

The Impact of Unwanted Guests: Do these personalities show up at your family table?

It is important to interact with your child at the table. However, if your communications are always trying to “push” food and eating, you are probably having the opposite effect than what you hope. Despite your good intentions, pressure can turn your mealtime into an endurance event for you and your child, which is unpleasant for everyone present. Do any of these look like your alter ego? Is there someone else in your child’s life who has a tendency to take on one of these personalities? Picture what you would do and feel if you were seated next to one of these people at a dinner or event. What would your response be? How do you think some of these personalities might interfere with your child's ability to be "in charge" of their own feeding and intake?

- **The Mafia** – Force feeding with a smile
- *The Rodeo Clown* – Offering a distraction for every bite so they don’t notice what you are really doing
- **Snake Charmer** – Singing through the meal as if to hypnotize them into eating
- *Pushy Waiter* - Hovering over the meal
- *The Voice-Over Narrator* - Self-talking every bite in hopes of drawing attention to eating
- **Papparazzi** – Cheering and taking pictures with every bite
- Home shopping Network Salesperson – Always displaying and showing food, utensils and plates, hoping that your child will suddenly want one.
- **Used Car Salesman** - Talking only about food, the benefits of food, the tastiness of every bite.
- **Human Calculator** (or actual calculator) – Keeping track of every single bite, gram and calorie.
- **PERFECTIONIST** – failing to recognize and be satisfied with small attempts such as touching or tasting because they aren’t as big or as varied or as frequent as hoped.
- **Bad First Date** - Going straight to the mouth with the spoon without allowing an “introductory period”
- **Bad Date. Always.** - Continuing to pressure after a child says (or communicates) “No.”