

Childhood Nutrition – Family Meals

Who: Parents of infants age 8-12 months

Why: Many families do not have frequent family meals due to their fast-paced lifestyle.

Time: 20 minutes

Objectives: By the end of this session, participants will:

- Identify the benefits of participating in family meals
- Identify the habits that are acquired during meals
- Identify ways to incorporate more family meals into their lifestyle

Lesson

Overview:

1. Introduction
2. Concept: Family Meals Offer Many Benefits to Children
3. Concept: Your Child Learns Eating Habits by Watching You
4. Concept: With Proper Planning Family Meals are Easy
5. Closing

Materials: Handouts: “Family Meals”
DVD: “Childhood Nutrition”

Introduction

- Arrange chairs in a semi-circle before participants enter classroom
- Welcome Participants
- Give overview of class session
- Introductions (make sure to include children in the introductions activity)

Example: “Good morning everybody! Welcome to Childhood Nutrition - Family Meals. This class talks the importance of family meals and how to plan for them. The class is about 20 minutes long and we will use this time to share some ideas. Let’s introduce ourselves. I’ll start: my name is _____”

 If preferred another icebreaker can be used

 **TIP:** Use introductions as an icebreaker. Throw a silly question out there that is not related to the subject that you will be talking about. People will laugh and relax and this will increase class participation. Some examples of questions you can use are: “if money was not an issue, what kind of car would you drive?”, “if money was not an issue and you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go?”, “if you could go out with any celebrity for your birthday, who would you pick?”

Concept: Family Meals Offer Many Benefits to Children

- **Essential Question:**
 - “Do you think family meals are important? Why?”

- **Affirm answers from participants (i.e. “yes”, “that is very true”, “that’s a good one”, etc)**
- **Write answers on the board**
- **Play Segment 5 (Family Meals) of the “Childhood Nutrition” DVD**



FACTS ABOUT FAMILY MEALS:

Studies have shown that in were family meals are frequent (5 or more times a week) children are less likely to do drug, drink, smoke, get depressed, develop eating disorders, and consider suicide. They are also more likely to do well in school, delay having sex, eat healthy, and have more extensive vocabularies.

Concept: Your Child Learns Eating Habits by Watching You

- **Essential Questions:**
 - “Have you ever seen your baby imitate you? How about imitating dad? Would you like to share what kind of things?”
- **Listen and affirm participants answers**
 - “Do you think that baby would also imitate your eating habits?”
- **Listen and affirm participants answers**
- **Make sure to include some stories about family meals:**
 - **Example** “A friend of mine told me that he had never eating cauliflower until he was about 19 years old. I thought he was kidding, but then he went ahead and told me that his mother hated cauliflower so she never cooked it. Has something like that ever happened to you? How do you feel about this?”



FACTS ABOUT FAMILY MEALS:

Baby imitates everything you do, so parents should try to be good role models. Parents should model keeping a balanced diet, exercising regularly, and keeping fast food to a minimum.

Concept: With Proper Planning Family Meals are Easy

- **Essential Questions:**
 - “What can we do to have family meals more frequently?”
- **Listen and affirm participants answers**
- **Example** “Fast-paced living can make family meals challenging. Let’s brainstorm about what can we do to have family meals more frequently”
- **Distribute “Family Meals” handout**

Closing

- **Thank participants for their participation**
- **Example:** “It was really great having you here today, thank you very much for your participation in class and I hope you are able to use some of the information we shared today. I look forward to seeing you again!”