

A Quick Guide to Introducing New Foods/Drinks

Some students find it difficult to try new foods. This can mean limited variety in their diet. Allenvale Specialists can offer support with food exploration which can help to increase tolerance and acceptance of foods and expand a young person's diet in the longer term.

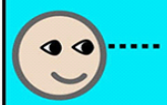
These are some tips and steps involved in trying new foods.

- Be aware that the goal of exploration is not to eat or drink
- Have a "spit out" bowl to encourage interaction with food without the pressure of swallowing
- Consider placing a new food in a plastic bag and modeling touching the food through the bag
- Start and finish with preferred foods
- Check posture: ensure feet are flat on the ground (or on foot plate etc) bottom back in seat and that the seat is comfortable and supportive
- Experiencing new foods can take a long time and many opportunities (repetitive exposure)
- Take your student's lead, and allow time for them to explore at their own pace

Michelle King, SLT
Victoria Tui'i, OT

Steps to Introducing New Foods/Drinks

Looks



I can be in same room with the new food/drink

- far away from me
- near my space
- directly in front of me

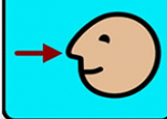
do



I can help to prepare the new food/drink by...

- using utensils/containers to stir, pour the food/drink for others
- using utensils/containers to prepare food/drink for myself
- using utensils to put food on my own plate

Smells



I can be OK to smell the new food/drink and show this by...

- staying in a room with the smell of the new food/drink
- sitting at the table with the smell of the new food/drink
- staying when the food smell is in my space
- leaning close to the food to smell it

Feels



I can touch/feel the new food/drink by...

- finger tip or fingers
- whole hand(s)
- arm, shoulder, chin, cheek, other
- lips, teeth, tongue

Tastes



I can taste the new food/drink by...

- licking, putting the food/drink on my lips or teeth
- taking a bite/sip and spitting it out immediately
- taking a bite/sip, holding it in my mouth, then spitting it out
- chewing and swallowing the food/drink

Sounds



I can hear/listen to the new food/drink by...

- listening during the cooking (frying, boiling, steaming sounds)
- listening to sounds during touching/manipulating the foods
- taking a bite/sip and hearing a crunch, silence, slurp
- chewing and swallowing the food/drink

eat



I may eat/drink the new food!