

Sharing Food, Creating Fun

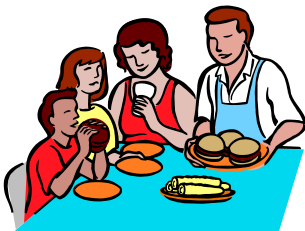
Sharing food together is a great way to connect with your family. Being busy and not having much time can make this hard to do.



“When we eat together it gives us time to share how our day went and it makes us closer.”

Nicole, 17 years old

Children who eat a meal or a snack with other family members at least once a day:



- Develop a sense of belonging, feel more secure and stable
 - Have an easier time talking with their parents
 - Have fewer behaviour problems
 - Do better at school
 - Have higher self esteem
 - Learn more words (have a better vocabulary)
- Try and enjoy a greater variety of foods
 - Eat more fruits and vegetables and less fried foods
 - Are less likely to smoke, use drugs, drink alcohol, be depressed or have disordered eating

Parents who eat with their families:

- Eat healthier
- Save money
- Strengthen family ties
- Role model healthy eating for their children
- Can share family values, traditions and culture
- Can connect with their children and find out what’s going on in their lives



Raising a Healthy Eater

- Parents decide what, when and where to eat
- Children decide how much and if they will eat

Tips for Sharing Fun Family Meals



- Make the same meal for everyone
 - Plan a weekly menu with the family and put it on the fridge; have each family member choose one meal or snack they would like to have each week
 - Use your weekly menu to make a shopping list
 - Let children help with the grocery shopping and cooking, not just the clean up
 - Keep meals simple – when pressed for time, make sandwiches, reheat leftovers, buy bagged salads or pre-chopped veggies or roasted chicken
- Turn off the TV, computer and cell phones
 - Take phone calls later
 - Try to make family meals a routine
 - Allow children to eat slowly or fast, eat just one or many different foods. Let them have more of any food.
 - Share your table manners
 - Keep conversation pleasant and make sure everyone gets to speak and be heard
 - Keep mealtimes fun



Keep a jar filled with things to talk about at the table. Here are a few ideas to get you started:

- The best part of your day
- Ideas for family activities
- The 3 favourite things about your best friend
- If you had one wish, what would it be?
- Share something you did that made someone else feel good
- Tell jokes or share a funny story

For more information:

www.bettertogetherbc.ca

Contact Dietitian Services at HealthLink BC; call 8-1-1 to speak to a dietitian or go to www.healthlinkbc.ca/dietitian to email your question. Translation services are available in 130 languages.

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