivers. We don't want children to sense any judgement or pressure about their eating. Keep the conversation light and away from food.

### Child Jobs

To decide if they will eat anything at the meal/snack you have chosen and decide how much.

This is where you have to trust your child. It takes a little while for them to learn about what their tummy is telling them and respond - but they will!

# Let's support our kids to eat well



## Introduction

This generation of children are growing up in a time of extreme diet culture, body dissatisfaction and disordered eating. Healthy eating advice is conflicting and confusing. Teachers are under-resourced. Parents are overwhelmed. Health Professionals are seeing the impacts in their clinics. Everyone is struggling to know what is best.

But it doesn't have to be like this.

**As a community there are lots of ways we can support this generation to become confident, adventurous eaters.**

Our aim is for children to grow into teens and adults who:

- ✓ Enjoy a wide variety of foods
- ✓ Listen to their hunger and fullness cues
- ✓ Feel in control around all types of food
- ✓ Feel comfortable in their bodies



school  
mealtimes

dr. kyla  
PAEDIATRIC  
DIETITIAN

Read on  
for how  
to do this  
below

### What could it look like?

#### Parents and caregivers who:

- ✓ Send a range of foods to school.
- ✓ Role model confident, adventurous eating at home.
- ✓ Demonstrate body respect.
- ✓ Advocate for their child's needs.
- ✓ Trust their child to eat freely.
- ✓ Trust teachers to support their child.

#### Teachers and schools who:

- ✓ Create a safe eating environment at school.
- ✓ Model positive attitudes towards food, health and bodies.
- ✓ Protect children from food and body shaming, nutrition misinformation and diet-talk.
- ✓ Support children to eat freely from their lunchboxes during dedicated mealtimes.

#### Which leads to children who:

- ✓ Choose happily from their lunchbox.
- ✓ Eat as much as they need to be full.
- ✓ Are free from feelings of guilt, shame or fear around food.
- ✓ Feel confident to try new foods, in their own time.

Some of this will be challenging for us. We might need to unlearn some old rules about food and our bodies. We will need to trust our children to make decisions that we are used to making for them. It won't be perfect. But it will be worthwhile.

**Change is coming.**  
Let's work together to bring it in.