



Your Toddler's hunger and fullness cues

Knowing when to feed

Your Toddler wants to be heard. Expressing his desire to eat and having you respond is important to his social and emotional development. Listen to his [Toddler feeding cues](#) and accommodate him best as possible, but don't let him make the rules. At this stage, parents and caregivers should establish a regular routine of meals and snacks, observing your child's hunger and fullness cues at each occasion.

Toddler hunger cues:

- Resorts to crying, fussiness, banging toys and temper tantrums if hunger takes over.
- Your Toddler's sounds, words and hand gestures are ways to get your attention and say, "I'm hungry."
- Enthusiastically reaches for food wanting to feed himself.
- Expresses desire for specific foods with words or gestures.

Recognizing when he's full

Being independent means letting you know very clearly that he's done eating and wants to move on. Using his fullness cues when he is done eating, your Toddler will shift gears, becoming uninterested in his food from one bite to the next. It's his way of making decisions and taking control.

Toddler fullness cues:

- Turns away or shakes his head to say, "no more" or "all done."
- Playing with or throwing food means mealtime is over. It's playtime!
- Covers his mouth or face with his hands.
- May cross arms to show refusal of more food.
- Chewing slows down and his attention is off somewhere else.
- May spit out foods that he usually likes.