

## Sensational Toddler/Preschooler OT Tip of the Month Picky Eaters

**Do you know toddlers/preschoolers that...**

1. Eat a very limited variety of food or drinks?
2. Seem bothered even by food on the table that they do not eat?
3. Gag at the thought or sight of certain foods?

**These children may have sensory differences that impact their eating experience. Taste, smell, texture and look or sound of certain foods can trigger a negative reaction.**

### **Sensational ideas for picky eaters...**

1. Make food fun through play with food – use as paint brush, in experiments. Do food puzzles and make collages with pictures cut from magazines.
2. Learn about healthy foods and encourage child to smell, touch and if ready taste the type of food being studied.
3. Make a rainbow chart with food of all the different colors represented on the chart and try a food in each color group.
4. Let child help prepare food even if they choose not to eat it.
5. Never force or pressure a child to try a certain food. These negative memories strengthen the resistance for many children.

A good read: [Just Take a Bite: Easy, Effective Answers to Food Aversions and Eating Challenges](#) by Lori Ernsperger, Tania Stegen-Hanson and Temple Grandin

For families:

<http://www.aota.org/-/media/Corporate/Files/AboutOT/consumers/Youth/Establishing-Mealtime-Routines-for-Children-Tip-Sheet.pdf>.

[Click here](#) for more tip sheets for preschool and school age classrooms at [www.cintiOTInstitute.com/tipofthemoth](http://www.cintiOTInstitute.com/tipofthemoth) . For information about occupational therapy services at COTI go to [www.cintiOTInstitute.com](http://www.cintiOTInstitute.com). Dostal-COTI-2016