# The family that eats together, benefits

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regular indoor activity, like family game night. Or, find a hobby everyone could enjoy. Perhaps take a vote on the activity, and then let each family member choose a role that will keep them involved.

The goal: Building togetherness, whether at the dinner table or beyond.

**More information:** The Family Dinner Project has more on sharing a meal together—from easy recipes that involve the whole family to how to start conversations at meals.

(HealthDay)—No doubt that work, school and outside activities can make it hard to schedule regular family dinners. But research has shown that eating together on a regular basis helps to bond families and build good communication.

For children, the benefits range from better grades to getting along well with others. Kids and adults alike are also more likely to eat healthy meals and less likely to be overweight.

When busy schedules make it hard for everyone to sit down to dinner, use other meals to build togetherness. For instance, get everyone up 15 minutes early for a breakfast sit-down, or plan a regular weekend brunch where everyone pitches in. When dinner has to be fast food, eat at the restaurant instead of doing a pickup so you still have the chance to sit and talk, even if only for a few minutes.

There are also plenty of ways to build togetherness in addition to mealtime. Schedule regular outdoor activities, like a weekend walk on a nature trail or an afternoon at the playground. Make plans for a

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