August is Back to School Month

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As summer comes to a close, parents and students all over the country will celebrate National Back to School Month. Many families are busy shopping for supplies needed to start the school year. It is important that parents do not forget about making time to enjoy a healthy meal together. Check out the benefits of family mealtime.

Relationships- Eating together helps build a close relationship with your children. It gives everyone in the family a chance to learn more about each other. Use this time to talk, connect, and make memories together.

Better Nutrition- Meals prepared at home are usually more nutritious than meals eaten while dining out.

Portion Sizes- Children learn about correct portion sizes, food groups, and nutrition when eating with their family. Let the children learn by serving themselves at dinner.

Saves Money- Eating at home saves the family money. It is cheaper to cook meals at home than it is to dine out.

Cooking Skills- Get everyone involved in meal preparation. Kids love to help prepare food. Letting them help prepare food will help them feel valued and part of the family.

Social Skills- Eating together as a family gives the children an opportunity to learn and practice their social skills, table manners, and conversation skills.

New Foods- Offer your children new foods, but do not force them to eat it. Let them choose how much to eat. Kids are more likely to enjoy a food when eating it is their own choice. It also helps them learn to be independent.
Tips to add physical activity to your family’s busy schedule

Set specific activity times: Determine time slots throughout the week when the whole family is available. Try doing something active after dinner or begin the weekend with a Saturday morning walk.

Turn off the TV: Set a rule that no one can spend longer than 2 hours per day playing video games, watching TV, and using the computer.

Plan for all weather conditions: Choose some activities that do not depend on the weather conditions. Try mall walking, indoor swimming, or active video games.

For more info getting kids moving visit: healthykidshealthyfuture.com

Kids Eat Right Month

The month of August is also Kids Eat Right month. Kids Eat Right Month™ is the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' and its Foundation's chance to highlight the fight for our children's healthy future. Kids Eat Right Month emphasizes on smart shopping, healthy eating and active lifestyles for every age group from infant to teens, featuring expert advice from registered dietitian nutritionists. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is encouraging families to take the following steps:

Shop Smart. To encourage a healthy lifestyle, get your children involved in selecting the food that will appear at the breakfast, lunch or dinner table.

Cook Healthy. Involve your child in the cutting, mixing and preparation of meals. They will learn about food and may even be enticed to try new foods they helped prepare.

Eat Right. Sit down together as a family to enjoy a wonderful meal and the opportunity to share the day’s experiences with one another. Research indicates that those families who eat together have a stronger bond, and children have higher self-confidence and perform better in school.

Healthy Habits. You can help kids form great, healthy habits by setting a good example. Fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables, choose lower-sodium options, and make at least half the grains your family eats whole grains. For beverages, choose water over sugary drinks, and opt for fat-free or low-fat milk.

Get Moving. Aside from being a great way to spend time together, regular physical activity is vital to strengthen muscle and bones, promote a healthy body weight, support learning, develop social skills and build self-esteem. Kids are encouraged to be active for 60 minutes per day

Resources:

- The University of Nebraska Lincoln Extension
- Kids Eat Right Month Media Materials