



# Helping Your Child with Extreme Picky Eating: A Step-by-Step Guide for Overcoming Selective Eating, Food Aversion, and Feeding Disorders

*Katja Rowell , Jenny McGlothlin , Suzanne Evans Morris (Foreword)*

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**In *Helping Your Child with Extreme Picky Eating*, a family doctor specializing in childhood feeding joins forces with a speech pathologist to help you support your child's nutrition, healthy growth, and end meal-time anxiety (for your child *and* you) once and for all.**

Are you parenting a child with 'extreme' picky eating? Do you worry your child isn't getting the nutrition he or she needs? Are you tired of fighting over food, suspect that what you've tried may be making things worse, but don't know how to help? Having a child with 'extreme' picky eating is frustrating and sometimes scary. Children with feeding disorders, food aversions, or selective eating often experience anxiety around food, and the power struggles can negatively impact your relationship with your child. Children with extreme picky eating can also miss out on parties or camp because they can't find "safe" foods. But you don't have to choose between fighting over every bite and only serving a handful of safe foods for years on end.

*Helping Your Child with Extreme Picky Eating* offers hope, even if your child has "failed" feeding therapies before. After gaining a foundation of understanding of your child's challenges and the dynamics at play, you'll be ready for the 5 steps (built around the clinically proven STEPS+ approach—Supportive Treatment of Eating in PartnershipS) that transform feeding and meals so your child can learn to enjoy a variety of foods in the right amounts for healthy growth. You'll discover specific strategies for dealing with anxiety, low appetite, sensory challenges, autism spectrum-related feeding issues, oral motor delay, and medically-based feeding problems. Tips and exercises reinforce what you've learned, and dozens of "scripts" help you respond to your child in the heat of the moment, as well as to others in your child's life (grandparents or your child's teacher) as you help them support your family on this journey. This book will prove an invaluable guide to restore peace to your dinner table and help you raise a healthy eater.

## Helping Your Child with Extreme Picky Eating: A Step-by-Step Guide for Overcoming Selective Eating, Food Aversion, and Feeding Disorders Details

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## **From Reader Review Helping Your Child with Extreme Picky Eating: A Step-by-Step Guide for Overcoming Selective Eating, Food Aversion, and Feeding Disorders for online ebook**

### **Jen says**

Great book for where we are right now. Concise, clear suggestions for promoting healthy eating in kiddos with extreme picky eating. Or heck, eating at all. I feel like I have a decent tool box to start this process at home. Already my anxiety is greatly reduced as I look over DAYS of eating, not individual MEALS. Great book if you have a picky eater, sensory eater, or otherwise not as adventurous an eater as others might be. I love the lack of pressure for both kids and parents this book presents. Even at the end they remind us that even if they don't eat everything, chances are they will grow up just fine. Yup. No parent NEEDS more pressure, neither do most of our kids. I really recommend it if your child has been diagnosed with an eating issue or in general is quite picky.

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### **Suzie Barston says**

Parenting books, especially those regarding specific issues and ESPECIALLY those regarding nutrition, are typically preachy and condescending. This book is the polar opposite. The advice is solid, the writing is direct yet warm, and the author offers continuous reminders that YOU are the expert on your own child. If your child has any sort of eating issues, this book should be the first (and perhaps only) guide book you order. You'll feel empowered by the end of the first chapter, and it only gets better from there.

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### **Beth says**

Oh, I wish this book had existed a decade ago!

I learned a lot of what is suggested in this book (such as low pressure at dinnertime and routine, consistent family meals) by a long and arduous road of trial and error. My oldest is an extremely picky eater - he has been since he started solids as an infant - and I remember many stressful meals full of tears (both his and mine!) over food. Not every meal was that way but I cringe thinking about the ones that were.

Unfortunately, this book probably isn't the miracle cure to my son's picky eating. Most advice is for parents of toddlers and preschoolers and maybe grade schoolers; my son is almost fourteen and he hasn't outgrown his eating habits. Sure, I will continue to try the methods outlined in this book, but I am skeptical it will turn my kid into an adventurous eater.

But I do feel like this book changed my perspective, and thus it was really valuable to me. The authors' tone and advice was so supportive and validating to me as a parent, which has strengthened my confidence in how I approach mealtimes and nutrition in my home. I think my own confidence will be invaluable as I advocate and support my teen. It's taken me a LONG time to set aside my own fears and shame surrounding his eating (and honestly, I'm still not free of that shame, but at least I'm now conscious of it so I can work on it). But letting go of shame really is crucial in helping these kids feel loved for who they are rather than being defined by what they eat. A person is so much more than his body, and a parent's relationship with a child should come before the child's relationship with food — I appreciate the authors reminding us parents of

that!

This book really was kind, helpful, and realistic - all things any mother needs in a parenting book. I do wish the authors had addressed more of my own son's stage of life (adolescence). And I wish the cover hadn't been purple-y pink with a photo of a curly-haired toddler girl on it! But at least this book introduced me to the authors; they have a follow-up workbook for teens and adults (I will probably order it, though I'm not sure my teen is ready for it yet) and they have been guests on podcast episodes that I've found helpful.

I hope that in another decade we will have some more solid research on effective therapies for selective eating and ARFID - I do think we'll get there!

I'll be back later with quotes I've underlined from this book!

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### **Maggie says**

After just one meal of implementing this program, can already see how over time it will change our lives for the better.

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### **Kathryn says**

What an informative, helpful guide for those with children who are picky eaters. I truly wish I had this book as a resource when my daughter was little. As an adult with her own children, she is still a very picky eater.

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### **Elaine says**

If anything, this book has made me feel a lot less anxious about how "badly" my daughter eats. It's not actually that bad when I look at it through a different filter. I think me being less anxiety ridden and letting things go is going to vastly improve our dinner time experience. Here's hoping, anyways.

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### **Cassandra says**

This book was very helpful in developing a feeding therapy plan for my son with ARFID. I have spoken with the Feeding Doctor on Facebook and clarified some things as well as other well known feeding therapists. We developed a no-pressure, DOR approach that focuses on volume tolerance and exposure over time. We also use the DOR approach with my 4 year old who has a G-tube and Autism. It is my most recommended book for those struggling with atypical picky eating.

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### **Tera says**

<http://yumstheraplay.com/2016/03/help...>

Parents of children with feeding difficulties need to take advantage of this book, *Helping Your Child with Extreme Picky Eating* by Katja Rowell, MD (family doctor and feeding specialist) and Jenny McGlothlin, MS, SLP (speech language pathologist specializing in pediatric feeding disorders). I'm a reader and reading is a preferred learning method for me personally. Repetition in learning feeding therapy strategies is always beneficial for parents. I've not seen a book so appropriately written, specifically for parents, to address feeding difficulties for children before. This book would be a great addition to participating in feeding therapy with your child. Really, I feel like this is a great summary of what I teach parents during a 3-4 month period of weekly feeding therapy.

Often, I remind parents of recommendations I've given in the past and they have forgotten. This book would be great to read before, during or after a child has received feeding therapy. It would really solidify the information given and parents could refer back to it easily.

If your child hasn't started feeding therapy, I suggest reading this book one chapter at a time. Remember that I said it's a good summary of what I teach parents over 3-4 months at a time? It is a large amount of information and could possibly be overwhelming all at once. Read a chapter, then take a week or two to really think and start applying the suggestions at home. Then go on through chapter by chapter like this until you've finished the book.

The philosophy of feeding therapy presented in this book addresses the importance of decreasing anxiety around food first, then to encourage and facilitate building skills in a trusting and safe mealtime environment. It mirrors my own feeding therapy philosophy. Towards the end of the book, the authors also discuss finding a feeding therapist and program that is a good fit for your child and family.

The book is written with a compassionate and realistic understanding of what children and parents go through when a child isn't eating well. The authors structure the book around Jenny McGlothlin's STEPS+ feeding therapy approach.

STEP 1: Decrease Anxiety, Stress and Power Struggles.

STEP 2: Establish a Structured Routine

STEP 3: Have Family Meals

STEP 4: Know What to Serve and How to Serve It

STEP 5: Build Skills

Buy this book! *Helping Your Child with Extreme Picky Eating* even has digital downloads to help implement book suggestions through the publisher, New Harbinger Publications.

I provide feeding therapy services in children's homes in Davis, Morgan and Weber counties in Utah. If I am not in your area, Feeding Matters has compiled an extensive list of international feeding professionals. I'd love to help your family!

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**IRIFF says**

This book was recommended in a parenting group on social media. I sought advice on dealing with mealtime power struggles with my 3 year old.

There is a lot of focus on eating (or not eating) as a disorder or because of sensory-motor issues, and how to seek and work with therapy. This was not applicable to my family; my son can chew and swallow, he just chooses not to. Implementing the main steps, starting with the division of responsibility approach, made a huge difference for my picky eater. The challenge now is getting others on board with unconventional methods like serving dessert with the meal.

If you are looking for guidance on how to get your child to eat, whether s/he's just being stubborn, is in full blown failure to thrive status, or anywhere in between, this book has good recommendations and resources. Good luck!

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### **Sara says**

If you have an extremely picky eater and the only advice you get is from friends, family and strangers who only make you feel anxious and guilty instead of confident and hopeful, get this book. The authors are experts, and they know what they're talking about. They've seen the worst-case-scenario kids who are fed by tubes and have been through traumatic "therapies" (force-feeding, deliberate starvation, threats, etc.), so anything going on in your house isn't going to shock them.

The suggestions in the book are honest and practical. Most importantly, the path that the authors advise is thoroughly compassionate, focusing on restoring and maintaining a positive relationship between you and your child, and between your child and food. There are clear steps to follow, answers to your nutritional fears, and words to help you deal with the people in your life who think that your child is bratty and spoiled ("Why don't you just make her sit there until she eats her vegetables?! That's what I'd do.") Highly recommend.

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### **Tiffany says**

Practical, helpful, and validating!

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### **Monica says**

Why didn't this book exist 8 years ago? As I read this book I seriously wished that I had a time machine and could just go back and do everything over. I would save my son and myself countless tears. I wouldn't have to see my son vomit or gag as I tried to force him to just lick a food. I wouldn't have to spend hundreds of dollars on toys if he would just try one bite of a food. There would be no more screaming or yelling because I was scared that he would die because I couldn't get him to eat.

There was nothing out there about eating issues like this 8 years ago. Trust me I looked everywhere. My son's eating issues started when he was an infant. Doctors were clueless. I worked with a nutritionist, two different OTs, psychologist, social worker and even a speech pathologist. I encountered tons of bad advice such as let him starve for three days and he will eat. Force him to drink it, he is winning the battle. The list goes on and on. As I was reading this book I just kept saying this is my son. My son suffered from sensory

issues and anxiety. We have also done everything they mentioned on the don't do list in this book. The other thing I loved about this book is they back up what they are saying with research. Most of which was published after 2006 which is when my son was born. My family has suffered for the past 8 years trying to get my son to eat. I can't thank the authors enough for finally giving some excellent advice. My son only eats 10 foods. He won't eat any food from a restaurant. He eats no meat or vegetables. He has also had the same thing for dinner for the past 7 years. This book opened my eyes to some much needed new strategies. It is not going to be easy but I have given up over the past couple of years because I just couldn't fight with him any more. I am excited to try these new techniques. I also appreciate the advice they gave when dealing with other people who need to comment. I don't know if the authors will ever read this review but THANK YOU for writing this book!

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### **Emily Jones says**

This was super helpful! Lots of good advice for even mildly picky eaters. I'm so so happy I found this book.

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### **Erin says**

If you are looking for advice on how to help a picky eater experiencing weight loss, pain, physical eating difficulties, or gagging/vomiting, this book might be for you. Unfortunately, my picky eater doesn't fit this mold.

I have a 5 year old picky eater who eats maybe 15-20 foods— maybe more or less. He will chew meat for hours. He will refuse foods that I know he loves that appear different (example— he likes eggs but won't try quiche). The only vegetable he will eat is a carrot.

Anyway, I used to try to force the one bite method and it was just a battle I wasn't willing to fight so for the last year, I've basically done what this book suggests— to let him make the choice to eat what he wants. I've been doing this for a year. I've offered new foods but taken the requirement of eating out. He has actually gotten pickier. It just doesn't seem to be the right advice fit for my picky eater.

The basics of the book is to eliminate the anxiety of eating by stopping the requirement of taking a bite or trying things and somehow (where do you bridge the learning?) they will like new stuff. Maybe it works for some... but it just didn't work for us.

Another thing I disliked was the passive aggressive sample responses they provided for you to try. It felt so strange... and I would never say some of those things.

A few things I am taking away from this book that I liked was to change the shape or presentation of the food— cut lunch meat or cheese into shapes. I'm also going to try to get my kiddo more involved in the shopping and preparing of the foods. That might help him get excited about something new.... who knows?

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### **Tranylle says**

I bought this book soon after my son (who at the time was just barely 5) completed his intensive feeding therapy program. Our therapist said it would help me help him branch out on foods, and to hopefully keep him (and myself!) from regressing. I just recently remembered I never finished it (I only read the parts relevant to me at that time) so I thought I should finish it up.

I got some great ideas on how to help my son branch out more in his food choices. We've definitely been in a rut, with him willing to try one bite of something new (if I ask him to, which the book says is a no no), but even if he sort of liked it, he wouldn't eat it again.

The book said that at dinner time, I should have the food in the center of the table, buffet style. Let the kids put whatever food they want on their plate. Don't coerce them into picking anything, but have foods they might not be comfortable with as one of the options. Also, serve dessert at the same time as dinner, and allow them to eat it at any point during the meal. ? Do not give them suggestions on what and how much to choose, and they don't need to finish everything in their plate.

So, a few days ago, I did it. I made rice-a-roni with shredded chicken, since both kids love it, and green beans. I put a cookie on a napkin by each kid. They were extremely excited to serve themselves. And my son, who is now 7, ate way more green beans than he is usually willing to when I scoop portions on his plate. Amazing! The next day, I served raw carrots (something he doesn't like) and ranch with our dinner. He immediately grabbed a carrot, dipped it in ranch, and took a big bite. He said it was really crunchy, tasted ok, and swallowed. He didn't take any more bites, but it was a big step for him.

So it was seriously such great advice, and I'm glad I finally finished the book. It can be helpful for picky eaters that don't have a medical reason for it as well, since it is mostly helping the parent present food in a safer way.

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