



# Happy healthy mealtimes for families



The good eating habits that our children learn in the home will stay with them for life. One of the best ways to promote healthy eating with your children is for all your family to adopt healthier habits.

Here are some tips for happy healthy mealtimes.

## Getting started

### It's a plan!

Take time to plan your meals in advance. This will help you to introduce variety, eat more nutritious foods, save money and rely less on convenience and processed foods.



### Have a daily routine

Try to have regular mealtimes where you sit down at a table with your child to eat. When your child sees you eating lots of different foods, they are more likely to do the same.



### Get them involved

Involve all the family in planning, shopping, washing, peeling, chopping, cooking, serving and tidying-up. Try to make meal times a social occasion that are relaxed, happy and fun.



## Making mealtimes easy and happy

### Healthy cooking methods

Use healthier cooking methods for the whole family. Try grilling, baking and steaming instead of frying or roasting with oil or fat.



### One family, one meal

Cook just one main meal for the whole family. Try to make this meal healthy and balanced including foods from the food pyramid shelves.



### Time out!

Allow children to stop eating when they say that they are full. Wait until the next snack or meal time before offering more food.



## Enjoying food

### Screen-free meal times

Make meal times screen free zones for all the family, which means no phone, television or tablet. Children can be easily distracted from eating.



### Best behaviour

Try not to rely on food to reward your child for good behaviour or as a comfort if your child is upset. Think of alternatives, for example, stickers, a trip to the playground/ beach/park.



### Positive comments

Make positive comments about food. Avoid placing too much focus on certain foods, for example vegetables.

