



## Fun With food

Food aversions are quite common, with some children having more aversions than others. Fun with food helps children with aversions to gain more confidence by encouraging children's exploration to new foods. This will hopefully then add a wider variety of food into the children's diet.

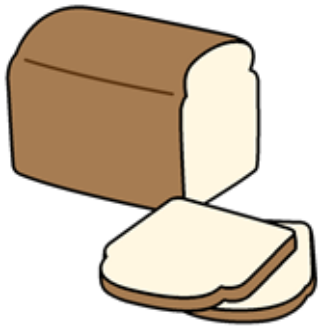
When looking at progress within fun with food we look at 5 different steps and each one is progress before a child can have the confidence to eat a new food.

1. Look at a new food
2. Touch a new food
3. Smell a new food
4. Take the food to their lips
5. Put the food in their mouth to taste.

Each new food can take several times of being introduced before the child has the confidence to get to step 5, but remember each step is progress! Just to look at some unfamiliar food can be quite scary for them at first, so take your time and work at the pace that keeps your child feeling happy.

- Fun with food should be done outside of mealtimes and some children find it helpful to have a different bowl or plate that they would normally have at meal times.
- Start by picking 1 food item, maybe a dry food item such as a cracker, cereal or bread.
- Model the activity alongside your child, so they can see its nothing to be scared of, and remember to model all of the 5 stages. Why not get other siblings involved too.
- If your child is not yet ready for steps 4 and 5, try different activities to encourage them to touch and explore the food such a breaking pieces off, maybe using cutlery to cut or stir, rolling food to each other, picking the food up and putting in into a bowl.
- Repeat the same food several times and track any progress they make
- When your child starts to show a liking to a food, then move this food into meal times alongside food they would normally have
- It is ok to change the food if you feel like your child isn't going to make progress with that particular food. Maybe come back to it at another time.

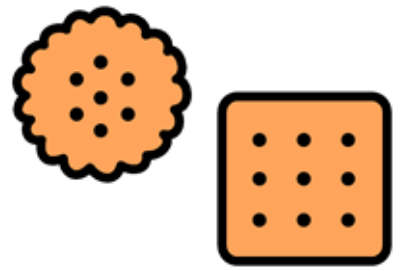
Attached we have included some food symbols to help you get started with your families journey to having fun with food.



bread



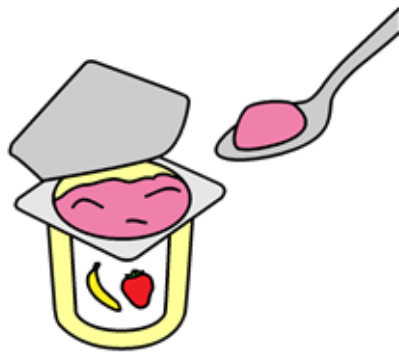
cereal



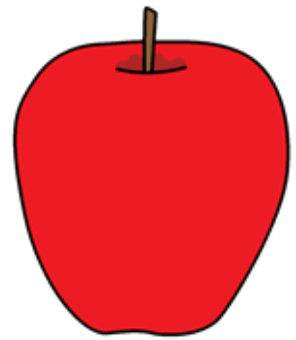
crackers



biscuits



yoghurt



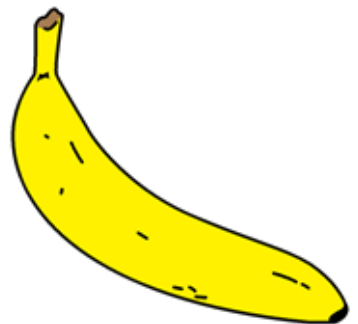
apple



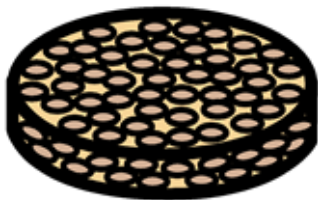
raisins



cereal bar



banana



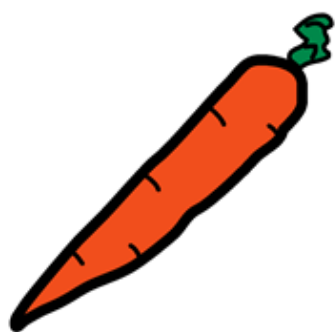
rice cake



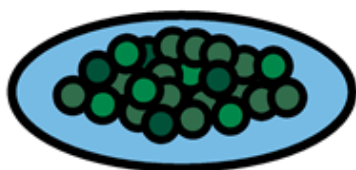
crisps



jelly



carrot



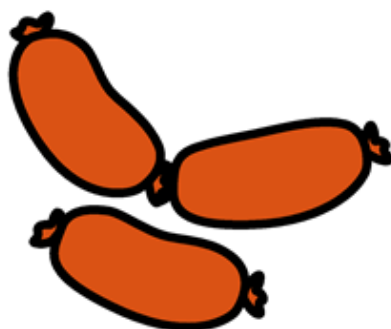
peas



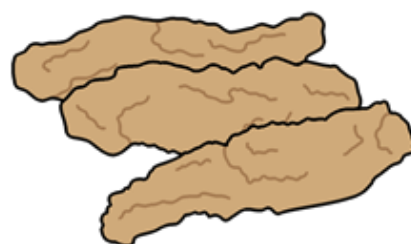
broccoli



chips



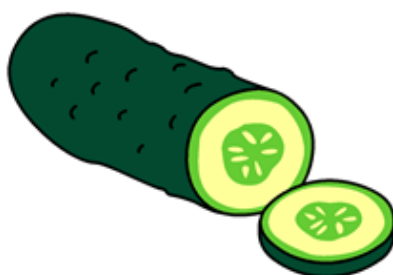
sausages



chicken strip



tomato



cucumber



pepper



rice



pasta



noodles