



Mini Messenger

FOR FAMILIES

SQUEEZY POUCH FOODS

Squeezy pouches are in abundance on our supermarket shelves. As with many convenience foods that are appearing in our supermarkets, the colours and marketing can make it hard for us to decide if they are an everyday choice for our precious little ones.

To help you make your decision on squeezy pouch foods, we've created a list of pros and cons for you to consider:

THE PROS

- No food prep required
- No heating required
- No need for spoons
- No need to refrigerate
- Less mess (depending on the child)



THE CONS

- May delay speech development as children are not practising chewing, licking and biting, which help develop important jaw muscles
- Could increase risk of 'fussy eating' as children are not experiencing seeing and touching of foods in different textures and forms.
- May delay fine motor skill development as children are not practising their pincer grip to pick up foods or utensils
- May have misleading nutrition claims, often surrounding vegetable content
- Some have large amounts of 'added' or 'hidden' sugars
- Some use very high heat during manufacturing which may destroy some important vitamins and antioxidants

So while there are some benefits to squeezy foods, they should not be considered a substitute for healthy family meals. Mealtimes are important for language and speech development, fine motor skill development, bonding time with family and for children to develop self help skills. For these reasons we recommend you consider squeezy pouch foods a last resort.

**SQUEEZY
POUCH FOODS**

**INFANTS AND
SCREEN TIME**

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We are all aware that screen time is not recommended for children under 12 months old. But how can we entertain children aged 0 - 1 years without a screen, especially when we need to get jobs done?

BREAK THE HABIT OF TURNING THE TV ON

Infants are easily distracted by the TV, try putting music or the radio on. Music helps brain and language development and your baby may even start to groove along!

DIY NEW TOYS

Make or buy simple toys that babies can safely manipulate and have a cause and effect, for example a bottle half filled with sand or coloured water.

GET THINGS DONE

Let your baby play with measuring cups and spoons in their high chair while you cook. Where safe to do so, you can let them feel or taste foods you're preparing. While hanging washing, place your baby on a blanket under the clothesline. They will love watching you as well as the colours and movement of the clothes and the sky.

PLAY INTERACTIVE GAMES AND SING SONGS

Babies love repetition and love hearing your voice. Do finger rhymes, play 'peek-a-boo', 'round-and-round the garden' or sing 'if you're happy and you know it'. Label and point to body parts and common items wherever you can.

DON'T FORGET THE IMPORTANCE OF READING

Research shows when babies are read to from an early age, they have stronger vocabularies and better early literacy skills throughout childhood. Choose a book that has mirrors or flaps and is written for young children.

All of these activities have the additional benefit of strengthening the parent-child bond, so take the time to enjoy these precious moments and create some beautiful memories.

