

MODULE 6

GROWING HEALTHY FAMILIES:

Dining Family Style



FACILITATOR GUIDE FOR MODULE 6

Dining Family Style

| Timeframe | | Purpose |
|---|---|--|
| Activity 1:.....5 minutes | Activity 2:.....20 minutes | Eating as a family happens infrequently in our busy world. Yet family dining has many benefits, including healthier foods, better vocabularies, better school achievement and even less involvement with drugs and alcohol on the part of the child. It allows a time to talk to your child, pass on traditions, and better understand him or her. |
| Activity 3:.....10 minutes | Activity 4:20 minutes | |
| Summary:.....5 minutes | | |
| Total:.....60 minutes | | |
| | | |
| Learning Objectives | | |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recognize the benefits of family style dining. 2. Problem-solve common barriers to family style dining. 3. Develop ideas for simple and fun mealtimes. | | |
| Activities | | |
| Activity 1: | | |
| Discuss family meals and benefits, and use Post-it® notes. | | |
| Activity 2: | | |
| Creating family mealtimes with brainstorming, mini-lecture and role playing | | |
| Activity 3: | | |
| Infant and toddler beach ball | | |
| Activity 4: | | |
| Develop a special family meal around a chosen theme and make paper flowers for the tables. | | |
| Activity 5: | | |
| Summary and Journal | | |
| Room Setup | Handouts/PowerPoint/ Materials to Be Prepared | Materials/Equipment |
| The room should be arranged with several tables so that there are 4-6 people at a table. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Family meal role play 2. Special family meal and flower table decorations | <i>Parent Guide and Journal</i> Computer Projector Markers Pens/Pencils Sign-in sheet Post-It® Notes See handout for materials to purchase for flowers. Make a flower before the workshop for a sample beach ball |

MODULE 6: DINING FAMILY STYLE

Activity 1: Welcome

Purpose of Activity:

- Welcome and Family Meal Memories and Benefits

Instructions:

1. Welcome the group
2. Have small groups go around the table and share a memory of a favorite family mealtime. What did people do? What did they talk about? What made it your favorite besides the food? Discuss PPT #2
3. (PPT #3, #4): Benefits of Family Meals

Facilitator Script:

- *Welcome! Some of my happiest memories are from times when my family shared a special meal around the table. Think about a favorite meal that you shared with family or friends. What did people do and how did they act? What did you all talk about? Why is this a favorite besides the food?*
- (PPT #2) *I would like you to write on Post-It® Notes descriptive words that come to mind when you think of the words, "family meal," words such as fun, stressful, laughing, talking, etc.*
- *PPT #3, #4, There are many benefits to family meals. Children:*
 - *Develop self-help skills, independence and confidence*
 - *Do better in school*
 - *Learn social skills such as talking to others and sharing*
 - *Are less affected by negative peer influence*
 - *Learn manners by watching and listening to family members*
 - *Are less likely to become involved in drugs and alcohol*
 - *Are closer to their families*
 - *Eat healthier and are less likely to be obese*
- *Why do you think this is so? (More talking together, builds relationships, just spending time not watching TV or using electronics.)*

Time: 5 minutes

Materials:

- Sign-in sheet
- *Parent Guide and Journal*
- PPT #2-#4
- Post-It® Notes

Notes:

Tips for Trainers!

Brain research indicates that people learn best and retain information more when it is built upon something they already know. So begin sometimes asking what they remember about the topic or how their parents handled it with them.

Activity 2: Creating Family Mealtimes!

Purpose of Activity:

- Recognize best practices in having a family meal

Instructions:

1. Ask what what issues prevent them from having regular family meals or snack times? Show PPT #5. (Write responses on a board or chart)
2. Let them know that as you go on, you will try to address those issues.
3. Share some basic ideas on how to create fun and happy family meals. PPT # 6
4. Give each person at a small table a role and have them role-play a family meal.
5. Encourage them afterward to discuss and offer ideas. Go back to your chart and see if there are still concerns about having family meals and then ask each table to help develop solutions and share them.
6. Have participants look at their *Parent Guide and Journal* and the ideas for family mealtimes and ask them to mark the 3 most important for them and share with their group.

Facilitator Script:

- *Family mealtimes can be wonderful...or can be not so great. What are some of the problems you have had, or might have, with having a regular family meal or snack time? I am going to write them on this chart and as we go, hopefully, we can solve the problems. (Discuss PPT #5: What would keep my family from having enjoyable family meals or snack times?)*
- *There are some basic guidelines that will make family meals the most effective. PPT #6:*
 - *Have family meals at least 3 times a week, 4-7 if possible*
 - *Can be any meal or a regular snack time if the family is together*
 - *No TV or phone!*
 - *Recognize that sometimes one or more family member will be missing but two family members can have a family meal together.*

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

- PPT slides # 5, #6
- Chart or Backboard
- Family Meal Role Play Handout for each person
- *Parent Guide and Journal*

Notes:

- *Here are some ideas for making family mealtimes work that we can discuss. Please mark at least 3 you want to discuss.*
- *Behaviors to avoid:*
 - *Negative conversation*
 - *Talking about grades, chores, criticisms*
 - *Topics that create arguments*
- *Discipline should be done away from the table*
- *Make it special*
 - *Set the table, provide candles or flowers*
 - *Use themes at times, such as Mexican night or Hawaiian night and provide leis or other small items*
- *Play games such as Guess Who, 20 Questions*
- *Start a fun conversation*
 - *What would you take with you if we were going to Disney World?*
 - *What is your favorite vegetable? What do you like about it?*
 - *If you were a bunny where would you want to live?*
- *How do you think family meals would be if you did these things?*
- *We are going to do a little practicing. At each table you have instructions for taking different family roles. Follow the instructions, and pretend you are having a family dinner.*

Notes:**Tips for Trainers!**

People come to a workshop thinking WIIFM (What's In It for me?) Always begin by telling them what you will cover and how they might be able to use it. You can also ask what they hope to learn during the session and try to cover those things.

Activity 3: What about Infants and Toddlers?

Purpose of Activity:

- To identify methods of creating family dining when you have infants or toddlers

Instructions:

1. Show PPT #7 and discuss information on infants and toddlers.
2. Have people talk to each other about other ways to keep toddlers and infants happy during family dining time
3. Toss a beach ball around the room. Have whoever catches the ball share one of the ideas from their table.

Facilitator Script:

- *How many of us have infants and/or toddlers?*
- *How many have had problems getting them to sit down and eat or letting you eat during a meal? Most everyone has that problem.*
- *Here are some ideas that might help (PPT #7)*
 - *When old enough to grab, infants do best in highchairs with finger food or small toys to play with.*
 - *A toddler may only be able to sit for 10 minutes; it's okay to let them leave when they are ready.*
 - *They often won't eat much with everyone there.*
 - *Family meals can be stressful for toddlers! Why?*
 - *You may want to give them an early healthy snack in case they don't eat well at dinner.*
 - *Make it a game to come to the table.*
 - *Keep it happy and light with questions such as "How many peas can you get on your spoon?"*
 - *40% of toddlers tend to be picky eaters.*
 - *Don't worry if they don't want to try foods; just keep offering them. It usually takes offering a new food 8-10 times before a child will accept it.*
 - *Make food fun, for example orange slices as a smile and grape halves as eyes.*
 - *Consider bringing them a quiet toy to the table.*
 - *Remember what your goal is for family dinners:*
 - * *Build relationships*
 - * *Have a happy time as a family*
 - *For infants and toddlers, food will not be the most important part.*

Time: 10 minutes

Materials:

- PPT #7
- Inflatable beach ball

Notes:

Activity 4: Creating a Fun Family Meal!

Purpose of Activity:

- Develop a plan for a family meal around a theme

Instructions:

1. Discuss PPT #8, #9. Have participants review page 37 of *Parent Guide and Journal* with you.
2. Have them turn to page 38 in the *Parent Guide and Journal* and as a group, design a menu and easy decorations for a family meal with a special theme! Let them know they are going to make paper flowers for their table in just a minute, and that they should keep it simple.
3. Place the items and instructions for paper flowers on the tables and put up PPT #10 for them to follow. Let them know they can take materials home if they don't finish (4-6 will make a nice bouquet).

Facilitator Script:

- *There are many ways we can make our family meals fun and easy. PPT #8, #9:*
 - *Plan ahead.*
 - * *Plan at least 3 easy meals and post the menu on your refrigerator along with the days so everyone knows to be there*
 - *Make it simple*
 - * *Use takeout foods mixed with things you make such as a salad*
 - * *Make larger quantities of food on the weekends to use during the week*
 - * *Buy already cooked chicken or beef or cook it in large quantities and freeze, so you can pull out and use in quick meals such as quesadillas or spaghetti.*
 - * *Have breakfast for dinner!*
 - * *Have your meal as a picnic.*
 - *Have a snack instead of a meal together.*
 - *Be sure you all sit down together and talk.*

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

- PPT slides #8, #9, #10
- *Parent Guide and Journal*
- Instructions for flowers for each table

Notes:

Tips for Trainers!

You should make a flower before the workshop for a sample

- **Remember keep it fun and your conversation light and friendly.**
- *Let's look at page 37 of our Parent Guide and Journal and talk about some of these ideas; which ones would help you?*
- *We are going to create a plan for a special family meal around a theme you choose and make flowers for the table. Remember that family meals don't need a theme and are usually simple, but once in a while, it is fun to plan a theme such as Hawaiian or Western night and have food and a few simple decorations.*
 - *Turn in your Parent Guide and Journal to page 38 and with your group develop a simple meal plan (it can have canned or frozen items in it as well) and simple decorations. Then we are going to make paper flowers for our decorations.*
 - *(After a few minutes, place the items for flowers at each table and post PPT #10, so people can begin making their flowers.) I will be putting out the items you will need to create the flowers. After you are done with your plan, please begin, and don't worry if you do not finish as I will send home enough for all of you to have some extras.*

Notes:

Activity 5: Summary

Purpose of Activity:

- Summarize and encourage everyone to have more family meals.

Instructions:

1. Discuss M.E.A.L. (PPT #11)
2. Challenge each person to use what they have learned and have at least 3 family meals or snack times together with their family this week.
3. Ask them to use the plan they made today in the *Parent Guide and Journal*.

Facilitator Script:

- *When you are planning family meals remember M.E.A.L. (PPT #11-Review).*
- *We have had fun creating a plan and flowers for a family meal today! Please go home and use what we designed for one of your meals this week.*
- *Set a goal of having at least 3 family meals or snack times together in the coming week and report back next week on how it went.*

Time: 5 minutes

Materials:

- PPT #11
- *Parent Guide and Journal*

Notes:

Ideas for Expectant Parents:

Encourage expectant parents to have family meals together regularly even if they don't have children. Ask them to practice having positive conversations and even playing some word games and to make these a habit. When their children are old enough, it will be a family tradition. It will also improve the parent's relationship!

Ideas for Parents of Infants:

Infants can present a challenge during family meals. While still small, they can sit in a carrier near you during meals. When they begin to sit up and grab for things, a high chair with toys or infant finger foods will keep baby busy and a part of the family dining experience.

Notes:

HANDOUTS AND ACTIVITIES



Special Family Meal Activity Instructions

1. Develop a very simple meal plan and a simple game or fun questions you can ask everyone.
2. Think about how you will set the table:
 - a. Small colorful candles?
 - b. Tablecloth?
3. Provide flowers—we are going to make some flowers for your table.

Making Flowers

- 6 cocktail napkins in bright colors (if you want a contrasting center, make the middle one a different color)
- 1 bamboo skewer (they can be bought inexpensively in the grocery store)
- Twist ties (or pipe cleaners, cut)
- Scissors

Directions:

1. Open all of the napkins up, and lay them on top of each other.
2. Begin folding like a fan or accordion, and continue folding.
3. Tie the center with the twist tie or pipe cleaner.
4. Cut ends into a semi-circle, points, or scallop.
5. Lay it flat and begin to fold each layer up carefully into petals.
6. Shape them and then attach bamboo stick with tape.
7. That is all there is to it!

Notes:

Family Meal Role Play

1. Each person at a table takes a role. If there are too many people at one table and not enough at another, move around for this activity. If there are 4 at the table please leave out either “Joe” or “Amy”. If there are 3, include parents and “Joe” or “Susy” only.
2. Take the role of the person you are given and act it out at a family meal. Try it twice. First, the role each person might typically behave in the playing scenario. Then, do it the way the parents might behave after going through this training on family meals.

Roles:

1. Father: The father is usually quite stern with the children and worries that they won't have good manners.
2. Mother: Mother wants family meals to be fun and enjoyable for the family. She has made her husband's favorite food, which includes a lot of vegetables.
3. Susy: Susy is 3 and doesn't really like vegetables. She also doesn't like to sit at the table but wants to go and play with her toys instead.
4. Joe: Joe is 11, and doesn't see the point in sitting down together. He doesn't usually talk to his parents about school or his day but likes to spend time on the phone texting friends or down the street with his buddies.
5. Amy: Amy is 13, and she is very excited today about the “A” she got in math at school. Dad is very proud of her but worried about Joe's grades.

Notes:

Additional Activities

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Physical activity correlated with theme for parents</p> | <p>Family Meal: Everyone puts chairs in a circle and all but one sit down. Make the circle big leaving room between chairs. The person standing walks around the circle and stands in front of each person, saying, “I’m hungry and someone is sitting in my chair.” They say this to several people, and then say to one, “I’m hungry and someone is sitting in my chair,” then, pointing to the person, say, “YOU!” Then they must both race around the circle, and the first person back sits down. Then the person standing repeats.</p> |
| <p>Physical activity correlated with theme for children</p> | <p>Family Meal for Children: The same as above except the children sit on the floor, not in chairs.</p> |
| <p>Parent-child activity based on theme</p> | <p>Placemats: Provide large construction paper or 8.5 x 14 (legal) paper, vegetables and fruits cut in half, and paint. Have them use the food as stamps to create placemats for each person in their family. These can also be laminated.</p> |
| <p>Book and activity for children on theme</p> | <p>Book: <i>Feast for 10</i>, by Cathryn Falwell (Available in Spanish) Activity: Read the book and then pretend to do all the things they do to prepare a meal—don’t forget to have them drive the car to the store!</p> |

Abbreviated Research Summary and Implications for Trainers

(A complete summary can be found at the end of this manual.)

| Citation | Findings | Implications for Instructors |
|---|--|--|
| Hammons, A. J., & Fiese, B.H. (2011) | Meta-analysis of 17 studies and over 180,000 children indicated that children who share at least 3 meals a week with parents are less likely to be overweight, eat healthier foods and have healthier eating patterns. | Ask parents about their biggest concerns; for example, how many worry about their child's achievement in school, future drug use, obesity, social skills or good relationships with the family as teens? Then tell them that research indicates that family meals help with all of those issues. |
| CASA (2010) | Surveys indicate adolescents who have more than 3 meals a week on average with family also show less involvement with drugs, tobacco, alcohol and other high risk behaviors, and those that had 7 meals a week with family were 40% more likely to make A's and B's than those who had 2 or fewer. | Suggest that if they see their children's grades lower than they would like, begin family meals most days a week and see if there is some improvement. |
| Feldman S, Eisenberg M.E., Neumark-Sztainer D., Story M. (2007) | Over 4,000 adolescents in a study with about 1/3 watching TV during meals found that those who watched TV during meals ate less healthy foods and more soft drinks than those who did not watch TV. | Let parents know that watching TV during meals takes away most of the good effects of family meals. There is no relationship-building and less eating of healthy foods. |
| Elgar, F. J., Craig, W., Trites, S. (2013) | Study of 26,000 children and adolescents indicated a positive correlation between the correlates of emotional well-being, pro-social behavior, life satisfaction and family meals. | The research indicates that children who eat family meals are happier and more well-adjusted. |