



PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN HEALTH
SANTÉ PRAIRIE MOUNTAIN



Gearing up for the upcoming school year? As kids and parents get back into their routines, it is time to give pause and consider the importance of the **family meal** time.

Family Meals Matter – eating together is an opportunity to connect with each other and develop healthy eating habits for life.

Allow Kids to help plan and prepare meals and snacks.

More Nutritious – foods prepared at home tend to be lower in sodium and sugars.

Increase the variety of foods offered to your child. Offer a variety of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats or plant-based sources of protein.

Leave screens off during family mealtime. Without distractions, we can focus on eating, listen to our hunger and fullness cues, and engage fully in conversation.

Yes – Say “yes” to exploring new foods. Avoid pressure: do not force kids to try new foods or bribe them with special rewards for trying. Instead, be patient; it can take many introductions to a food before a child will accept it.

Raise a Healthy Eater

September 2019

Model a healthy and balanced approach to eating. Children pick up the attitudes and habits of their role models.

Establish a routine – Have a meal or snack every two to three hours. Regular eating times help children learn to self-regulate food intake according to hunger and fullness. Have a “*kitchen is closed*” rule between meals and snack times (except for water) because grazing (constant snacking) can interfere with being hungry at mealtimes making it more difficult to eat mindfully according to physical cues.

Ask children to help with meal planning by creating a list of their favourite foods to prepare

Less expensive – preparing foods at home costs less than eating out

Save time – Plan ahead and stock your freezer and pantry with some easy to prepare foods. (e.g. Frozen and canned vegetables and fruit, pasta, rice, low sugar breakfast cereals, “on-sale” bread or flatbreads in the freezer, canned tuna, canned beans, chickpeas, lentils, eggs (in the fridge), etc.)

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For more information on healthy eating for young children:

- *Dial-a-Dietitian* 1-877-830-2892
- <http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/>
- <http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthyliving/hlp/nutrition/children.html>

