

Family Meals & Breastfeeding: *The Heart of Good Eating*



Discussion Points

1. **Infants who are only fed breast milk the first 6 months have the best start to healthy eating.** Continue to breastfeed 12 months or longer, up to baby's 2nd birthday is best.
2. **Young children fed at the family table have better eating, self-feeding, and language skills.** Good eating begins by watching others, touching foods and exploring new tastes.
3. **Family meals help communication and build relationships.** Families can talk more while preparing one meal for everyone to eat together.
4. **Family meals help children eat better.** Children eat more fruit and vegetables and less fried food and soda when included in family meals.

Questions To Ask

- **What benefits do you see if you breastfeed your baby longer?**
- **What meals or meal times does your family already eat together?**
- **What vegetables does your family eat and enjoy?**

Setting Goals

- *I will only feed breast milk to my baby for first 6 months.*
- *We will eat together dinner together on Sunday night.*
- *We will make two vegetables for dinner this week, one new and one favorite vegetable dish.*

Handouts

Nibbles for Health. Nutrition Newsletter for Parents of Young Children, USDA, Food and Nutrition Service. (1) *Enjoying the Family Meal*; (2) *Family Meals – Fast, Healthful*; (3) *Together... Let's Try New Foods!* (4) *Teaching Good Food Habits.*

Referrals

Alaska Breastfeeding Coalition. <http://www.alaskabreastfeeding.com>

Food Stamp Nutrition Education / Extension Food & Nutrition Education Program; (FSNE / EFNEP) Cooperative Extension Service, University of Fairbanks, Alaska.
<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/homeeconomics/index.html>

Washington State University, *Eat Together, Eat Better.*
<http://nutrition.wsu.edu/ebet/index.html>

