



UNITED TRIBES
TECHNICAL COLLEGE
LAND GRANT EXTENSION

NUTRITION EDUCATION

Family Meals

LS00023

FAMILY MEALS: FOR YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES

NUTRITIONAL BENEFITS

Regular family meals are associated with an increase in breakfast and dinner intake, as well as an increased intake of healthy things like:

- Vegetables and fruit
- Calcium containing foods
- Dietary fiber
- Magnesium
- Iron
- Zinc
- AND a decreased intake of FATS and SUGARY FOODS & BEVERAGES.

BEHAVIORAL BENEFITS

If offered on a regular basis, family meals can decrease a child's likelihood of:

- Smoking
- Drinking alcohol
- Using illicit drug use
- AND children will grow into adults with HEALTHIER FOOD & FAMILY TRADITIONS.



Family Meals....Support

1. **Traditions:** Tradition can be as simple as serving the same menu for a celebration, memorial meal, or having the children make special placemats for the table. Tomorrow will look like what is practiced today.
2. **Teaching & Storytelling:** The stories told, the teasing that is heard while sharing food, becomes your family memories.
3. **History:** Take a family picture in the same place at the same time each year. It will be a record of how your children have grown.
4. **Manners:** Teach children to politely ask for food: "Please pass the bread" and remember "thank you." Children can be taught to think "Elders first," by being at the table and quietly waiting for Elders to offer thanks or begin conversation.



Family Meals — Table Blessing

Teach everyone to give thanks to the food for giving its life for us to live. Include in your thanks the person who hunted or gathered the food and say thanks "for the hands that prepared the food."

Before eating, always take time to thank the foods. – Arapahoe

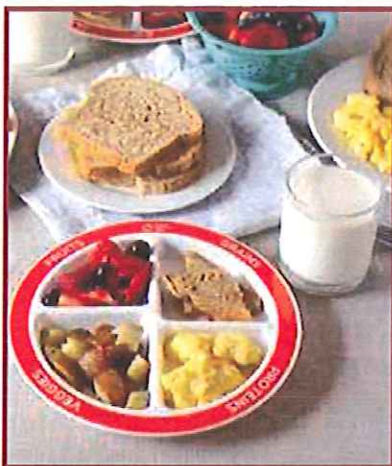
Northern Plains Table Blessing Smudging the food and self with sage, smoke we say: "We thank the Great Spirit for the resources that made this food possible; we thank the Earth Mother for producing, and we thank all those who labored to bring it to us. May the wholesomeness of the food before us, bring out the wholeness of the Spirit within us.

Reverend White Eagle



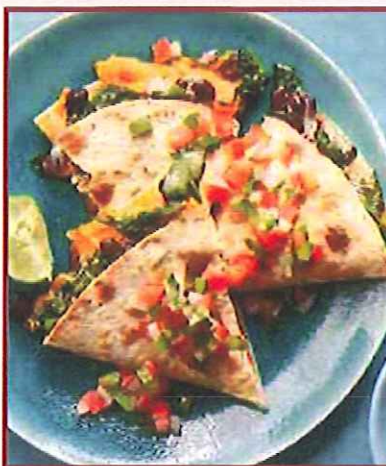
Plan Best Breakfasts

- Help prepare your children for the next day, including packing school bag and choosing clothes to be sure your child will have time to eat breakfast.
- Allow your child to pick from a variety of choices and eat the amount he or she chooses.
- Provide protein: peanut butter, eggs, or lean sausage or Canadian bacon.
- Provide fiber from whole grains: English muffins, oatmeal, toast, cold cereals, graham crackers.
- Provide fruit: banana, berries, orange wedges, applesauce, or fruit smoothie made of frozen fruit and yogurt or skim milk.
- Provide calcium: low-fat milk, yogurt, cheese.
- Enroll in School Breakfast Program.



Plan Delightful Dinners

- Pack noon lunches together. Let kids know that what they are carrying to school—you will be eating while at work.
- Enroll children in the School Lunch Program. It's inexpensive, healthy and easy. Check out the free or reduced meal plan.
- Keep meals a priority for both you and your children even on the weekends. Eat lunch together—create conversations that all may take part in. Try to not complain, argue or reprimand.
- Keep a positive vibe; respect one another by saying please and thank you. Good manners learned at the kitchen table, last a lifetime and may even help when children apply for employment, later in life.



Plan Super Suppers

- Make it with love. Allow kids to participate in meal planning and preparation according to their skill and ability levels. Use their input when making weekly menus prior to weekly grocery shopping.
- Make meals that are simple to prepare and ready soon after work and school. Take advantage of easy to use products like jarred spaghetti sauce and precooked chicken. Include at least "2" of the original "fast foods" in your meals - fruit and vegetable.
- Use "weekly menu nights" EXAMPLE: Tuesday= potato bar, Sunday=pizza night, or Friday = soup & bread & board game night.
- Do jumping jacks with the kids or play a game outdoors, while supper is in the oven.
- Plan ahead by cooking in a crock pot. Supper will be ready when you get home after work and school. Use the extra time to play outside, do laundry, do homework, or take the dog for a walk.
- Ignore the dishes, go for a walk or bike ride after supper and do dishes later.

