

Family Day-A Day to Eat Dinner With Your Children

To emphasize the value of mealtime, President Bush, along with the governors of 35 states have proclaimed September 27, 2004 as “Family Day-A Day to Eat Dinner With Your Children”.

A decrease in family dining has evolved over time as families are becoming busier with activities in the community, school, and work. According to Tufts University, studies show that more than 80% of parents consider eating dinner with their children very important, but less than 50% actually sit down together on a daily basis.

What are the benefits of eating as a family?

- ✓ Eating together is related to better school performance.
- ✓ Teens who have frequent family dinners are less likely to smoke, drink, or use illegal drugs.
- ✓ Family meals are important memories in a child’s life.
- ✓ Eating together helps to keep teens eating right.
- ✓ Research has shown that family style meals increase food acceptance and can influence children’s level of nutrition knowledge.
- ✓ Research suggests families that eat together have children who experience fewer behavioral problems.

How to make it happen!

- ✓ Pack a picnic dinner to eat together at the soccer field, either before or after the game.
- ✓ If one parent needs to work late, take dinner and the children to the office. Turn the break room into your family dining room.
- ✓ No time to cook.....order a pizza and salad; you provide the beverage and fruit.
- ✓ When you cook, make enough for planned left-overs, and reheat the next evening.
- ✓ Begin by scheduling just one family dinner per week. Increase from there.
- ✓ If there is no time to cook, meet at a restaurant as a family.