

Neurodiversity Home 101:

Mealtimes with ND children

Mealtimes can be a time of tension if children won't sit for long, won't eat a range of foods or there is limited communication.



Ideas to Help:

- ✓ Try to be realistic about how long your child can sit still (around child's age x 2 = minutes sitting at a table e.g. 5 years x 2 = 10 minutes sitting). It's better for the child to sit well for 10 minutes and be praised for this, and then gradually building up the time they can stay rather than running around during the whole meal and disrupting this for everyone else as well.
- ✓ Call your child to the table only when the food is being served.
- ✓ Allow your child to get up and move around between the main meal and dessert if they become restless.
- ✓ Switch off the television to allow your child to concentrate on mealtimes. Eat with them so they can enjoy being with you.
- ✓ Try to involve your child in the conversation or they may lose concentration. Ideas, for example, could be to have a family quiz, asking each child to tell a joke, or discuss their favourite TV programme, film or computer game they are playing.
- ✓ Build on what your child likes to eat introducing other textures and flavours.

