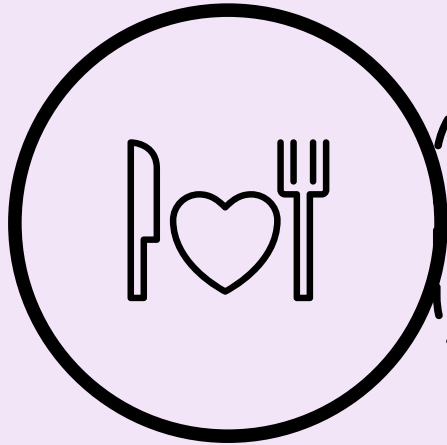


Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) Parents/Carers Help Leaflet

This leaflet has been produced with parents and carers of young people with ARFID, to gather the best tips and insights into helping families of young people with ARFID



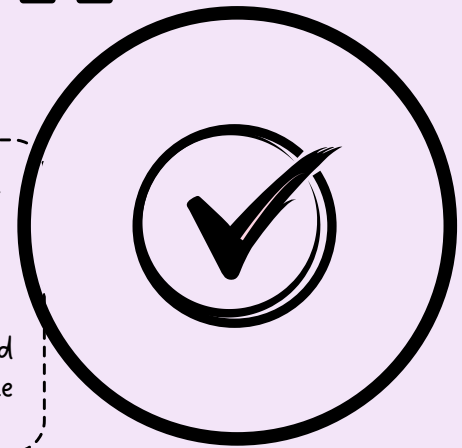
No pressure approach to eating

Don't put pressure or force your child to try and eat foods they don't want to, this could make things worse.

Any food is better than no food. While nutrition is important for many ARFID children, eating any food is better than eating no food.

Have safe foods available/stocked up

- An ARFID sufferer will not eat if preferred foods are not available.
- Listen to your child, you know them best, ARFID is not bad behaviour but rather a need to feel safe and in control.
- Consider leaving around new foods outside of mealtimes (where possible), with no pressure, no mention of it and often on the table on a separate plate at mealtimes (sensory permitting). This could help to stop preferred foods becoming over eaten and 'boring' without pressure and increases the feeling of control.



Consider the sensory needs of your child at mealtimes

Think about your child's sensory needs around food and try to remove possible problems.

Noises: for example other people chewing, plates clattering, humming fridges can be off-putting.

Smells: Cooking or smells from other people's food can cause nausea.

Sensory help these things may help with managing emotions e.g. weighted blankets, headphones or having feet touching the floor/on a skateboard.

Learning plate if possible have one in front of your child and serve a small amount of food on this plate. There is no pressure for them to eat this food, but they can look /smell /touch /play with this food.

Speak to your child's school about making changes for your child at mealtimes, Dietitians can support with this. See the [ARFID Awareness UK Schools Resource leaflet](#) for more details.

ARFID Parents/Carers Help Leaflet

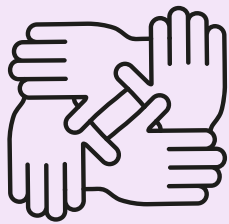
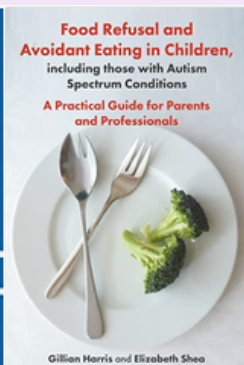
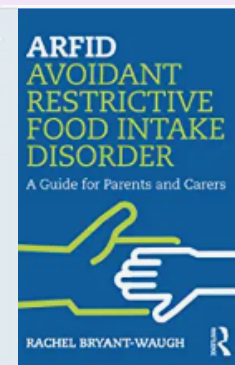


Look after yourself

ARFID is not caused by parents or the child being deliberately 'naughty'. It is important to look after your own wellbeing so you are able to provide support for your child. See Peer Support Groups (below) for groups of other parents/carers going through something similar. The support and understanding from someone in a similar situation can be reassuring.

ARFID Books and Websites to Access Help

- [Endeavour - ARFID carer support group - Beat](#)
- [ARFID Awareness UK](#)
- [Twinkl ARFID information](#)
- [Feeding Matters](#)
- [BeBodyPositive](#)



Peer Support Groups

- [ARFID Parent/Carer Facebook Peer Support Group](#)
- [Beat: Hummingbird Online ARFID Support Group](#)
- [Beat: Endeavour - ARFID carer support group](#)
- [Owl Blue ARFID Friends Facebook Support Group](#)
- [Your local parent/carer forums may have an ARFID support group e.g. Teesside ARFID parent/carer support group](#)

Things to consider

If you're worried about the amount of food your child is eating, see your GP and ask for a referral to a dietitian. A dietitian can assess your child for nutritional deficiencies. Speak to your GP about checking your child's blood pressure, heart rate and temperature, all can be signs of a cause for concern. Ask your Dietitian/GP to monitor your child's height and weight to ensure continued growth.



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