Is my child stubborn?

Many parents of picky eaters believe their child is unique – which they are in all sorts of ways – but specifically in the fussy eating sphere. They often feel their child is more stubborn than others and that normal fussy eating strategies do not work for them.

If I had to pick the word that most parents of a picky eater use about their child, it would be stubborn. I would love to explain why.

Let's look at how children approach food:

If food is difficult for a child, then it makes sense for them to say no. If you didn't like water, why would you voluntarily go to the swimming pool?

No is a defense mechanism and no keeps them safe. If they say yes to a new food, they may have a bad experience so saying no is far safer.

Over time that no becomes a habit and becomes automatic. Which is why they often seem 'stubborn'. When we ask if they want to try something they say no straight away.

As a parent this is enormously frustrating as we're sure they would like something if they would just try it.