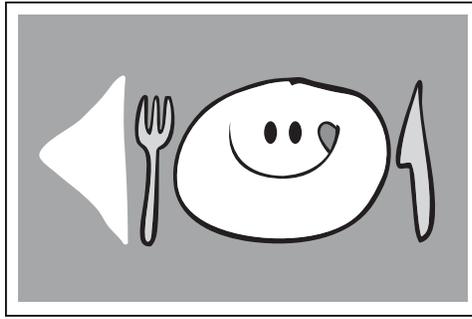


Eating Out



with KIDS:

Restaurant Behavior

Children can be both excited and bored when at a restaurant. They can find it difficult to sit in one place for the length of time necessary to order, wait, eat, and pay for the meal. This problem is one that improves with age, development and practice. With a good game plan, you can help your children learn how to behave appropriately in a restaurant so that you can all enjoy the experience.

Start at home

- ★ Practice good manners at home for every meal.
- ★ Practice having longer sit-down meals at home.

Pick the right restaurant. It should have a:

- ★ Children's menu
- ★ Short wait time for a table
- ★ Booster seats or high chairs
- ★ Noisier, family-friendly atmosphere

Do's for dining out

- ★ When possible, stick close to your routine.
- ★ If you must go out later than your usual time, then provide your children with a snack at the normal time.

- ★ Order an appetizer immediately, or ask for some bread, chips or crackers.
- ★ Bring along a few quiet toys to keep the kids from getting bored.
- ★ Stick with familiar foods, when possible. A restaurant is not the place to battle over new and unfamiliar foods.
- ★ Keep your post-meal conversation short.

Review your restaurant rules before you go.

Be very specific and leave no stone unturned. A sample list of "restaurant rules" might be:

- ★ Sit in your seat.
- ★ Use a quiet inside voice.
- ★ Use your silverware, not your fingers.

Don't stay if you're not having fun.

If a child's behavior gets out of hand, take her to the restroom or out to the car for a time out so that she can calm down. If she continues to misbehave, don't be afraid to ask for doggie bags and leave the restaurant. **But don't give up. Review your expectations and try again.**

Excerpted with permission by McGraw-Hill Publishing from The No-Cry Discipline Solution (McGraw-Hill 2007) by Elizabeth Pantley <http://www.pantley.com/elizabeth>



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Call 800-CHILDREN (800-244-5373) for more information.