1. **Infants who are only fed breast milk the first 6 months have the best start to healthy eating.** (1, 2)
   - Feed your baby only breast milk the first 6 months. Continue to breastfeed 12 months or longer, up to baby’s 2nd birthday is best!
   - Breastfeed as long as both mother and baby want.

2. **Young children fed at the family table have better eating, self-feeding, and language skills.** (3, 4)
   - Offer older babies appropriate foods after 6 months of age to add nutrition of breast milk.
   - Serve older infants and young toddlers nutritious ‘best bits’ of family meals prepared (mashed, chopped, softened etc) to suit babies’ eating abilities.
   - Talk with young children during meals. Use new words to describe foods they are eating.

3. **Family meals help communication and build relationships.** (3, 5, 6, 7)
   - Mom & Dad or adult family members are role models for children’s good eating habits.
   - Children eat better when adults sit down to eat meals with them.
   - Families’ cultures are shared when "families’ recipes" are developed, prepared and tasted together.
   - Turn off the TV during meals.
   - Cook it quickly, but eat it slowly.
   - Keep conversation light and fun. Talk about the best part the day. Save heavy discussions for another time.

4. **Family meals help children eat better.** (3, 8, 9)
   - Parents decide what foods to offer.
   - Children decide how much to eat.
   - Serve a variety of foods and encourage small tastes of each new food. New foods can take several tries before accepted as “okay” food.
   - Avoid using foods as reward or punishment.
Resources