

# Make Mealtime Family Time

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EXTENSION

Know how. Know **now**.



Family meals allow your young child to focus on the task of eating and give you a chance to model good behaviors. It may take a little work to bring everyone together for meals. Start eating meals together as a family when your kids are young and it will become a habit. Plan when you will eat together as a family. You may not be able to eat together every day but try to have family meals most days of the week. A meal together doesn't have to be the evening meal. Sometimes lunch may work better for your family. Breakfast together can be a great way to start the day – these Super Strawberry Muffins would be a great addition!

## Make Mealtime Family Time

**Cook together.** Have your child help you get ready to eat. Your child may be able to:

- Rinse fruits and vegetables
- Add ingredients
- Help set the table
- Turn off the TV
- Pour milk (with help)
- Clear the table
- Wipe the table

**Eat together.** Make family meals enjoyable.

- Focus on the meal and each other.
- Turn off the television.
- Take phone calls or texts later.
- Try to make meals a stress-free time.

**Talk together.** Involve children in the conversation. Ask questions like:

- If you could invite anyone to eat with us today, who would it be?
- What made you feel really happy today?
- What's your favorite crunchy food? Why?
- What made you laugh today?

**Source:** MyPlate for Preschoolers:

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/preschoolers>

**Related Link:** Free slideshow and PowerPoint on feeding young children:

<http://food.unl.edu/web/fnh/feeding-without-the-fuss>

For more information check out Food Fun for Young Children at: <http://food.unl.edu/web/fnh/food-fun-for-young-children> or on Pinterest at: <http://pinterest.com/cwellsrd/food-fun-for-young-kids>

## Super Strawberry Oatmeal Muffins



- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, lightly packed
- 1 cup strawberry applesauce (no added sugar)
- 1 egg
- 1 cup white whole wheat flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh strawberries
- 1 cup quick-cooking oatmeal

1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Mix together oil, brown sugar, applesauce, and egg.
3. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Add to oil mixture to dry ingredients and mix until moistened.
4. Carefully blend in strawberries and oatmeal.
5. Spoon into 12 muffin cups sprayed with cooking spray or use paper muffin liners. Bake at 350°F for about 20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and cool. Makes 12 muffins. Each contains 164 calories, 7 grams fat, 25 grams carbohydrate and 2.1 grams fiber.



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