

# Module 3: Addressing Parent Concerns

## Dot/Smart Phrase Examples

*At the end of the Module 3 video, we leave dedicated work time for you to create custom, personalized dot/smart phrases to assist in your practice. Below, you will find examples that may help you craft your personalized dot/smart phrases.*

### After-Visit Summaries/Information for Patients and Parents

#### For Parents

Your main job around eating as a parent is to trust your child's body to grow in the way it's meant to. All kids are different, so try to avoid comparison to other kids (even in the same family) around how their bodies are developing, how much they eat, and how often or intensely they move. **THERE IS NO ONE RIGHT WAY TO PARENT or FEED/EAT.**

Work on helping your child build these positive elements to their relationship with food and their body: Connection, Permission, Trust, Comfort, Satisfaction, and Flexibility (from the Intuitive Food and Body Relationship Model by Brooks and Severson, see below). Don't try to manage your child's weight but focus on their feeding relationship and skills.

Goals for a healthy relationship with food:

- Enough food with enough nutrients to grow in the way that the body is meant to grow, often enough
- Being able to be flexible and spontaneous about food and food choices
- Avoid restriction in all forms
- No guilt or shame around food or eating
- Kind and caring relationship with the body

Some helpful resources:

How to Raise an Intuitive Eater (book) – Sumner Brooks and Ameer Severson

The Division of Responsibility – Ellyn Satter (website and books)

Burnt Toast podcast and newsletter with Virginia Sole-Smith

Sunny Side Up Nutrition podcast

If your child has some neurocognitive differences, feeding them may need to look different than what the Division of Responsibility describes, so don't feel like this way has to be the only way.

There are also resources available to help with a healthy feeding relationship for neurodivergent children and adults.

**WHAT to SAY**  
**Healthcare**

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### For Patients (Age-Specific Recommendations)

#### Birth-2 Years

- Focus on responsiveness and helping your child self-regulate.
- Don't force your baby/child to eat more, trust and respond to their hunger and fullness cues.
- Trust their hunger and fullness cues.
- Around 18mo-2 years, start to establish a structure of meal and snack time, where eating happens (kitchen, dining room, etc), and try not to regularly provide milk or juice between meals, as it may disrupt their appetite pattern.
- You are not and cannot be perfect. Compassion, kindness, and flexibility is important.
- Keep your focus on feeding adequately and appropriately, NOT on managing weight.

#### 2-5 Years

- Your child is starting to notice bodies and may experience shame and guilt for the first time.
- Introduce your child to books that teach body appreciation and body diversity.
- Normalize talking about bodies neutrally without judgment.
- Provide a flexible and reliable feeding routine.
- Give kids some choice.
- Provide a variety of foods, textures, temperatures, styles of presentation, and also be ready for a potential drop in the variety of preferred foods.

#### Older Children

- Keep exposing your child to a variety of foods without pressuring.
- Help set them up to have enough food. Help them plan snacks & enough food in their lunches.
- Avoid shaming them for anything they want to eat.
- Encourage consistency and a routine around food and eating – eating together when you can, communicate mealtimes.
- Educate them about body diversity and body respect.

#### Parents of Adolescents

- Accept that they are starting to have independence around when and what they choose to eat.
- Be prepared for an increase in eating – this is normal, they are growing, both weight and height.
- Be vigilant for food restriction.
- Encourage adequate sleep.
- Tune into what they're consuming in social media, etc.

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