

**How do we  
benefit from  
family meals?**

# Feeding Children

## Lesson In a Box

### Activity 2: Activity Sign

**¿Cómo nos  
ayuda el comer  
en familia?**

# Feeding Children

## Lesson In a Box

### Activity 2: Activity Sign in Spanish



## **Activity 2**

# Family Image: Two Parent Family

Family Meal [Image]. (n.d.). Retrieved December 20, 2009, from Clip Art

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## **Activity 2**

# Family Meals: Extended Family

Family Meal [Image]. (n.d.). Retrieved December 20, 2009, from Google Images:  
[http://fotosa.ru/stock\\_photo/ImageSource/p\\_1805033.jpg](http://fotosa.ru/stock_photo/ImageSource/p_1805033.jpg)

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## **Activity 2**

# Family Image: Grandparents and grandchildren

Family Meal [Image]. (n.d.). Retrieved December 20, 2009, from Google Images:  
<http://www.graphics.iparenting.com/clipart/generations/GEN30.jpg>

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## **Activity 2**

# Family Image: Single Parent Family

Family Meal [Image]. (n.d.). Retrieved December 20, 2009, from Google Images:  
<http://www.mydogella.com/multitask.jpg>

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# Activity 2

## Family Image: Eating Out

Family Meal [Image]. (n.d.). Retrieved March 29, 2010, from Google Images:  
[http://familyguide.com/myadminpanel/Editor/images/Family\\_eating\\_out.gif](http://familyguide.com/myadminpanel/Editor/images/Family_eating_out.gif)

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Set the table  
for the entire  
family. Set  
roots for a  
lifetime.

you eat. you talk. you listen.  
you laugh. you learn.

  
1.800.WIC.1007

# FAMILY MEALS: more than just eating together

“When I was growing up, we didn’t get called twice to the dinner table. Mom let us know that family meals were important and we’d better be there on time. That’s when we connected as a family and got closer to each other.

I now have three children of my own. My life feels like it’s stuck in fast-forward! But I want my children to have sweet memories of family meals so I make time for us to eat together at least once every day.

Nothing earth-shaking happens during our family meals. We talk. Laugh. Clean up spills. Share. Smile. But I know those tiny threads of togetherness weave us into a family.

Sometimes grandparents, aunts and uncles join us for meals. I’m thankful that we can celebrate the simple pleasure of eating together again. I want to give my children the same gift my parents gave me: a family that cares enough to enjoy each other daily.”



Ygra, with daughter Nabrioska

## Ygra’s tips for making family meals easier:

- Prepare meals for the week on Sunday. Freeze them for quick meals throughout the week.
- Ask older children to wash vegetables. They will enjoy eating them more if they helped prepare them.
- Use the crock-pot to slow-cook stews, soups, and roasts. Come home to great smells and tastes.
- Kids love picnics anytime, even in the winter. Spread a blanket on the floor. (Hint: Even left-over food tastes great when served picnic style.)
- Turn off the TV so you can focus on your family.



Set a smart example.  
Sooner or later, kids  
will do as you do.

A photograph of an adult hand holding a banana with a child's hand following it. The background is a solid blue color. The text is overlaid on the image.

meals are a great time  
to play FOLLOW-THE-LEADER

and you're the leader

# how a mother's devotion led to a healthy family (AND LOWERED THE WEEKLY GROCERY BILL!)

"I grew up in a large family—eleven people in all. With eight brothers and sisters my parents had to be economical. Meals were always filling yet thrifty foods like spaghetti, and lots of it. Once in a while my mother would add a can of vegetables to the meal but we rarely ate fresh fruits or vegetables.

My son's pediatrician told me that eating habits are set by age five. That shocked me. I realized I had a huge responsibility. I wanted my child to learn healthy eating habits early so he would have them throughout his life.

I had never considered myself to have particularly healthy eating habits, but practically overnight I started buying and eating healthier foods. Sure, I could have served these foods to my son and continued eating candy and other old favorites. But I knew I couldn't keep this game up forever, and it just seemed easier to learn to like what I wanted my child to eat. Besides, not only did I want to set a good example, I wanted to stay healthy for my son, too.

Now most of what I buy is vegetables and fruit, yet remarkably my weekly grocery bill is less than my friends' bills. I don't buy the more expensive organic produce or produce that is out of season. We don't

keep a lot of unhealthy snacks around either. And we don't depend on fast-food meals. I learned early that huge servings of meat and a reliance on fast-food meals add up to far more than my produce-heavy bill.

Others are amazed at how my children eat. Avocado sprinkled with garlic powder is always a big hit. The older children scoop it out of the shell with a spoon—the perfect 30 second snack. Salads are a favorite too when drizzled with a light touch of ranch dressing. Tomato slices are devoured when sprinkled with cheese and a little olive oil and vinegar.

Meal time is a peaceful time at our house because we respect each other enough not to comment on what others eat. I don't hang over them encouraging them to try this or that, or ordering them to eat more. I offer about five healthy foods on a plate and say nothing. Giving them independence to listen to their own body has resulted in children who eat just until they are full.

It's been a great investment: five years of healthy eating for a lifetime of not just healthy habits but healthy living. I never guessed I would also receive the extra bonus of learning to like healthy foods myself. I'm so proud of the way my children eat—and I'm proud of myself, too."

## Virginia's Tips for Healthy Eating Habits (and keeping the grocery bill down):

- Set a good example by adopting healthy eating habits yourself.
- Offer a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Resist fast food meals and meals that depend on huge servings of meat.
- Offer healthy meals to your children and let them decide how much is enough.

