



## ENJOY FAMILY MEALS

Family meals are more than just a time to eat – they are a time when everyone can be together. They are also fun! Having meals together teaches children healthy eating habits that will last a lifetime.

### MAKE MEALTIME FAMILY TIME:

- Remove distractions. Turn off the TV and put away phones and tablets.
- Keep mealtime pleasant and stress free. Talk about happy things. Do not scold or talk about problems. Here are some ideas for positive table talk:
  - What was the best part of your day?
  - Ask about a time in the day the child helped someone or received help.
  - What is your favorite food?
  - Share your happy childhood memories with your child.

### TIP

Plan “theme cuisine” nights. For example, Tacos on Tuesdays, Leftovers on Thursdays, and Fish on Fridays.

### Involve the whole family in the meal planning and preparation!

- Ask your child to choose the vegetable for supper.
- Teach your child how to set the table.
- Include your child in simple food preparation. Kids love to stir, pour, and add ingredients.



## MAKE MEALS A PRIORITY

Eating meals together as a family is not always easy, especially when schedules are busy! A family meal can be breakfast, lunch, or supper. Help bring your family together at the table. Add milk, fruits, and vegetables to balance these quick-and-easy meal ideas:

- **Muffin Pizza:** Top an English muffin half with tomato sauce, chopped bell peppers, broccoli, and shredded cheese. Heat in a toaster oven or broiler.
- **Fun shaped sandwiches:** Make a sandwich with whole wheat bread, deli meat, cheese, or peanut butter. Cut into fun shapes with cookie cutters.
- **Lunch Pockets:** Stuff half a pita pocket with sliced chicken, shredded lettuce and carrot.
- **Quick Chili:** Heat canned black beans, canned diced tomatoes, and canned corn over the stove.



## FAMILY MEALS ARE IMPORTANT:

- When families eat together, they make better food choices.
- Sitting down together for a meal is a great time for families to connect and talk.
- Studies show that children who eat family meals usually do well in school and have better grades.
- Eating together creates great family memories.

