



Making the Most Out of Family Meals

Sitting down for meals together benefits the whole family. While there's no rule about how often or for which meal, the more often families share table time, the more they reap the rewards. Recent studies have shown that children in particular display benefits including:

- Better academic performance
- Stronger vocabulary
- Higher self-esteem
- Greater sense of resilience
- Lower rates of obesity
- Reduced risk of depression
- Decreased risk of substance abuse and eating disorders

Ready to get the conversation started? Here are some openers:

- *What are your friends at school like? What do you like to do together?*
- *What did you learn or notice today that surprised you?*
- *What was the best part of your day?*
- *Who is your favorite book character and why?*
- *If you could go anywhere in the world, where would you like to go and why?*
- *If you could be any kind of animal, what would you be and why?*
- *If you had three wishes, what would they be and why?*
- *What are some ways we can show love without using words?*
- *What is one random act of kindness you did today?*
- *What is one healthy action you took today?*
- *What is one thing we could do as a family to be healthier? To have fun?*
- *How do you think the world will be different in ___ years?*
- *Do you know the story about...*
 - *How you got your name?*
 - *How your parents met?*
 - *What life was like for your grandparents when they were growing up?*

These are just suggestions, and of course we encourage you to get creative and have fun coming up with your own. The more you can use open-ended vs. “yes” or “no” questions, the richer the response you’ll elicit from your child. We will also provide additional conversation starters in our monthly calendars, so please check the website regularly.