



My Child Avoids. . .What Do I Do???

Below are some tips that can lead you to success with conquering sensory fears or finding ways to smooth the way.

- * **Model it first.** Exposure first before pressure to engage is a powerful tool.
- * **Be Patient.** Remember that the adult sets the goal, but the child sets the pace.
- * **Make it fun.** For example, if your child does not like broccoli, you can pretend that they are eating trees in a story that you fabricate. You can also make it part of a game.
- * **Use Rewards.** We all need rewards sometimes to get us started. This can work better than excessive pressure. Rewards can vary- snacks, stuffed animal, snuggle time, helper priveledges.
- * **Peer Pressure.** Sometimes kids need to see a peer try it. Be careful you don't put too much pressure that they shut down.
- * **Use a Game Approach.** For example, a child that only eats chips, you may show them 3 kinds of chips (one being the one that they will eat voluntarily) and have them feed you one with your eyes closed and guess which one it is. Then you feed them one with their eyes closed. Ease in to it.
- * **Touch It.** If it is a food that is avoided, try to let them get exposed to it first by touching it or serving it to other family members that like it. When they are comfortable with this, then try letting them cook it with you or cut it up and serve it or smell it.
- * **Watch It.** Sometimes kids need to see videos or others dealing positively with the same issue that they have.
- * **Read it.** Reading stories that have their struggle in it can be very helpful, especially if they get connected with the characters in the story.
- * **Insist Upon It.** There come moments when sometimes you have tried all the other approaches and a child needs the firm approach in a quick small dose. Take it little chunks at a time and win small battles until the big battle is won.
- * **Pick your Battles.** There are times when if you look at the entire picture, to get in a struggle that does not really benefit the child or you is not worth the fight. Think and plan your approach to be successful.