

The importance of family meals



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Introduction

Whether it is dinner, breakfast, or lunch, family meals offer an opportunity for all family members to pass time enjoying each other's company and good food. In many occasions, mealtimes might be the only occasion many families have a chance to congregate as a unit. Eating meals as a family provides a huge opportunity to form and strengthen domestic bonds as members engage each other in conversations. Also, research shows that family meals benefit members of the household in terms of nutrition, academic performance, spending and manners. This expressive article highlights the nine major benefits of family meals.

The Benefits of Eating as a Family

The advantages of eating meals as a family are as follows:

Communication and Well-Being

Dialogue during mealtimes provides an opportunity for the family to plan, learn, and bond with one another. It is a chance to chat about events of the day as parents give additional attention to their children. Family meals foster love, warmth, security and feeling of belonging. Eating together as a household is not merely about food, but knowing about the wellbeing of one another. Sharing meals with loved ones is like a special event that almost assumes the form of a ceremony, which has always been practiced since time immemorial. Besides the appreciation of the food and the effort that went into making it, there are numerous social elements, such as learning

how to conduct conversations, listen, serve others, compromise and solve conflicts which come into play when a household shares meals (TheHJGroup, 2013).

Role Modeling

Family mealtime is the best time to display and teach one another appropriate meal etiquette, table manners, and social skills by keeping the mood relaxed, light, and loving. Family members try lead by example and not to criticize or instruct. Eating together offers an opportunity to exercise gratitude through prayer or sharing the thing members are thankful for prior to eating.

Family meals grant the opportunity to convey the attitudes and values of a household from one generation to another: Children can be taught by their parents or grandparents about the values that are significant to the family. Family meals are also an ideal approach to link up household members with their ethnic or cultural heritage, because differing foods might reflect the distinctive ethnic tastes or cultural traditions of their family's background (TheHJGroup, 2013).

Exploration

Family meals enable family members to expand and explore the world round them one diet at a time. Members of the family can encourage each other to try out new foods, without bribing or coercing. They can introduce new foods accompanied by some of their favorites. Parents and children can select new recipes from cookbooks, web sites, magazines or newspapers. Trying out

new foods, particularly from different parts of the world is like exploration or beginning a new hobby. It magnifies the experience, knowledge, and skills of the household members (TheHJGroup, 2013).

Nourishment and Relaxation

Meals that have been prepared and consumed at home are generally more nutritious. They comprise more vegetables, fruits, and dairy products as well as extra nutrients such as vitamins A and C, fiber, and calcium. Moreover, home cooked foods are not usually deep-fried or highly salted like take-away meals. Plus, consumption of sweetened beverage is frequently low at the table as family members ought to take natural blended juices. Recent researches show that family meals are connected to a low risk of obesity in both children and adults because when people eat at home they typically consume a balanced diet.

Also, eating together helps family members relax. Before or after having a long day away from home, parents and children can benefit from the pleasure of cooking and enjoying their meal. Not only does this give you them a chance to calm down, it prepares them for the day or for a peaceful, rejuvenating sleep.

Self-Sufficiency

Family meals provide self-sufficiency to household members because it allows them to know how to plan and make meals. Both basic and complex cooking preparations are requirements for being self-sufficient. Parents can involve their family members in grocery shopping, menu planning, and food

preparation. Young children can cut bananas, tear lettuce, and set the table while older children can do tasks, such as peeling vegetables. Teenagers can grill, dice, chop, and bake. Working together puts meals faster on the table and makes everybody more responsible.

Prevention of Destructive Behaviors

Research indicates that frequent family meals (five or more per week) are linked to low rates of drinking, smoking, and illegal drug abuse in teenagers and pre-teens compared to households that do not eat together. Even as the schedules of older children get more complex, it is vital for parents to make efforts to have meals together.

Studies by Columbia University's National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse show that children who do not have meals with their family members at least twice every week were 40% more likely to indulge in alcohol and drugs, not to eat healthily, and report being distant from their parents than youngsters who eat with their parents often.

Better Academic Performances

It has been proven that children perform better academically when they have more meals with their family members. Mealtime discussions translate into success in class. As children listen to their parents and other members talk, they learn essential language abilities, such as new reading and vocabulary skills. These skills are necessary for expressing oneself verbally and comprehending what is read, thus they help children perform better on tests in school. According to research by University of Illinois, children who

eat more than five times per week with their family members tend to have high academic performance than their peers who habitually eat away from home or eat alone.

Cost Reduction

Home cooked meals are much cheaper than fast foods. Families do not need to spend a lot of money to prepare tasty meals because they can look up for cheap and simple recipes from cheap vegetarian foods to healthy snacks on a low budget of under \$3 per serving. Meals bought outside the home are generally two to four times costly than meals made at home.

Fun

Family meals are fun. Through sharing meals and taking time to converse about what the family members are experiencing in term of flavors, they are more likely to have fun and be mindful of the food. This results in improved digestion and enjoyment of the food. Family meals are also fun because they are taken and enjoyed in a cool and relaxed setting.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the benefits of family meals go beyond nutrition. Eating as a family has multiple advantages in many other aspects as well.

Family meals are healthier and they provide an occasion for household members to sit around the table, enjoy, relax, discuss and applaud themselves for preparing a meal that is more likely to be nutritious than one that they would have purchased outside the house. Moreover, recent

evidence demonstrates that children who have more meals with other family members are the less likely to engage in illegal behavior, such as smoking marijuana and drinking alcohol. These children also perform well in school, have high self-esteem, and do not develop eating disorders.

Family meals are a tradition and the cornerstone of the home because they offer self-sufficiency, reduce costs, and provide fun.

Bibliography

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