

Feeding Children

Lesson In a Box

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Cornell University
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Feeding Children

Lesson In a Box

Core Message:

- Know feeding responsibilities and have family meals more often

Suggested Recipes:

- Crunchy Banana
- Purple Cow
- Tuna Carrot Spread
- Fruity Cabbage Salad

Suggested Incentives:

- Frisbee
- Measuring Cups

Feeding Children Table Layout

My Pyramid for Kids Poster

Feeding
Children Sign

CUCE Nutrition
and Health Sign

<p>Parent Wall Sign Child Wall Sign</p> <p>Place cards</p> <p>Child plate with food models Adult plate with food models</p>	<p>Family Mealtime Poster Be a Healthy Leader Poster</p> <p>Family Image Family Image</p> <p>Family Image</p> <p>Family Image Family Image</p>	<p>TV Image</p> <p>Clock Image</p> <p>Video Game Image</p> <p>Positive Phrases Sign</p> <p>Grow Happy Kids Poster</p> <p>Playing Video Games Image</p> <p>Post-It Notes</p> <p>Pencils</p>
<p>Activity 1:</p> <p>When eating, what is the role of the parent and the child?</p>	<p>Activity 2:</p> <p>How do we benefit from family meals?</p>	<p>Activity 3:</p> <p>How can you have more family meals?</p>

List of Supplies

Table Set-Up:

- Table Cloth
- MyPyramid for Kids Poster
- CUCE Nutrition & Health Sign
- Feeding Children Lesson In a Box Sign

Activity 1:

- Activity Sign: “When eating, what is the role of the parent and the child?”
- Laminated Parent’s Responsibility sign
- Laminated Children’s Responsibility sign
- Laminated Responsibility cards (set of 10 cards)
- Plastic adult sized plate
- Plastic child sized plate
- Nasco food models
 - 6 models: 3 for adult plate, and 3 for child plate. A grain, a meat, and a vegetable in each. Child food models should be smaller portions than adult models
 - Dairy Council paper food models if Nasco models are not available

Activity 2:

- Activity sign : “How do we benefit from family meals?”
- Laminated Family Mealtime Poster (Massachusetts WIC Poster)
- Laminated Be a Healthy Leader Poster (Massachusetts WIC Poster)
- Laminated family images to lay on table (pick from assortment of 5 different family types)
- Optional: Dairy Council paper food models
 - 5 models: one from each of the five food groups

Activity 3:

- Activity sign: “How can you have more family meals?”
- Laminated Grow Happy Kids Poster (Massachusetts WIC Poster)
- Laminated TV image
- Laminated Video Game image
- Laminated Clock image
- Laminated Playing Video Games image
- Laminated Positive Phrases sign
- 1 pad of Post-It notes
- 2 pencils

Activity 1:

When eating, what is the role of the parent and the child?



Directions for Activity:

“Identifying Parents’ and Children’s Feeding Responsibilities”

- Set up the two signs of Parent’s Responsibilities and Children’s Responsibilities on the table with Responsibility Cards placed in random order in front of the signs. If there is wall space, you may use the larger wall cards, taping them on the wall. (**Note:** when presenting to a group that is mostly just passing by, have the responsibilities already laid out in front of or taped up with the correct categories).
- Participants should place responsibility cards next to the sign they believe fits the card’s description.
- Discuss as a group why each of the cards belongs either as a parent or a child responsibility
- Set up two different sized plates (child size and adult size) with Nasco models (small and large food portions) to show how parents can provide age-appropriate table settings to their children.

PARENT’S WALL OF RESPONSIBILITIES

- Selecting and buying food
- Presenting food
- Making meals
- Providing regular meals and snacks
- Participating in meals
- Providing age-appropriate table settings
- Showing children appropriate meal time behavior
- Providing pleasant meal times

CHILDREN’S WALL OF RESPONSIBILITIES

- Deciding whether to eat
- Deciding how much food is eaten

Activity 1

Feeding Children

Open Ended Questions:

- Where do these responsibilities belong? By the parent's side or by the children's side?
- How much might a child eat compared to the portion of an adult?
- Who decides whether a child eats?
- Who decides how much a child eats?
- How do children feel if they are forced to eat everything on their plate?
- What do you do to provide regular mealtimes?
- How do you provide pleasant mealtimes?

Messages:

- Parents select and buy food, offer regular meals and snacks, provide age-appropriate table settings, and make mealtimes pleasant for the family.
- The child decides whether to eat, and how much food is eaten. Avoid lecturing or forcing a child to eat.
- Young children need the same variety of foods as adults, but in smaller portions.

Additional Information:

- Children may not eat the same amount of foods if they are going through periods of growth or illness (i.e. situations where a child decides how much to eat).
- Try new foods yourself. Describe its taste, texture, smell. Let your child see how much you like to eat fruits, whole grains, or vegetables.
- Offer one new food and serve with something your child likes along with the new food.
- The division of responsibility concept is key in our teaching and thinking about preschool, school-age, and adolescent eating behaviors. Nutrition educators should guide parents to provide foods in amounts and quality known to be beneficial to their children, in an environment that is conducive to eating. Children respond by eating, or not.
- Developing a positive feeding relationship requires a division of responsibility. The parent is responsible for what the child is offered to eat and how the food is presented. The child is responsible for how much and even whether she eats. This is called "division of responsibility".
- Based on research and experience, here are facts about children's eating patterns:
 - Children will eat.
 - They are capable of regulating their food intake.
 - They generally react negatively to new foods but will usually accept them with time and experience.
 - Parents can either support or disrupt children's food acceptance and food regulation.

Adapted from How to Get Your Kid to Eat, But Not Too Much, Ellyn Satter, 1987.

Activity 2:

How do we benefit from family meals?



Directions for Activity:

"Identifying Benefits of Family Meals"

- Ask open-ended questions about the benefits of eating together as a family.
- Lay on table images of families and discuss how any type of family can benefit from frequent family meals (i.e. closer family ties, more communication, healthy adolescent behaviors who are less likely to use drugs, children learn teamwork and appropriate mealtime behavior).
- **Optional:** Lay out paper food models from the 5 food groups. Discuss why eating meals as a family could provide children with more opportunities to consume new and/or healthy foods and develop healthy eating patterns.

Activity 2

Feeding Children

Open Ended Questions:

- How do family meals help your family?
- From these posters, what benefits do you see families enjoy when eating together?
- What healthy habits can you role model for your children when eating?
- What positive things can families do when eating together?
- What types of foods do families eat when they eat together frequently?

Messages:

- Family meals helps parents serve as role models in choosing healthy foods for themselves and their children.
- Evidence shows that families who have more family meals, eat more fruits and vegetables, fiber and other nutrients, and consume less soda, fried foods, saturated and trans fat. Benefits of family meals increase the more frequently they occur.
- Family meals can introduce new foods, develop a meal pattern, and share family time important to healthy self-esteem.

Additional Information:

- Aside from a more balanced diet, family meals improve communication, which could help children do better in school.
- According to a recent study in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, eating together as a family during adolescence is associated with lasting positive effects on dietary quality in young adulthood. The researchers found adolescents who ate with their families grow up to be healthier adults who eat more fruit, dark-green and orange vegetables and key nutrients and consume fewer soft drinks.
- Make the most of family mealtime. Eating meals together provides the opportunity to help children develop a healthy attitude toward food. It also enables parents to serve as role models, introduce new foods and establish a regular meal schedule.
- Every child needs appropriate amounts of calories, protein, minerals and vitamins to grow. MyPyramid.gov offers personalized eating plans for healthy adults and children over age 2 and interactive tools to track food choices, stay active and eat right.
- Girls who have five or more meals a week with their families are one-third less likely to develop unhealthy eating habits, which can range from skipping meals to full-fledged anorexia or abusing diet pills.

Activity 3:

How can you have more family meals?



Directions for Activity:

“Identifying Challenges and Strategies to having family meals”

- Discuss how these images (i.e. image of: TV, time, video game console, children playing video games) can be challenges to having family meals.
- Invite participants to write positive phrases on post-its that could facilitate pleasant meal time conversations with children. Ask participants to share.
- **Optional:** Layout 5 simple recipes from FNEC website (Easy Skillet, Confetti Bean Salsa, Fried Rice, Tuna Carrot Spread, and Tossed Salad) to show that family meals can be simple to prepare.

Activity 3

Feeding Children

Open Ended Questions:

- How can you have more family meals?
- What challenges do you face with having family meals?
- How can you limit distractions to enjoy family meals?
- How can you plan a family meal despite lack of time to cook or different schedules of family members?
- How can you start a positive conversation with your family at mealtime?
- How else can you make family meals easier?
- Which of the 10 suggestions from this poster can you try with your family during mealtime?

Messages:

- Identify challenges that affect how often family meals occur in your family
 - i.e. busy or conflicting parent and child schedules (extracurricular activities, long work hours), poor family relations, food dislikes, and individual family members eating separately watching TV, the computer, or playing video games.
- Make family meals a priority and plan for family meals.
- A family meal doesn't have to be at dinner – you can have family breakfast. Incorporate family meals whenever possible and as often as possible. You can start small – start on the weekends and build your way to making it part of most days/meals.
- Focus on each other during family meals. Turn off the TV or video games. Make phone calls later. Family meals are a time to relax, laugh together, communicate, and show love for each other.

Examples of topics you can discuss at family meals:

- Ask everyone to share their favorite part or biggest challenge of the day.
- Plan and then let the kids pick tasks for the next day's menu, preparation, and cleanup.
- Discuss an activity the family can do together and then put it on the calendar.
- Ask the kids about their classes, books they are reading, homework, teachers, and upcoming assignments. Find out if they would like your help or want to brainstorm on an assignment.

Additional Information:

• **Keep Your Kitchen Stocked with Quick-to-Fix Foods**

Whenever you shop, look for specials on staples (rice, pasta, beans, etc.) as well as frozen and canned fruits (in juice) and vegetables. With a wide variety of tasty choices on hand, you'll only have to worry about the main dish when it's time to make dinner.

• **Prepare Multiple Batches of Main Ingredients**

If you're cooking ground beef, it's just as easy to cook a double or triple batch. Freeze extra servings to reheat for tacos or casseroles. Try slicing, marinating and freezing extra beef, pork, chicken or fish for stir-fry dishes.

• **Get the Whole Family Involved from Start to Finish**

The evening meal doesn't have to be one person's responsibility. Even very young children like being involved in planning and preparing healthful meals. Assign age-appropriate jobs, like choosing the fruit for dessert, mixing pre-cut vegetables into a salad, setting the table with unbreakable dishes or clearing the dishes afterwards.

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Recipes:

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- Tuna Carrot Spread. In *NYC Cornell Cooperation Nutrition and Health recipe collection*.
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Activity 1 Images:

- Parents and Children’s Responsibility Signs (English & Spanish). Feeding Children Lesson. Nutrition and Health. CUCE-NYC.
- Responsibility Cards (n.d.). In *FNEC website under Navigating for Success* (Unit 17). Retrieved from http://www.fnec.cornell.edu/Securepages/Uploads/NFS/Infant_and_Child_Nutrition_Tool_Task3C_Responsibility_Blocks_for_Walls.pdf

Activity 2 Images:

- Family mealtime poster. In *FNEC website under Massachusetts WIC Posters*. Retrieved from http://www.fnec.cornell.edu/Uploads/WIC_Posters/Poster%2016.pdf
- Be a healthy leader poster. In *FNEC website under Massachusetts WIC Posters*. Retrieved from http://www.fnec.cornell.edu/Uploads/WIC_Posters/Poster%2019.pdf
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Activity 3 Images:

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