



Bradford Tioga Head Start Inc.

Family Meals

Sitting down with the family for meals is an important time for children.

Eating together helps children feel part of a family group and gives them time to share. Family dinners especially help single parents. They create a more normal family time.



Try to eat one meal as a family each day, and select at least one night to be family dinner night. Research shows that family dinners are healthier. They contain more calcium, iron, fiber, fruits and vegetables, and less salt and fat.

To make family meals more pleasant:

- Let children help shop, cook and set the table. Preschool children especially become excited when a parent gets home from work. They need attention. Helping a parent fix dinner is a good way to connect.
- While preparing and eating a meal, turn off the TV, put the newspaper aside and don't answer the phone. Problems arise when there is too much confusion at mealtime, or when too much (or

too little) time is allowed for eating.

- Don't make family meals a battle zone. Children don't need to listen to family fights.
- Let children decide how much and whether to eat what is served; it's up to parents to prepare and present nutritious meals at regular times. Problems occur when parents insist children eat certain foods, when children are told how much to eat, and when parents insist children stay at the table until their plates are clean.
- Encourage children to practice serving themselves. For example, let them serve themselves from a bowl, pour their own milk from a small pitcher, or spread butter on their bread. Expect spills and messes. Children who are old enough can help clean them up.
- Let children help with regular clean-up duties. Rotate duties among children.
- Don't worry about fancy meals. Once in a while, have take-out or frozen dinners. Spending time at the table together is what's important.

Tuna-Corn Chowder



What You Need:

- 2 medium potatoes, cubed
- 1/3 cup diced onion
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 (12-ounce) can white tuna, drained
- 1 (14 3/4-ounce) can creamed corn
- 1 (14-ounce) can chicken broth
- 2 cups 1 percent milk
- 2 tablespoons fresh parsley
- 1/4 teaspoon oregano
- Juice of 1/2 lemon or lime

How To Fix:

1. Cook potatoes in small amount of water, just until tender. Drain.
2. Sauté onions in butter until tender.
3. Break tuna into small pieces. Add onion and butter. Cook just until tuna absorbs the butter.
4. Add potatoes and rest of ingredients to tuna mixture, except lemon juice. Cook 5 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir in lemon juice. Serve warm. For thicker soup, add 2 to 3 tablespoons cornstarch to milk. Makes 7 cups. (240 calories and 8 grams fat in 1 cup)

Medications and Children

Adults must be very careful when giving medications to children.

To prevent overdoses:

- Read the label for correct dosage.
- Know the difference between a tablespoon and a teaspoon.
- Use a measuring spoon or dosing cup. Kitchen teaspoons differ.
- Don't give double doses.
- Before giving two medications, talk to your health care provider or pharmacist about possible drug interactions.



- Never give medications in the dark.
- Don't let children take medications themselves.
- Never call medications candy.
- Relock child-resistant caps after each use.
- Store vitamins where children can't see or reach them. (Iron pills are the leading cause of accidental poisonings for children under the age of three.) And, medications don't belong in a purse.
- Avoid taking medications in front of children. They imitate adults.

Clean-Up Time

Clean-up time is often frustrating for parents, but it can be a fun and enjoyable learning experience.

Children learn best when **they** do something, rather than when something is done for them.



Tips for clean-up time:

- Warn children before it's time to clean up, and set a time limit. "We will need to finish coloring and start cleaning up in 10 minutes," gives a child time to complete what he's doing. Set a kitchen or egg timer.

- Adults can help clean up, too. Being a good role model helps children learn.
- Break up difficult tasks. For example, you put away all the blue toys and your child all the red toys. Or, each of you put five toys away if the pile is too large.
- Sing a clean-up song.
- If several children are cleaning up, appoint a leader who decides how to clean up. Rotate this job to another child for the next clean-up time.

Infant Dental Care

The American Dental Association (ADA) suggests that infants receive a checkup within six months of the first tooth eruption, or no later than their first birthday. Checkups uncover problems that can be treated in the early stages.

Early childhood caries (ECC) results from frequent exposure to sugary liquids in a bottle, such as fruit juice or formula. To prevent early childhood caries, wipe baby's gums with a clean, damp cloth after every feeding. Avoid bottle feeding for long periods and always put sweet liquids in a cup. If a bottle is allowed in bed at nap or night time, it should contain only water.

Thumb sucking is a soothing, normal reflex for children, but it should stop when permanent teeth come in, around age six.

Fluoride prevents tooth decay. Dentists suggest children drink fluoride-treated city water, or use fluoride tablets or drops, if city water is not treated. Only use fluoride toothpaste (a pea-sized amount) if your child is over the age of two.

Side Effects of Tobacco Smoke

Children exposed to tobacco smoke may have an increased risk of asthma, sudden infant death syndrome, middle ear disease, cough, pneumonia, upper respiratory infection and coronary artery disease. The more smoke and harmful particles in the air, the greater the health risks to children.

Pregnant women who smoke increase the risk to their babies of low birth weight, spontaneous abortion, sudden infant death syndrome, and long-term mental and behavioral problems.

Smokers should not smoke around children or expose children to smoke. Pregnant women who smoke need to quit.

