

Why Your Child is a Fussy Eater—And What To Do About It

The ultimate guide for parents ready to ditch
mealtime battles, understand their child's eating
habits, and finally enjoy family meals again

Ruth Hetherington
*Children's Nutritionist & Creator
of Happy Little Eaters*

Happy Little **Eaters**
— ♥ —

INTRODUCTION 01

A gentle introduction to the guide – what to expect, how to use it, and why this is the beginning of a calmer, more confident chapter for you and your child.

MEET RUTH 02

Your guide through this journey – a children's nutritionist and mum who truly gets it

WHAT IS FUSSY EATING (AND WHAT IT'S NOT) 03

Understanding what's normal, what's not, and why your child's eating habits aren't your fault.

5 HIDDEN REASONS KIDS REFUSE FOOD 04

It's not about being difficult – here's what might really be going on beneath the surface.

7 MISTAKES WELL-MEANING PARENTS MAKE 06

Gentle guidance to help you spot and shift habits that may be making things harder.

THE 3 PILLARS OF HAPPY MEALTIMES 08

Structure, rhythm, and calm – the three things that make all the difference.

THE DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY 09

An evidence-based approach that reduces stress and builds trust at the table – for you and your child.

WHAT TO SAY (AND WHAT NOT TO SAY) 12

Powerful language swaps to reduce pressure and support food confidence.

GET KIDS IN THE KITCHEN 13

Why hands-on involvement is one of the best ways to build food curiosity and reduce resistance.

REAL WAYS A CHILD CAN HELP 14

Simple, age-appropriate tasks that build confidence, increase food exposure, and make children feel like valued little chefs.

MAKE FOOD EXPOSURE FUN 15

Creative ways to help your child feel safe and interested in food – even without eating it.

WHAT A GOOD EATER ACTUALLY LOOKS LIKE 18

Let's challenge the myths around "perfect eaters" and unpack what healthy, intuitive eating really looks like in children.

REFRAMING SUCCESS AT THE TABLE 19

A side-by-side comparison of what we expect versus what truly matters – helping you shift your perspective and feel confident in what progress looks like.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU REMOVE PRESSURE 20

Letting go of control is hard. Here's what the journey usually looks like when you do.

THE PROGRESS TIMELINE 22

A visual guide to help you recognise small wins, slow change, and long-term growth.

A REAL-WORLD MEALTIME RHYTHM 23

A sample daily structure to support consistent appetite, reduce grazing, and bring calm predictability back to your child's eating routine.

QUICK WINS TO START TODAY 24

Simple, low-effort strategies you can implement immediately to reduce stress and gently support your child's eating – even on the busiest days.

ACTION STEPS 25

A clear summary to help you move forward with confidence

3 DAYS TO CALMER MEALTIMES 26

A mini action plan to help you feel the shift in just a few meals.

LET'S FIX THIS TOGETHER 27

If you're ready for calmer mealtimes and lasting change, here's how we can keep working together inside The Fussy Eater Fix.

WHAT OTHER FAMILIES HAVE TO SAY 30

Real-life words from parents who've walked this path and seen real change.

If you're reading this, chances are mealtimes in your home aren't the peaceful, happy moments you hoped they'd be.

Maybe your child refuses anything green. Maybe they won't eat foods that touch. Maybe they eat nothing unless it's beige and bland.

You're exhausted. You've tried everything. You worry they're not getting enough. You wonder what you're doing wrong.

"They'll eat when they're hungry."

"Don't worry – it's just a phase."

"Just offer it again and again."

Sound familiar? I've heard it all – and as a nutritionist (and mum of two!), I'm here to tell you this:

Fussy eating is not your fault.

And more importantly – it can be fixed.

Gently, respectfully, and without turning mealtimes into a power struggle.

This guide will help you understand what's really going on when your child refuses food – and show you simple, powerful strategies that work.

You'll learn:

- Why your child really refuses food (it's not just "being difficult")
- The common mistakes (we've all made them)
- My 3-part formula for calmer mealtimes
- What to do – and what not to do – to turn things around

I'm Ruth Hetherington – a children's nutritionist, clinical nutritionist and mum of two little girls who've both taught me more about food, feeding, and family mealtimes than any textbook ever could.

I've worked with hundreds of families to reduce mealtime stress, build trust at the table, and support children in becoming confident, curious, and capable eaters – without bribes, battles, or pressure.

But I don't just bring lived experience as a parent. I've also trained extensively in leading, evidence-based feeding approaches, including:

- **The SOS Approach to Feeding**
- **Responsive Feeding**
- **The Division of Responsibility (sDOR) framework**

My work is grounded in compassion, neuroscience, and child development – but delivered in a way that makes sense in the middle of a busy, messy, real-life family kitchen.

Whether you're navigating total food refusal, strong preferences, or daily mealtime struggles, I'm here to guide you with practical tools, gentle support, and a method that truly works.

My guide pulls together the exact approach I use with parents in The Fussy Eater Fix program – a method that works in real life, with real children, and real family pressures.

The Fussy Eater Fix is the programme I wish every parent had access to – and I'd love to support you inside.

You're not alone in this.

And you're not failing.

Let's rewrite the story around food – together.

Fussy eating is more than just being picky.

It's when a child regularly refuses certain foods, especially anything new, and shows signs of distress, resistance, or anxiety around mealtimes.

Most children go through some kind of “neophobic” (fear of new food) phase. But for many families, it becomes a daily battle – and one that can deeply affect mood, nutrition, and family life.

What fussy eating is not:

- **It's not bad behaviour.**
- **It's not something to be punished.**
- **It's not about being stubborn.**

Instead, fussy eating is usually a response to something deeper – like sensory sensitivity, fear, anxiety, or a need for control.

And the more pressure we apply? The worse it tends to get.

Every fussy eater has a story – and once we understand that story, we can start to rewrite it. This guide is here to help you do exactly that.

“Fussy eating is never about being naughty – it's a child doing their best with what they can handle.”

Let's uncover what's really going on behind the "I don't like it":

1. Overwhelm

Big portions, lots of colours or textures on one plate, unfamiliar smells – all of this can feel like too much for a young child's nervous system.

- Try offering tiny portions (think: a teaspoon-size) and serve food in separate little sections or ramekins.

2. Control

Food is one of the few things children can control. If life feels uncertain or overwhelming, refusing food is a way to assert independence.

- Give them small choices: "Would you like peas or carrots with dinner?"

It builds confidence and cooperation.

3. Negative associations

A single gagging episode, being forced to eat, or even being shamed for their choices can leave a lasting impression.

- Healing those associations means rebuilding trust. No pressure. No pushing. Just calm, consistent exposure.

4. Sensory sensitivity

Some children are sensitive to textures (mushy, crunchy, slimy), smells, or even the sound of chewing. It's not defiance – it's discomfort.

- Try serving familiar foods with new textures nearby. No pressure to eat – just let them explore at their own pace.

5. Unintentional pressure

Even well-meaning encouragement like “just try it” can create pressure. Children sense our expectations even when we say nothing.

- Instead, focus on the experience of mealtimes – the togetherness, not the bites.

Not every child struggles for the same reason. The key is to stay curious – and remember that behaviour is communication. If we listen closely, we can respond with calm, confidence, and connection.

Remember – food refusal isn't a personal attack, and it's not a parenting failure.

It's often a sign that something deeper is going on: a need for control, a lack of trust, a feeling of overwhelm, or even just a normal developmental phase. The more we understand what's driving the behaviour, the more calmly and confidently we can respond.

In the next sections, we'll explore exactly how to rebuild that trust, reduce mealtime stress, and gently guide your child back to food – without pressure, battles, or bribes.

If you've done any (or all) of these – you're not alone. Most of us have.

Fussy eating is one of the most emotionally charged challenges for a parent. We all just want our children to eat well, grow strong, and enjoy food. And in the middle of that stress, it's completely understandable that we fall into habits we think will help – but that often backfire.

The good news?

Once you know better, you can do better.

These mistakes are incredibly common – and entirely fixable.

- **Bribing with dessert**

If you eat your broccoli, you can have ice cream.”

This teaches kids that broccoli is the yucky chore, and ice cream is the reward.

- **Praising only when they eat**

“Good girl for trying that!”

This puts pressure on performance. Instead, focus on the connection: “I love spending time with you at dinner.”

- **Making a second meal**

Reinforces the idea that “their food” is separate – and that if they wait long enough, something familiar will appear.

- **Talking too much about food at the table**

Constantly asking questions or narrating what's on their plate makes mealtimes feel like a test.

- **Labelling them as “fussy”**

Whether to them or in front of others, it reinforces the identity: “I’m a picky eater.”

- **Grazing all day**

When snacks are constant, appetite never builds. Structure creates healthy hunger.

- **Ignoring your own needs**

Parents matter too.

You deserve to enjoy your meals – not just serve them.

If you recognised yourself in any of these – take a breath. These habits are incredibly common, and they often come from a place of love. The good news? With a few small shifts, things can change dramatically. And you're already on the right track by reading this.

What to do instead:

- Serve one meal for everyone
- Avoid food-based bribes
- Focus on connection, not consumption
- Keep snacks structured

These are the non-negotiables I use in my 1:1 work and inside The Fussy Eating Fix. Everything builds from here:

Routine & Rhythm

Children thrive on predictable rhythms.

- Keep regular times for meals and snacks.
- Avoid all-day grazing.
- Predictability = safety = more eating.

Trust & Autonomy

You decide **what**, **when**, and **where** food is offered.

Your child decides if and how much.

This is called the **Division of Responsibility**, and it works.

Environment & Example

Are mealtimes rushed? Tense?

Is everyone eating together?

Are YOU eating the foods you want them to try?

Children are watching.

They learn most by imitation – not instruction.

These three pillars work together – routine builds safety, trust builds autonomy, and the environment shapes everything. When these pieces come together, mealtimes stop being battles and start becoming moments of calm connection.



A foundational, evidence-based approach for building trust, reducing stress, and raising confident eaters. The Division of Responsibility in feeding (sDOR) is a widely respected and evidence-based framework created by feeding expert Ellyn Satter. It outlines how feeding is a shared responsibility between parent and child – and that both have clearly defined roles.

At its core, the theory of sDOR is based on the understanding that children are born with the natural ability to regulate their own appetite – to eat when they're hungry and stop when they're full. They are also instinctively cautious around new foods, and need repeated, pressure-free exposure in order to feel safe exploring them.

According to this approach, it is the **parent's responsibility to decide what food is offered, when it is offered, and where it is eaten.** The **child's responsibility** is to **decide if they will eat from what is offered, and how much they will eat.**

This structure helps children feel safe and respected at mealtimes, and supports the development of a healthy relationship with food and eating.

When both roles are honoured, children learn to trust not only the food being offered – but also their own internal cues and signals. And that trust becomes the foundation for confident, competent eating over time.

The Division of Responsibility

What does this look like in real life?

THE PARENT'S JOB

Chooses what food is offered

Decides when & where meals are served

Prepares balanced meals without pressure

Creates a calm, mealtime environment

Models curiosity and flexibility with food

Offers consistent structure and routine

Respects the child's pace and preferences

THE CHILD'S JOB

Chooses what food is offered

Decides how much they want to eat

Listens to hunger and fullness cues

Explores food at their own pace

Builds confidence to try new foods in their time

Learns to trust that food will come regularly

Feels safe to say "no" without pressure

Why this approach works:

- It removes pressure, which reduces anxiety and resistance
- It gives children autonomy in a developmentally appropriate way
- It builds long-term skills like body awareness, curiosity, and flexibility
- It helps parents feel more confident and less responsible for every bite

This approach doesn't mean letting children eat whatever they want, whenever they want. It means offering balanced, consistent meals and snacks, and then giving them the freedom to respond without pressure.

It's not about control. It's about partnership.
And it works.

This is the foundation I use in my own home and in my work with families through The Fussy Eater Fix.

When we stop trying to control what our child eats – and start supporting how they experience food – everything changes.

Children need to feel safe at the table – not judged.

Words shape that safety more than we realise.



DON'T SAY

“Just one bite!”

“You’ll like it if you try.”

“You need to eat more.”

No dessert unless...”

“Be a good boy and finish.”



DO SAY

“You don’t have to eat it.”

“It’s there if you’re curious.”

“Listen to your tummy.”

“Dessert is just part of the meal.”

“It’s lovely to have you at the table.”

When we shift the script, we change the whole experience of mealtimes.

Remember, it’s not about the perfect phrase – it’s about safety, consistency, and connection.

A powerful, practical strategy to reduce fussy eating and build lifelong confidence around food.

Involving children in the kitchen is one of the most effective (and often overlooked) ways to support a positive relationship with food. It increases exposure, builds familiarity, and most importantly – gives children a sense of ownership and connection with what they eat.

Children are naturally curious. They want to touch, mix, pour, and create. And when they're part of the process, they're more likely to explore food on their own terms.

I've seen this play out in my own home: both of my daughters began helping in the kitchen from around 15 months. By the age of 2, they each had their own child-safe knives, chopping boards, peelers, and aprons. Cooking is part of our daily rhythm – and because of that, food is not something that's "done to them" but something they participate in.

Why it works:

- Exposure without pressure: Kids can touch and smell ingredients before they appear on the plate.
- Increased confidence: Helping out builds familiarity, which builds trust.
- Autonomy and involvement: Feeling like they've contributed gives them a sense of pride.
- Connection: Cooking together becomes quality time – and children feel safe and supported.

Even if they don't eat what they've helped prepare, the experience still counts. It's a stepping stone in the right direction.

You don't need a themed baking day or a Pinterest-perfect setup. Real cooking, real routines, and small daily tasks are more than enough.

Even simply letting them stand beside you with their own tools while you cook is powerful. The goal isn't to train them to be chefs – it's to help them feel involved, capable, and curious.

Here are some simple and great ways children can help:

- Washing fruits and vegetables
- Stirring or pouring ingredients
- Tearing lettuce or leafy herbs
- Using child-safe knives to cut soft foods
- Spreading toppings (nut butter, hummus, yoghurt)
- Squeezing lemon onto food
- Helping set the table
- Helping with grocery shopping
- Choosing a new fruit or veg at the supermarket
- Packing items into bags
- Cleaning up with a small cloth or sponge

Getting children into the kitchen doesn't just help them eat better – it helps them build a healthier relationship with food, with you, and with themselves. And that is a win in every sense of the word.

Make exposure to food fun. Because progress around food doesn't have to mean eating – and play is one of the most powerful tools we have.

One of the biggest misconceptions about fussy eating is that progress only happens when a child eats something. But in reality, the journey toward accepting a food begins long before the first bite – and often without any eating at all.

Exposure is the process of helping a child become more familiar with a food. That might mean seeing it, smelling it, touching it, or helping prepare it. And when exposure is offered in a fun, pressure-free way, children are far more likely to feel safe enough to engage with food over time.

This is especially important for children who feel overwhelmed by new textures, colours, or smells. By turning exposure into a game, a craft, or a hands-on experience, we remove the pressure – and invite curiosity.

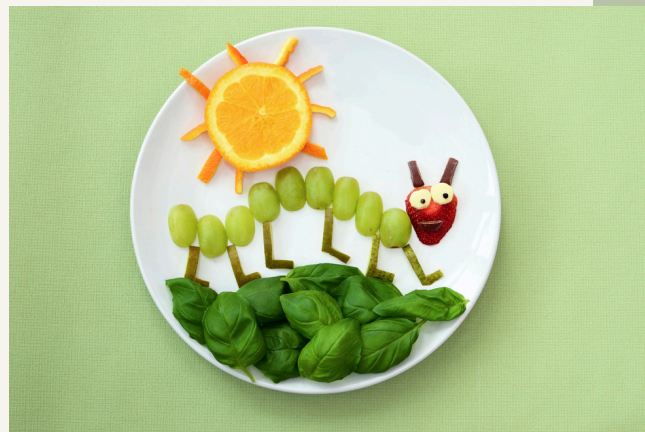
Why this matters:

- It reduces anxiety around unfamiliar foods
- It creates positive associations with food (instead of battles or fear)
- It gives children the space to explore at their own pace
- It allows progress to happen through repeated, low-stakes interaction

Children are wired to learn through play – and food is no exception.

Here's what food exposure can look like:

- Making silly faces out of fruit and vegetables
- Using cookie cutters to make shapes from sandwiches or cheese
- Playing “restaurant” or “shopping” with toy food and real packaging
- Using mini tongs, tweezers, or child-safe knives to move and arrange foods
- Creating colour boards or rainbow plates
- Painting with purées or edible dips
- Mixing herbs, grains, or seeds in a sensory tray
- Letting your child choose one “mystery ingredient” at the supermarket
- Creating themed snack boards (e.g. jungle animals, garden bugs, faces)



None of this is about tricking children into eating. It's about making food a safe, fun, and familiar part of their world – without pressure, rules, or judgement.

What counts as a win?

If your child...

- touches a new food? That's exposure.
- helps you put it on the plate? That's progress.
- smells it, licks it, or comments on it? That's learning.

Food doesn't have to go in the mouth to make an impact.

The more comfortable your child feels around food, the more likely they are to engage with it in future – on their own terms.

Play is not a distraction from eating. It's a doorway into it.

It's time to let go of the myths – and build a new, healthier definition of success at the table.

So many of us were raised with the idea that a **“good eater”** is someone who clears their plate, tries every new food on the first go, eats their vegetables first, and never complains.

But that idea has nothing to do with real, responsive, intuitive eating. And when we hold onto that image, we set ourselves – and our children – up for constant frustration and disappointment.

Here's the truth:

Children **aren't** supposed to eat like adults. They're supposed to explore, push back, go through phases, and develop trust in their own body over time.

A child who eats everything without question may not be eating intuitively – they may be trying to avoid disappointing you. And a child who pushes food away isn't being “difficult” – they're communicating something.

Maybe they're overwhelmed.
Maybe they're tired.
Maybe they're just not hungry.

Being a good eater doesn't mean being perfect. It means feeling safe, supported, and confident enough to explore food at your own pace – with no pressure, and no shame. When we shift our expectations, everything else begins to shift too.

Reframing Success

Let's reframe what success actually looks like.

WHAT WE THINK A GOOD EATER LOOKS LIKE:

Eats every food
you offer

Tries something new
the first time

Never complains
or says no

Finishes their
entire plate

Eats their
vegetables first

Always eats
“balanced” meals

WHAT A GOOD EATER ACTUALLY LOOKS LIKE:

Feels safe saying
“no thank you”

Eats more some days,
less on others

Tuned into their own
hunger & fullness signals

Tries new foods when
they're ready

Feels relaxed
at the table

Understands that all
foods can have a place

Your child doesn't need to “get it right” at every meal.
They just need to feel safe enough to keep showing up.
That's what builds a good eater. And you're doing that – right now.

Progress doesn't always look the way you expect – One of the hardest parts of fussy eating work is letting go of control. When you stop coaxing, persuading, or negotiating – and finally step back – it can feel scary. You might worry:

“If I stop pushing, they'll eat even less...”

“What if nothing changes?”

“How do I know this is working?”

The truth is, the shift into pressure-free feeding doesn't always look linear – but that doesn't mean it's not working. Most children go through phases of adjustment, resistance, curiosity, and slow rebuilding.

Letting go of pressure doesn't mean letting go of structure – it means stepping into a different role. One that feels less reactive and more grounded. One that doesn't rely on tactics like “just one more bite,” or pleading, or negotiating pudding in exchange for peas.

Instead of being the food enforcer, you become the safe guide. The calm anchor. The one who shows up consistently, provides structure, and trusts that progress can unfold without a battle.

This isn't always easy – especially if you've been stuck in a cycle of mealtime stress for months or even years. You might feel unsure. You might miss the tiny signs that things are beginning to shift.

But I promise you: when you remove pressure and offer food with respect, structure, and calm, your child has space to grow.

Not every meal will feel magical. But you'll start to notice fewer arguments. More willingness to come to the table. Small, subtle signs that trust is being rebuilt – and that your child is beginning to feel safe enough to explore again.

Let's take a realistic look at what happens when you stop pressuring and start trusting the process.

WHAT TO EXPECT WHEN YOU REMOVE PRESSURE

And remember...

Progress might look like:

- Touching food they used to ignore
- Asking questions
- Sitting longer at the table
- Helping with food prep
- Taking one bite without being asked

All of this counts. And it all adds up.

This approach isn't about instant results – it's about building safety, trust, and confidence that lasts.

You are doing it right – even when it feels slow.

The Progress Timeline

WEEK 1-2: RESISTANCE OR RELIEF

- SOME CHILDREN TEST BOUNDARIES (E.G. REFUSING FAMILIAR FOODS JUST TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS)
- OTHERS FEEL IMMEDIATE RELIEF AND BEGIN EATING MORE FREELY
- PARENTS OFTEN FEEL UNSURE, ANXIOUS, OR LIKE NOTHING'S CHANGING
- STICK WITH IT – THIS IS THE “TRUST REBUILD” PHASE.

WEEK 3-4: SETTLING INTO STRUCTURE

- CHILDREN BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND THAT MEALTIMES ARE CONSISTENT, PRESSURE-FREE, AND PREDICTABLE
- GRAZING TENDS TO REDUCE AS APPETITE NATURALLY REBALANCES
- YOU MAY SEE EARLY SIGNS OF EXPLORATION: TOUCHING, SMELLING, LICKING, OR MAKING COMMENTS ABOUT NEW FOODS
- THIS IS A BIG SHIFT – EVEN WITHOUT ACTUAL BITES.

WEEK 4-6+: CONFIDENCE BEGINS TO GROW

- CURIOSITY INCREASES (ASKING ABOUT NEW FOODS, HELPING PREP MEALS, IMITATING WHAT OTHERS EAT)
- SOME CHILDREN WILL BEGIN TRYING TINY TASTES OR PLAYING WITH FOOD THEY USED TO AVOID
- MEALTIMES FEEL CALMER, EVEN IF EATING HASN'T DRASTICALLY CHANGED YET
- THIS IS THE MOMENTUM PHASE – THINGS BEGIN TO SHIFT.

WEEKS 8+: DEEPER CHANGE

- OUR CHILD BEGINS TRYING NEW FOODS MORE WILLINGLY
- THEIR SAFE FOOD LIST SLOWLY EXPANDS
- THEY BEGIN SHOWING TRUST: SITTING DOWN MORE EASILY, INTERACTING WITH FOOD MORE OFTEN
- THESE ARE THE SIGNS OF TRUE, SUSTAINABLE PROGRESS.

A REAL-WORLD MEALTIME RHYTHM THAT SUPPORTS APPETITE

23

There is no need for rigid rules – just gentle structure that works with their body clock. You can adjust these times according to your own family schedule.

7:30 AM	Breakfast
10:00 AM	Snack (fruit + fat/protein: e.g. apple + almond butter)
12:30 PM	Lunch
3:30 PM	Snack (e.g. oat balls, cucumber + cream cheese)
6:00 PM	Dinner
OPTIONAL: 7:30 PM	Light supper (if genuinely hungry: yoghurt, banana, toast)

Stick to these times for 3-5 days and watch what happens.

Build in downtime before meals (especially after school) – let them regulate.

Serve 1-2 safe foods without asking them to try anything else.

These tiny changes have a BIG impact:

- Serve smaller portions – it's less intimidating
- Use fun, divided plates or bowls
- Eat together, even if it's just a snack
- Invite them to help cook or plate up (ownership builds interest!)
- Keep a rotation of safe foods available at each meal
- Say nothing about what they eat – instead, talk about your day
- End meals calmly, even if they barely touched anything

You'll be amazed what changes once the pressure is off.

Small shifts create big change. You don't have to overhaul everything at once – even one or two of these gentle changes can start shifting the dynamic at your table this week.

You don't need to do everything at once – consistency matters more than perfection.

Action Steps

Here's how to start putting everything into practice – gently and at your own pace.

1

Focus on
One Shift at a Time

Pick just one tip from the “Quick Wins” page to try this week.

Maybe it's serving smaller portions, or saying nothing about what your child eats. Keep it simple.

2

Create a Calm
Mealtime Environment

Sit with your child, eat together (even if it's a small snack), and take the focus off the food. Talk about your day, play soft music — make it feel safe and relaxed.

3

Observe Without
Judgement

Start noticing what helps your child feel safe at the table. What foods do they gravitate toward? When do they push back? Get curious, not critical.

Need help putting it all together?

That's exactly what we do inside The Fussy Eater Fix — step-by-step support, personalised to your child and your family.

3 Days to Calmer Mealtimes

A gentle reset to take the pressure off and start shifting the mood around food.

DAY 01

CLEAR THE PRESSURE

- DON'T MENTION FOOD, BITES, OR "JUST TRY IT" TODAY.
- SERVE ONE MEAL FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY, WITH 1-2 SAFE FOODS FOR YOUR CHILD.
- FOCUS ON CONNECTION: TELL A STORY, ASK ABOUT THEIR DAY, PLAY CALMING MUSIC.

DAY 02

LET THEM LEAD

- LET YOUR CHILD SERVE THEMSELVES (EVEN IF IT'S JUST ONE PEA).
- DON'T COMMENT ON WHAT THEY EAT – JUST EAT WITH THEM AND ENJOY THE MOMENT.
- GIVE THEM A FOOD PREP JOB BEFORE THE MEAL (E.G. "CAN YOU PICK THE CARROTS?")

DAY 03

TRUST THE PROCESS

- STICK TO YOUR MEALTIME ROUTINE.
- SAY LESS. SMILE MORE.
- REFLECT AFTERWARDS: "WHAT FELT DIFFERENT TODAY?"

You might not see a big eating change yet – but you've already shifted the tone. And that's where it all begins.

Ready for Real Change?

You've just taken a huge step by downloading this guide – and that alone shows how deeply you care.

You've learned what fussy eating really is, why it happens, and how gentle, pressure-free strategies create lasting change.

But if you're still stuck in a loop of worry, refusal, and mealtime stress... you're not alone – and you don't have to stay stuck. I'm here to help you along the way.

Introducing: The Fussy Eater Fix 1:1 Personalised Programme

A **gentle, expert-led 1:1 programme** for parents who are ready to **stop stressing** and **start seeing real progress**.

Inside The Fussy Eater Fix, I take everything you've learned in this guide – and bring it to life for your unique family.

No more second-guessing. No more wondering if you're "doing it right."

This is real help. The kind that works. The kind that lasts.

This isn't a course. It's not guesswork. It's your fix.

Whether your child refuses entire food groups, panics when something new is on their plate, or only eats beige and biscuits – you are not alone.

And you're not doing anything wrong.

I've supported families with all kinds of feeding challenges, and the shift is often faster than they expected – once they had a plan.

If this guide helped something click...

imagine what we could do together in just one personalised session.

I created this programme because I know how it feels to be stuck.

And I know how to get unstuck.

This is not a Zoom session or a copy-paste meal plan.

This is me, Ruth – children's nutritionist, mum of two, and expert in evidence-based feeding approaches – personally guiding you every step of the way.

Ready for Real Change?

How It Works (And Why It's So Easy).

When you're already dealing with mealtime battles, the last thing you need is a complicated programme or another overwhelming to-do list. That's why **The Fussy Eater Fix** is designed to fit seamlessly into your life – and still make a big impact.

Here's how it works:

Step 1 – You fill in a simple intake form

This is where you tell me about your child, your mealtime setup, and your biggest challenges. It takes just a few minutes – no long questionnaires or complicated history. Just real, honest answers that help me understand what's going on.

Step 2 – I review everything and build your plan

Once I've read through your responses, I go to work. I pull together a clear, personalised feeding strategy based on your exact situation – whether that's selective eating, food anxiety, mealtime refusal, or something else entirely.

Step 3 – I send you a detailed voice note + PDF plan

You'll receive a warm, supportive voice message from me walking you through your plan, along with a beautifully written PDF you can refer back to any time. You'll know exactly what to focus on, what to stop doing, and how to support your child from where they are right now.

Step 4 – (Optional) Get follow-up support if you need it

You'll have the option to check in with me once you've had time to implement your plan – either via WhatsApp or a short voice note response. Because I know that sometimes, one small reassurance can keep the momentum going.

No pressure. No judgement. Just a calm, supportive path forward – tailored just for you and your child.

Ready for Real Change?

Here's what's included:

A personalised voice-note consultation from me

No awkward Zooms or rigid appointments. I go through every detail you've shared and record a thoughtful, supportive voice note – like having a nutritionist in your back pocket. You can listen while folding laundry, walking the dog, or whenever it suits your day.

A multi-page, personalised PDF plan – tailored entirely to your child

This isn't a generic handout. This is a beautifully designed, deeply personalised plan (often 6–10 pages long) that walks you through exactly what's going on, why your child may be refusing food, and step-by-step what to do next.

Inside your plan, you'll get:

- A detailed summary of your child's feeding profile
- An overview of the key challenges you're facing
- Specific, gentle changes to make at mealtimes
- A realistic mealtime approach that works for your family
- My feedback and notes on your current approach – and what to tweak
- Realistic short-term goals to help you start seeing progress fast

Every word is written for you and your child – with the same care I'd want for my own family.

Expert support grounded in real-world experience

Everything you receive is based on evidence-based approaches like the Division of Responsibility, responsive feeding, and the SOS Approach to Feeding – combined with years of experience as a children's nutritionist and mum of two. This is calm, confident guidance from someone who understands exactly what you're dealing with.

Optional follow-up support

If you need it, you'll have the option to check in after you've started implementing the plan. That might look like a short voice note exchange or WhatsApp check-in

What Other Families Have to Say

Real Words from Real Parents

You're not alone – and you're not the only one who's found this approach life-changing.

Sarah,

“ Before working with Ruth, I dreaded every single mealtime. My daughter would cry, I'd get frustrated, and nothing ever worked. Within two weeks of following her approach, everything changed. No more bribes, no more battles. Just calm, structured mealtimes – and a child who's slowly but surely trying new foods

Laura

“ Ruth helped me understand what was really going on behind my son's picky eating. I used to think I was failing, but now I realise he just needed to feel safe and in control. The difference in him (and in me) is incredible.

Emma

“ I was so tired of making three different meals every night. Ruth gave me a plan I could actually follow – and now we all eat the same dinner, together, without stress. I only wish I'd found this sooner.

James

“ Ruth's approach works. Full stop. She doesn't offer quick fixes – she offers lasting change. My son hadn't touched a vegetable in months, and last night he asked for seconds of roasted carrots. That says it all.

Ready to be the next success story?
Join The Fussy Eater Fix and start your journey today.

Let's Keep In Touch

I created this guide to give you clarity, reassurance, and a practical starting point – and I'm so glad you're here. If this guide helped you feel a little less alone... if it made something click, or helped you see mealtimes in a new light – there's so much more support waiting for you.

Whether you're looking for recipes, daily feeding tips, or gentle guidance from someone who truly gets it, I'd love to stay connected.

I'm always sharing realistic, respectful strategies for feeding kids well – without the overwhelm.

Let's raise calm, confident happy little eaters – together.

Ruth x



+353 83 3706651



@happylittleeaters



wearehappylittleeaters@gmail.com



wearehappylittleeaters.com

Notes