



Family Resiliency Center | Strengthening families for life's challenges.

## Mealtime Minutes

Practical mealtime solutions to make gathering together around the table the best part of your family's day.

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## DINNER TIME Healthy Habits



- Forget take out, make tonight's dinner about what you take in.
- Healthy habits are both how you feed your body and your mind.
- Carve out some dinner time for your busy family; don't just do it for them, do it for you, too.

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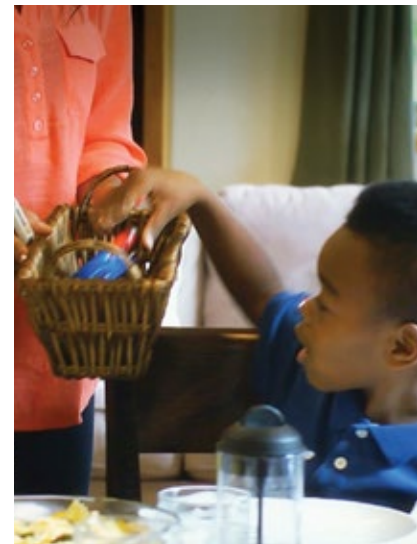
## CONTROL the Chaos



- Devote just 20 minutes each night to a more meaningful mealtime by turning off all electronic or handheld devices.
- Turn off the TV and other distractions and wait until everyone is seated at the table to eat.
- Don't allow life's distractions to drown out your family's dinner time.

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## MANAGE Life's Distractions



- Make it a TV-free zone during mealtime.
- Ask the kids to help set the table.
- Put all cellphones and toys in a basket before dinner time.

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## POSITIVE Dinner Table Communication



- Ask someone if they want seconds, request to pass the dish, and discuss who is going to help clean up after the meal.
- Let the kids drive the table conversation; make sure all children have time to speak.
- Keep the conversation friendly and discuss life and family events.

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## AVOID Negative Dinner Table Communication



- Avoid harsh statements such as “You’re so annoying” or “You will always forget to put your dishes in the dishwasher.”
- Take turns speaking.
- Have a signal for who gets to talk (raise a hand or wave a napkin).

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## MAKE Mealtime Easier



- Make one night a week a special, stress-free meal.
- Have a build-your-own pizza or taco night; let everyone choose their favorite toppings and have fun preparing a meal together.
- Everyone will look forward to it, and the cook is off the hook.

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## PLAN Meals Ahead



- Prepare meals that are “double hitters,” entire meals or ingredients that can be used for tomorrow’s dinner.
- Cook extra so that leftovers can be used in another meal the next night.
- Get everyone involved; ask for favorite meal ideas for the week.

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