



WHEN FAMILIES WITH YOUNG CHILDREN ARE HOMELESS

Relationships Between Parents and Children are Key

IT'S TIME TO EAT:

Building Family Relationships at Mealtime

Family mealtime can strengthen your family's relationships and support your child's development.

Families that eat together as a family at least 5 times a week:

- Have lower rates of obesity
- Have children with higher grades at school
- Have children with less depression and more emotional stability
- Have children who use less drugs, less alcohol, and smoke less

Isn't that surprising? Here are some ways to build your relationships during mealtime:

Routine! Routine! Routine! Doing the same thing every day helps children know they can rely on you. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Include children in meal planning and preparations
- Have a regular dinner time so that your children can transition to dinner more easily
- Start the meal with a ritual practice such as saying grace, singing a song or having a moment of silence
- Stick with one rule that will show your children your time with them is most important: no televisions, phone, or electronic devices to be used during meal time.
- Talk about things that are pleasant. Let mealtime be an oasis from talking about things that are upsetting
- Have each member of the family share at least one thing about their day that they want the family to know

Something to Remember:

Mealtime is a great opportunity to help children learn manners, sharing, and turn taking. They will learn the lesson more easily if you remember to

connect before you correct.