

# 2 to 3 Years



## FEEDING & SWALLOWING MILESTONES

These milestones cover feeding and swallowing development in children.

Each child develops uniquely, even within the same family, and may meet certain milestones earlier or later than others. If your child does not meet many of the milestones within their age range, visit [www.asha.org/profind](http://www.asha.org/profind) to find an ASHA-certified speech-language pathologist (SLP) for an assessment.

### What should my child be able to do?

- Feeds self with fork and spoon, although often still uses fingers.

### How does my child eat and drink?

- Drinks from an open cup without spilling.
- Chews all foods, including those with tougher textures, without gagging or choking.

### What types of food should my child be eating and drinking?

- Most crunchy, hard or mixed food textures, but parents should avoid offering foods that carry a choking risk—like popcorn, hotdogs, or grapes. Child still requires adult to cut more challenging foods into smaller pieces to prevent choking.
- Human milk, pasteurized fat-free or low-fat milk, water.

### What can I do to help?

You know your child best, so don't wait to get help if your child is having trouble breastfeeding, bottle-feeding, or eating solid foods. Getting help early can prevent problems with eating and can foster a healthy relationship with food for you and your child.

- **Help your child learn their hunger and fullness cues.** This creates healthy eating habits and a long-term positive relationship with food.
- **Children learn through play, so expose them to new foods by making meals exciting or playful.** For example, have a picnic lunch outside, or finger paint with applesauce.

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## What can I do to help?

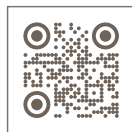
- **Serve a variety of foods to your child.** Don't get discouraged if they don't like it the first few times.
- **Have your child try a new food many times**—this gives them the chance to decide if they like it.
- **Build on what your child already likes to eat by taking food one step further.** For example, if they like chicken nuggets, try a chicken patty.
- **Ask your child to try new foods,** but don't bribe or push your child too much. Pushing can cause your child to have negative associations with the act of eating—or with food in general.



**Cook with your child. Share new smells and tastes. Cooking together can make tasting new foods exciting when your child knows that they helped to prepare it!**



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