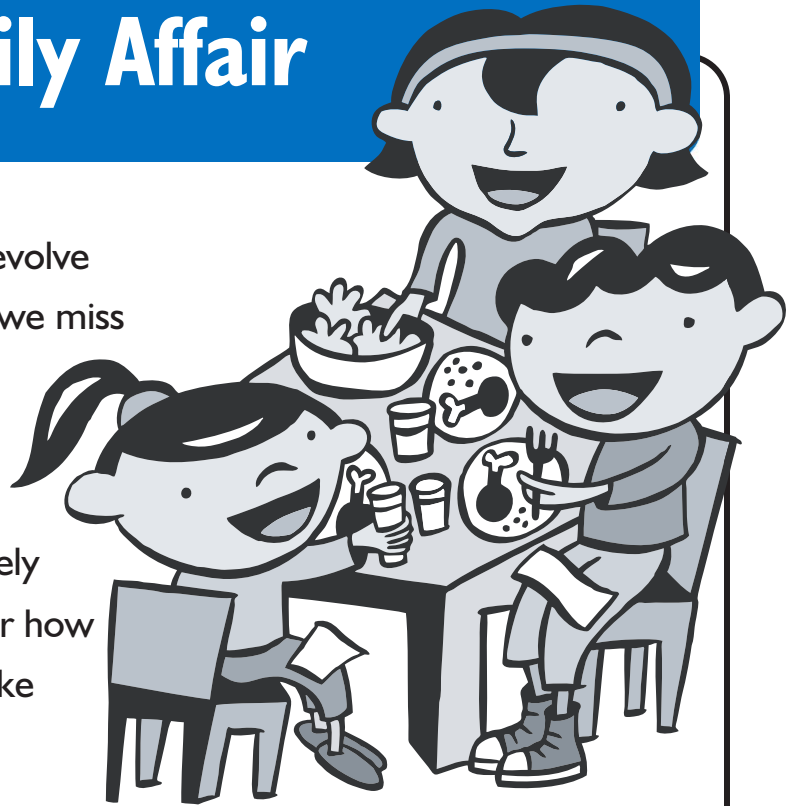


A Meal Is a Family Affair

In such a busy world, mealtimes often revolve around our lifestyles. As a result of this, we miss meals or eat foods that are not the best for our bodies. Did you know that experts have found that kids who eat regularly with their families are more likely to eat fruits & vegetables¹? So, no matter how busy life may seem, it's important to make family meals a priority.



To get started, try some of these ideas:

- Choose a time when everyone can enjoy at least one meal together – it may be breakfast, lunch, or dinner.
- As the parent, you should decide when and where meals are served and what is offered. Your children can then decide whether and how much to eat².
- Include your children in preparing the meal and turn off the TV.
- Gather around the table for a meal.
- Make the meal pleasant by keeping the conversation positive.
- Help your child learn good manners and mealtime behaviors.
- Limit eating and drinking unhealthy snacks between meals.
- Role model the habits you want your children to develop.

Adapted from *Family Meals*, KidsHealth, www.kidshealth.org

References:

(1) Gillman, M. W., Rifas-Shiman, S. L., Frazier, A. L., Rockett, H. R. H., Camargo, C. A., Field, A. E., Berkey, C. S., & Colditz, G. A. (2000). Family dinner and diet quality among older children and adolescents. *Archives of Family Medicine*, 9(3), 235-240.

(2) Satter, E. (1995). Feeding dynamics: Helping children to eat well. *Journal of Pediatric Health Care*, 9(4), 178-184.



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