



You eat. You talk. You Listen... (Virtual) Session Guide

Getting Started

Purpose: Use this session guide to explore how parents can create more opportunities for family meals and enjoy peaceful, fun meals together.

Time Needed: 15-20 minutes

Key Messages

- Family meals connect families in a powerful way.
- Families can find ways to make time for family meals.
- Families can find ways to make mealtime peaceful and fun.

Materials Needed

- *You eat. You talk. You listen...* handout ordered from myPRINT
- Virtual Session Guide
- Technical equipment and software to conduct virtual class

Open

Facilitator: Welcome! We're so happy you are joining us today. Today we are going to share ideas about the benefits of family meals and how to find ways to make time for fun family meals. Before we start, I'd like to go around the group and ask you to tell us your first name and how many children you have. *(Thank everyone for sharing)*

Facilitator: Now, I'd like to read a little of Ygra's story. You received a copy of Ygra's story by email. *(If desired, hold handout up to the webcam)* She says, "When I was growing up, we didn't get called twice to the dinner table. Mom let us know that family meals were important, and we'd better be there on time. That's when we connected as a family and got closer to each other."

Facilitator: Ygra knew how important family meals were to her family and is trying to continue the tradition in her own family. What about eating together as a family is important to you? *(Hear and reflect)*

Facilitator: Thanks to those of you who shared your ideas with us. Simply eating together as a family can have a positive impact on your child’s and your family’s life. But with busy schedules, we know that it can be hard to get everyone together for family meals.

Share and Connect

Script	Instructions/notes
<p>Facilitator: Let’s share some ideas to help busy families get the benefits of family meals. One of the tips that Ygra shared was to prepare meals for the week on Sunday and freeze them for quick meals throughout the week. Now let’s hear your ideas. How can busy parents find time to sit down and eat together with their families?</p> <p>Facilitator: Thanks for those great ideas to make more opportunities for families to sit down to eat together.</p>	<p><i>Wait for ideas and acknowledge all contributions.</i></p>
<p>Facilitator: We know that family meals can be fun, but sometimes they are stressful when we are all so busy. Ygra keeps things simple. She says, “Nothing earth-shaking happens during our family meals. We talk. Laugh. Clean up spills. Share. Smile. But I know those tiny threads of togetherness weave us into a family.”</p> <p>Facilitator: Now let’s talk about your ideas. What can parents do to make family meals peaceful, fun experiences for all?</p> <p><i>Prompt: If the presence of technology/devices is not mentioned by the group, you can add this question:</i></p> <p>Facilitator: How do you think phones or tablets at the table affect your family at mealtime?</p> <p>Follow-up: What are some ways you can think of to keep devices to a minimum or remove them from your family meal?</p> <p><i>If no one has a suggestion, you can give a few yourself, such as having a basket to collect everyone’s mobile device at the start of the meal.</i></p> <p>Facilitator: Thanks for sharing those great ideas. It’s fun to hear about mealtime routines or traditions that are shared from one generation to the next. Are there rituals or traditions that you could start today that might be something your children will share with <i>their</i> children?</p>	<p><i>Wait for ideas and acknowledge all contributions.</i></p>

Summarize and Act

Script	Instructions
<p>Facilitator: We are almost done. I have one more question for you. <i>(Ask only one of the following questions)</i></p> <p>What is one thing you can do this week to make eating together possible?</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Of the things talked about today, which idea will you try this week to make mealtimes more peaceful and fun for your family?</p>	

Closing

<p>Closing: I'd like to end by reading one last quote from Ygra's story. "I want to give my children the same gift my parents gave me: a family that cares enough to enjoy each other daily." Thanks so much for being with us today and for doing your best to share the gift of family meals with your children.</p>

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DOH 961-1242 March 2021

