Family Mealtimes: More Than Just Eating Together

Family meals are not only a time for being with your family and children, they can actually lead to better physical and mental health for your children!

Benefits of family meals

- Frequent family meals are related to better nutrition, & lower risk for obesity.
- Eating family dinners together most or all days of the week was associated with eating more healthfully by everyone.
- Families eating meals "almost every day" generally consumed more important vitamins and nutrients such as calcium, fiber, and iron, and less fat.
- Children who had family meals ate more fruits and vegetables and ate fewer snack foods than children who ate separately from their families.
- Children who frequently eat with their families tend to do better in school.

Children model your behavior

- When you cook and serve meals at home, you have control over the quality and quantity of your family's food choices.
- Family meals should be dynamic - sharing ideas, conversation, and feelings.
- Turn off the television, video games, and computer. Mealtime is a wonderful time to strengthen family ties and pass on family cultural traditions.
- Encourage your children to help prepare meals, set the table, and help with dishes.