

## FOOD PLAY

### Speech Language Pathology

#### Feeding Plus.com Food Play Ideas

Food play is a great activity for children with sensory challenges, aversions to food types or simply picky eating. During food play, children are encouraged to explore foods without the pressure of putting any of them in their mouth. Children learn about foods through other senses such as looking, touching, smelling and hearing. Food play should occur outside of mealtimes.

The following are some ideas of food play activities, which can be found on the Feeding Plus website (<https://www.feedingplus.com/blog/food-play-ideas-for-picky-eaters>):

- Finger painting with pudding/yogurt/whipped cream
- Use paint brushes to paint with pudding or purees (if your child is not ready to touch)
- Touch and squish wet foods through Ziploc bags
- Teddy bear/doll picnic on the floor with real foods
- Make a “meal” with real foods in your child’s pretend/child-sized kitchen
- Feed puppets and dinosaurs or any toys with a mouth
- Fruit salad/fruit kabobs (sing the Wiggles song: “Fruit Salad”)
- Potato Head with real foods
- Use figurines/action figures to create a food scene or Mario world (e.g., pudding mud pit)
- Count anything! Cheerios, pieces of fruit, crackers...
- Create funny faces with foods on paper plates. Take pictures of them and send to friends.
- Stack crackers, cookies, cubes of cheese, Jello then knock the tower over and laugh
- Match different shaped crackers/foods into categories (e.g., shape, colour, size)
- Sort different shaped foods in a shape-sorter toy
- Drive cars and diggers through cooked pasta/rice, canned fruit, or Jello
- Cook and bake and ask your child to help prepare for meals (your child is head chef for the day)
- Serve food to others (give your child “helping” jobs with food)

- String cheerios or fruit loops and make food jewelry
- Stir/pour/shake/mix foods and sing songs
- Wrap foods in napkins and open them like presents...surprise!
- Make a noise with a food to draw attention to it (e.g., crunch, splat, pop, splash)
- Play Peek-A-Boo with foods
- Make mustaches with foods (e.g., peppers) or glasses (e.g., cucumbers)
- Flick and Roll foods across the table. Play table finger-hockey or soccer with foods
- Write names/letters in purees or sauces
- Make letters/numbers from sticks of foods/cooked noodles
- Use Dixie cups to hide foods, shuffle them, and find them
- Pretend to be a kitty cat or puppy game = licking food from hands or fingers