



Holiday Table Items to Help Your Picky Eater Be More Comfortable

Children are unique and so are their preferences. Think about foods your children are comfortable with and include a few of those on the holiday table (for everyone to partake in if they want.)

Here are a few ideas:

1. Filled squares (or bonus, find a holiday cookie cutter and make a festive shape.)
2. Cheese & crackers & salami (like a mini charcuterie board, with items they like.)
3. Any bread item they enjoy (rolls, toasted sourdough etc.)
4. Bowls of fruit, yogurt & granola
5. Trail mix
6. Baby carrots (or other veggie) and dip

Space them around the table for family style serving alongside the other meal items. Then, everyone can relax.

HOLIDAY MEALS WITH PICKY EATERS

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As adults, there is nothing better than seeing that delicious holiday spread on the table. But, for many children, especially those who are pickier eaters, seeing that same holiday spread can be overwhelming.

Many children (especially younger children) struggle with food neophobia. This makes new, or unfamiliar foods very uncomfortable. Yet, parents often put a lot of pressure on these meals and feel disappointed when their kids only want to eat dinner rolls.

Here are 3 ways you can walk away from holiday meals with your children feeling more content.

1. **Remember the Satter Division of Responsibility.** As a parent, your job is to provide the food, the time, and the location of the food, but it is not your job to get them to eat or control how much they eat.
2. **Let go of what your holiday table "should" look like.** Many people consider holiday meal items based on what they want or are used to having. Turkey, potatoes, stuffing, green bean casserole, gravy, etc. But those may not be foods your children are familiar with. Instead, think about things you can include that might help them come to the table happily and feel comfortable about the meal. Be sure to serve those items family style too, so anyone can enjoy them. (See sidebar for ideas).
3. **Focus on the time together, rather than what is consumed.** Half of the fun of the holidays is the act of being together. Holidays meals only come around a couple of times per year. So, if your children don't eat "as well" as you would prefer on those occasions, let it roll. You can easily get back to your routine the next day. Your children will likely remember how they felt on the holiday more than what was served and what they ate. Memories are built on so much more.

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