

More tips for family dinner time

1. Parent responsibility is the time of the meal and what food is served.
2. Child responsibility is whether or not they eat, and how much food they eat (of course, the plate has been appropriately portioned and served by the parent).
3. Your TV is off when eating.
4. Reading books and newspapers is also strongly not recommended!
5. You eat your food slowly, enjoying every bit.
6. When a family member talks, people listen.
7. Talk about weight, fitness, eating, nutrition and any other sensitive, difficult topic is off limits!
8. Parents and children enjoy their food.
9. Parents do not tell their kids to eat or not to eat.
10. Kids don't ask parents what they have to eat.

These tips are suggestions that you may or may not be already doing. It helps to sit down as a family at a time other than meal time to establish ground rules and collaborate as a family to make meal time a pleasant experience. Although it is the parent responsibility to make sure dinner is served and what is served, enlisting the help of the entire family is encouraged. Get ideas ahead of time from the kids for dinners they enjoy so that if they do not like the selection a certain night they can know that they have an input and will see their selection later in the week. Involve your kids in dinner prep and clean-up. Setting the table, making a salad, chopping vegetables and fruit, clearing the table, helping with the dishes are all practical ways to involve the family and teach your children self-sufficiency for when they are adults. And remember the old saying "Rome was not created in a day" and "Progress not perfection". Be happy with small, gradual changes and know that you are changing habits for a lifetime!!