

## Increasing food joy

Food plays a big and complex role in our lives. Food is the foundation of well-being that rhythms the day, creating a sense of security. Our relationships with food and eating habits are formed in childhood, evolving throughout life. The child's closest circle plays a strong guiding role in eating habits, food-related speech, and eating behavior.

A good diet is diverse and varied, flavoursome and tries out new tastes. A regular meal rhythm provides sufficient energy throughout the day. The regular meal rhythm of a family with children includes breakfast, lunch, snack, dinner and evening snack. Joint family meals strengthen the interaction between the family members and create a sense of togetherness. Make sure to have a joint, peaceful meal without the presence of any smart devices.

The children enjoy when they are able to participate in the everyday tasks. Involve the whole family in cooking, setting the table, and other kitchen chores. Interest in foodstuffs and cooking is often ignited in childhood. As a parent, be prepared to take part whole-heartedly in the child's wonderments and reflections. Marvel at the shapes, flavours and colours together.

Every family's daily rhythm is individual, so are the ways in which meals are carried out. Create ways that suit your family in accomplishing food education and food joy. Sometimes, in families with children, eating poses questions and challenges. Child health centres' nurses will assist you with eating-related issues or help you solve food challenges.

### TIPS FOR EATING FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY:

- § The parent has the opportunity to be an enabler in the child's healthy eating habits and good table manners.
- § A regular meal rhythm supports overall well-being throughout the day.
- § Shared, leisurely dining moments support family interaction and well-being. Gathered around the food, it is natural to discuss the day's events and daily matters.
- § Taste and try new flavours without prejudice. Increase food courage with all your senses!
- § Getting used to a new taste should be long-term. Offer a new taste alongside the already familiar and liked flavours, this will make even new flavours taste better.
- § Sweet treats have their own moments, enjoy them too.
- § Delight in preparing food together and being together around food.

TO REFLECT AT HOME: Play restaurant at home! Plan roles for each family member to play at the restaurant. Who is the head chef and who is responsible for dessert? Who is responsible for setting the table and who for the music? Is the restaurant a pizzeria or a vegetarian restaurant?

### TPIS FOR THOSE INTERESTED:

Neuvokas perhe (Resourceful family) [10 tips when the child is a picky or selective eater - Neuvokas perhe](#)

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