



How do I tell if my child is hungry or full?

Did you know that children can tell when they're hungry or full?

You may have noticed some of your own child's signals! They might close their mouth & turn their head away when full. Click [here](#) for more information. Looking for & responding to these signals **supports children to listen to their bodies**, build a **positive relationship with food** & can mean **less overeating** later in life.



Pushing children to eat can:

- Reduce their **appetite & willingness to eat**
- Make them **anxious**
- May make **fussy eating** worse

A helpful approach is to remember the role of the adult is to decide what foods are provided, and the child is to decide if & how much they eat. Following this can mean **less stressful mealtimes!**



If a child shows signs they're full, it's best to pack up the meal, without making any comments about any leftovers. Providing small portions & popping leftovers in the fridge may help with food waste. If they're still hungry during a meal, the adult can provide more of the meal. **The amount children eat will vary from day to day.**

At our service, educators respond to these hunger & fullness signals during mealtimes & support children to recognise these signs. We don't pressure children to finish their food, rather, we support children to eat a variety of healthy foods by role modelling healthy eating, allowing children to explore new foods through touch, smell, & taste, & providing food-related activities.