

IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY MEALTIME

There are few greater investments parents can make in their family than sitting down together and sharing a meal. Let's bring back this lost tradition to Utah homes, and reap all the known benefits:

Children who participate in consistent family mealtimes:

- Eat an overall healthier diet
- Consume more fruits and vegetables
- Maintain healthy body weights
- Perform better academically
- Develop larger vocabularies

These same children are also less likely to:

- Engage in risky behaviors including tobacco, drug, and alcohol use
- Struggle with disordered eating
- Experience depression or low self-esteem



Parents who engage in family mealtimes:

- Have overall healthier diets
- Enjoy strengthened family bonds
- Spend less money on food by eating at home more frequently
- Are able to role model healthy eating habits

While some of the benefits of family mealtime are more significant for families who eat three or more meals together weekly, adding just one mealtime to your routine is a great place to start (Pediatrics 2011). Remember, family mealtime is not only for dinner – it can be whichever meal works best for your family's schedule.

Hammon, AF & Fiase, BH. Is frequency of shared meals related to the nutritional health of children and adolescents? Pediatrics;127(6). 2011.

