

# FAQUIER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## EVERY KID HEALTHY WEEK

### EATING MEALS AS A FAMILY

#### MINDFUL MONDAY

Food is much more than fuel for our bodies; it is something that brings people together. Shared family meals provide opportunities for family members to talk about their day and connect to better understand one another.

#### **Take Action**

Eating meals as a family can be as simple as picking up tacos from your favorite local restaurant and sharing stories of the day around the dinner table or working together to cook a family recipe. The act of coming together over a shared meal helps family members feel safe and supported by their loved ones and learn alongside one another.

#### **Work as a Team**

Split up the various responsibilities each meal to ensure that no single family member is left with cooking, setting the table, and cleaning up. Work together as a team to grocery shop, prepare, and clean up in order to foster teamwork skills and responsibility. Set up stations and have each family member make a different part of the meal. (e.g., washing, chopping or peeling vegetables, rolling out the dough, etc.). Children are more likely to try new foods if they have had the chance to touch, feel, and cook with various ingredients.

#### **Create a Routine**

Pick at least one day per week that takes priority in everyone's busy schedules. Ask family members to plan their activities and other outings around. Every month ask a new family member to find a healthy recipe that they would like to make for the next family meal. Keep your family favorites in a folder and slowly develop your own family cookbook. Whoever chooses the recipe, gets to help cook the recipe.

#### **Set Aside Electronics While at the Table**

Electronics such as mobile phones, tablets, video games, computers, and TV often take our attention away from the present moment and the people around us. Set a family norm that all electronic devices are put away in a separate room for the duration of the meal. Use this time to tell stories, jokes, and to connect on a deeper level with one another.

#### **Theme it Out**

Switch things up by adopting a theme for your next family meal. Use family dinner time as an opportunity to learn about different cultures and culinary practices. Rotate themed dinners and switch off which family member chooses each theme. Need an idea to start? Start by working together to cook a traditional family recipe. Discuss your family heritage and provide a space for children to ask questions about family history and culture.

Dress up, play music, add in games and recipes that align with your theme! Voyage to a seaside dinner by playing tropical music, wearing summery clothes and testing out tropical recipes. Explore the mountains with a camping theme by cooking foil packet recipes, baking smores and telling campfire stories around a picnic on the floor.

#### **Invite Extended Family**

If you are lucky to have extended family members or close friends who live nearby, plan a bi-monthly dinner all together. Worried about cooking for so many people? Have a potluck-style dinner party and ask every family to bring a different healthy dish.

**FAQUIER COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
EVERY KID HEALTHY WEEK  
EATING MEALS AS A FAMILY  
MINDFUL MONDAY**



Source: [Eating Meals as a Family - Action for Healthy Kids](#)

