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Where is Your Family Eating?

Families who eat meals together find that it benefits them in many ways. When the atmosphere is relaxed and pleasant communication increases, children feel more positive about themselves and better food choices are made. Families can use this time to connect and enjoy one another as they discuss events of the day without reprimanding and scolding. Family mealtime is also a good opportunity to teach conversation skills and pass on family traditions.

Keep the conversation relaxed by limiting distractions from television. Families are healthier and more active when making the move to eating together in a positive setting. Children who eat with families seem to have a lower risk of obesity than do those who are watching TV as they eat.

As children get older and involved in their own activities it may become more difficult to eat together everyday. Make this time a priority and find at least once a week to sit down to a meal together. Eating together does not have to be an elaborate event. Have a picnic at the ballpark or a simple and easy meal at home. The important thing is to make it a family time of sharing and relaxation.

For more information about family mealtime go to the web site:

<http://web.extension.uiuc.edu/regionwc/lessismore> or contact your local University of Illinois Extension office.

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