



★ Early Years Home Learning ★

Self Regulation - A Calming Experience

Eat Like A Scientist



This is best:



Indoors

Materials:

You may need:

- A piece of fresh or dried fruit
- Knife
- Chopping board
- Magnifying glass (optional)



The basic idea: Choose a piece of dry or fresh fruit. Investigate the fruit with your child in a mindful and scientific way - taking time to explore how your food really looks, its colour, texture and shape and finally its taste.

Tips to support your child:

- Before tasting investigate how the food actually looks - are there different colours? What shape is it? Is it heavy or light? Is there anything else they can notice about it? Now use your real/imaginary microscope/magnifying glass - can you see any lines/patterns? How does it feel on the outside - is it smooth, bumpy, hairy? What kind of texture does it have inside? Dry, gooey, juicy? How does it feel to touch? Now hold the piece of food under your nose and take a big deep breath in... how does it smell?
- Now take a small piece of the food and put it on your tongue, but don't chew - how does it feel in your mouth? Notice the shape and texture. Does it taste of anything?
- Now start to chew - can you notice any changes? What does it sound like in your mouth as you chew it?
- What does your mouth do once it has been swallowed? Are there still tastes in your mouth?

How this benefits your child:

- This experience is great for helping your child develop a sense of appreciation for food. It may also be a way to help them make healthy choices.
- Meal times can often be a time of anxiety and stress for both you and your child if you have a fussy eater. You may be able to use this to introduce your child to new food in a fun and relaxed way.
- So gather your test tubes, fasten your lab coat, put on your safety goggles... it's time to Eat like a Scientist. As we eat the food, we're going to use our best scientific skills to explore our food.

Make this simpler...

Sensory spaghetti - put some dried spaghetti pasta into a washing up tub (or something similar) add a jug of warm water. Talk to your child about how the spaghetti looks and feels before the water goes in, how it sounds if you snap it. Then re-visit the spaghetti as it changes texture. Allow your child to explore freely with their hands. Encourage them to talk about how it feels.

Make this more challenging...

Choose a range of different tasting foods
Eg - something salty, sweet, sour, bitter, savoury.

Blindfold your child and ask them to taste the food without seeing what it is. Ask them to describe it and guess what they think it could be.



"The fun is in the journey, not the end result!"



Top Tip from our Speech and Language Therapy partners:

Try to turn questions into comments. For example instead of saying "what shape is it?" when talking about an apple you could say "I think it's a square shape" and wait.... Your child will enjoy trying to correct you.

