

Learning Links' Tip Sheet

Choosing the ultimate lunch box



To develop independence and a sense of "I can do it", choosing a good lunch box is vital.

Many children (and preschool staff) may have difficulty opening children's lunch boxes during meal times. It can be very frustrating for children if they cannot do this task when their parent is not with them.

It is important for children to feel that they can master their environment and experience success in daily activities. Independence, mastery and success contribute to a child's sense of accomplishment and self-esteem.

What to look for in a lunch box

The most important thing is user friendliness. That is, it should be easy for your child to open without help. The best way to ensure that this occurs is to take your child shopping and let them trial the lunch boxes & cooler bags.

This is not always practical so some things to look out for are:

- ∞ easy to open lids requiring small amounts of strength or effort,
- ∞ simple locking systems (some flip top locks are suited to some children but they should be fairly easy to flip open),
- ∞ easily visible tabs to help children know where to start opening the lunch box,
- ∞ add a sticker to the place to start or press to open the lunch box,
- ∞ easy to clean and will it stand up to rough treatment?

Most department stores allow you to exchange or refund a purchase. If you buy a lunch box and discover that it is a bit too tricky for your child to open, return or swap it.

- ∞ Don't forget to label lunch boxes and drink bottles.
- ∞ Use paper wrap not cling wrap. It's much easier to open.
- ∞ Add an ice brick or frozen drink to keep it cold.

We hope that these tips help you in your quest for the "ultimate" lunch box. For more information about Lunch Box World go to www.meerilinga.org.au.

The information in Learning Links' Tip Sheets is prepared by experienced early childhood professionals. Each child is unique and this material is not necessarily suitable for every child, parent or carer. We recommend you discuss this information with your child's therapist or education professional prior to using these tips.



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