

# TODDLER MEALTIME MANGEMENT

## The One-Year-Old Child (12-24 months)

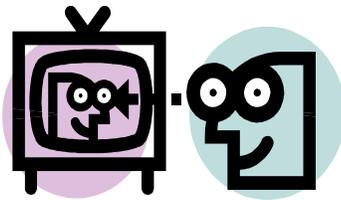
Child's Developmental Stage	Common Mealtime Behaviors	Caregiver's Mealtime Strategies
Curious – Watches and explores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May dump or throw food to see what happens.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set positive limits at the table, such as “Put the food in your mouth.”</li> </ul>
Uses fingers to feed self	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May make a mess or be viewed as playing with food.</li> </ul> <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow for messy mealtimes by having surfaces that you are able to clean.</li> <li>• Provide finger foods.</li> <li>• Have your child sit at the table while eating.</li> </ul>
Doesn't like new situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be afraid of new foods or new meal-related situations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer a new food up to 20 times without fuss.</li> <li>• Add new foods into family meals.</li> <li>• Have regular mealtimes and snacks.</li> </ul>
Eating often slows down <div style="text-align: center;">  </div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May not eat as much or as often as before and is easily distracted.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve small portions.</li> <li>• Allow your child to decide if and how much food to eat.</li> <li>• Have your child sit at the table while eating.</li> <li>• Permit your child to leave the table when full.</li> <li>• Turn off the TV during meals.</li> </ul>
Says two or three words	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can't tell you about food likes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch your child's face and body to see what he or she wants.</li> <li>• Eat and talk with your child.</li> <li>• Make mealtimes pleasant.</li> </ul>

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# TODDLER MEALTIME MANGEMENT

## The Two-Year-Old Child (24-36 months)

Child's Developmental Stage	Common Mealtime Behaviors	Caregiver's Mealtime Strategies
Short attention span-watches many things  	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May not eat if distracted.</li> <li>• Often wants to leave the table shortly after sitting down.</li> <li>• Has a hard time waiting for food if hungry.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Turn off the TV during meals.</li> <li>• Plan meals and snacks at regular times during the day.</li> <li>• Make mealtimes a pleasant, social experience.</li> <li>• Have your child sit at the table while eating.</li> <li>• Permit your child to leave the table when he or she is full.</li> </ul>
Can use spoon and cup fairly well	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has better use of spoons, forks, and cups, but still may be a messy eater.</li> <li>• Has trouble pouring and cutting.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide small spoons, forks, and cups that won't break.</li> <li>• Fill cups half-full or less.</li> <li>• Expect messiness during mealtimes</li> </ul>
Independent—often says “no!”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May refuse food.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow your child to decide if and how much food to eat.</li> <li>• Avoid power struggles.</li> <li>• Continue to offer new foods and encourage tasting.</li> </ul>
May have food jags (picky eater)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children often have times when they only eat one food. For example, they may want only cereal for a while, then just fruit and cheese.</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do not worry, if your child is growing.</li> <li>• Offer many nutritious foods and allow your child to select what to eat.</li> <li>• Do not prepare special foods for your child.</li> </ul>
Says short phrases-“more juice”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to talk a little better, but still has some trouble.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch your child's face and body to see what he or she wants.</li> </ul>

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