Making the Most of Mealtimes

Mealtimes provide opportunities for all of us to nourish our bodies and make emotional connections with the people we love. For children and teenagers, sharing regular meals with loved ones can:¹²

- **Increase intake of healthy foods**
- **Promote positive weight status**
- **Strengthen emotional bonds**
- **Improve communication skills**
- **Provide exposure to healthy role models**
- **Decrease the likelihood of experiencing mental health issues**
- **Lower the risk of engaging in unhealthy behaviors**

Many of these benefits also extend to parents and caregivers!

### Make Meals Enjoyable for Everyone:

- Plan meals in advance to avoid last-minute stress
- Schedule a specific time for meals so everyone can be there
- Turn off electronics during mealtimes

### Universal Conversation Starters:

- What was your rose (favorite thing) and thorn (least favorite thing) about today?
- If you could have a superpower, what would it be?
- What is your favorite book/song right now and why?
- What is something new you would like to learn?
- If you had the opportunity to change the world, what would you do?
References
