

# mealtime routines



Are mealtimes a struggle in your home? Does your child say he is too busy to eat and wants to play?

**This can be very frustrating.**

You probably feel that you need to get your child to eat "something". You may even find yourself chasing your child with a spoon, trying to get him to take a bite or two. **This is not good.**

## small children thrive on routines

Your child will eat better and be happier if he knows what to expect at mealtimes.

### create some mealtime routines:

1. Offer 3 meals at about the same times each day.
2. Give a warning for mealtimes such as, "we will be eating in 5 minutes." Your child will have time to think about eating. Pulling a child away from playing and forcing him to a table may upset him.
3. Have a routine activity before you eat. Wash your hands together. Give your child time to slow down and prepare for eating.

### eat together

- Serve meals in the kitchen, on the table or counter.
- Take time to sit down and eat with your child. Children like to eat with others, not alone.

### stay at the table

Your child should stay with his family at mealtimes even if he isn't eating. He may even start eating as he watches others eat.



### serve it

- Encourage your child to serve his own food at the table.

If you want to serve foods to your child, portion on his plate. He asks for more.

Waste all the foods.

Don't push to eat.

Use the same foods.

Learn to eat sitting and standing.



Decide how much he will eat.

Parent is to serve healthy control how much he eats.

## meal endings

Prepare for the end of a meal.

Put scrap leftovers into the trash and put his plate on the counter.

Wash his hands and face away from the table.

### stop 20 minutes and to 15 minutes

Don't eat within that time, and clean up.

At most of his meal, you can eat and put it in the refrigerator. It can be reheated and served if he wants to next planned snack or meal.

### eat together

Encourage your child to stay at the table after the meal is over.



Your child will stay at the table and eat until the meal is over. This shows there will be no more eating.



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