

Happy Mealtime Memories

Family meals are more than just a time to eat together.

They are also a time to create strong family ties and enjoy family traditions.

Eating together as a family helps create happy family memories that last a lifetime!

Young children thrive on routines!

- ♥ **Children are better behaved** when they have routines such as meal times, nap times and bed times in their lives.
- ♥ **Children eat more fruits and vegetables** when they have family mealtimes.
- ♥ **Children tend to snack less on unhealthy foods** when they have planned mealtimes with their family.
- ♥ **Children tend to overeat less** when they have planned mealtimes with their family.
- ♥ **Children develop positive attitudes about food during family meals.** They learn to eat healthy foods when watching their parents enjoy healthy foods.
- ♥ **Teenagers** who eat regular family meals tend to be happier with their present life and their hopes and dreams for the future.



Try something different:

Make your own sandwich or taco

Put together a platter of bread or tortilla shells, lettuce, tomatoes, meat, cheese and other toppings.

Serve a mini buffet of leftover foods

Let your children choose what they want to eat.

Favorite food night

One person gets to choose one of their favorite foods to have as part of the meal.

Let your child plan a meal once a week or once a month.

Serve breakfast foods for dinner.

Serve pancakes, waffles or French toast.

Make an omelet.

Serve scrambled eggs, toast and fruit.

Create fun mealtime memories.

Enjoy your children!

Listen to your children.

Make sure everyone has a chance to speak and be heard.

What can you talk about?

- ☺ Talk about fun places where you and your children want to visit – the zoo, park, grandma’s house, beach or campground.
- ☺ Talk about your favorite foods – what vegetable do you like? How do you like to cook it?
- ☺ Talk about what you and your child did today.
- ☺ Ask your child what he would like to do after dinner? On the weekend?
- ☺ Plan tomorrow’s dinner together.
- ☺ Share your happy childhood memories with your child.

Your child will learn that you care what they say at mealtime and it is important for you to be with them.

Your child will also learn how to take turns listening and talking.

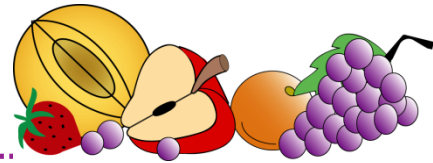
Fruit Salad

Kids love to help make and eat this salad!

Canned fruit of your choice – peaches, pears, pineapple, fruit cocktail or mandarin oranges.

Fresh fruit of your choice – melon chunks, banana slices, apple slices, blueberries, strawberries, or kiwi fruit.

Mix canned and fresh fruit together and eat!



Enjoy whole fruits

2 year old boys and girls

3 year old girls

1 cup fruit each day

3 year old boys

4 and 5 year old boys and girls

1 ½ cups fruit each day

What counts as a ½ cup of fruit?

In general, ½ cup of fruit
or 4 ounces of 100% fruit juice,
or ¼ cup of dried fruit

**Limit fruit juices to 6 ounces
or less each day.**

Enjoy whole fruits!

Kid Friendly Fruits

♥ **Fruit Dips** – Dip apple slices, pear slices, grapes cut in half in peanut butter or flavored yogurt.

♥ **Fruit Slush** – Cut fresh fruit (melon, strawberries, blueberries, peaches, and pears) in large chunks and freeze. Whirl frozen fruit in a blender for a quick snack.

♥ **Fruit to go!** Apples, oranges, bananas, pears, peaches, blueberries and strawberries make easy snacks to carry along for hungry kids.

♥ **Fruity Peanut Butter Sandwich** –

Add sliced bananas, strawberries, peaches or mandarin oranges to your peanut butter sandwich.

