

Food for Thought

By: Maggie Macaulay, MS Ed

As you juggle your children's busy school schedules – with music or dance lessons, homework, team sports, clubs and social activities – one important activity that might get overlooked is the family meal. You may find that you are eating on the run, grabbing a quick meal

eat fast food as an adult. Having healthy meals together now will prepare your child for a lifetime of healthy eating.

To make sure that family meals happen, schedule them on your calendar. Set yourself up for success by being realistic, possibly beginning with family dinners three times a week.

Create a week of menus in advance with input from everyone in the family, and make sure you have the needed ingredients on hand. It is easy to talk yourself into eating out when you don't know what to prepare or you are missing a key ingredient.

Involve your children in meal preparation. Cooking together is a great time to bond. When your children contribute to meal planning and preparation, their needs to belong and to feel powerful and valuable are met.

Most importantly, make mealtime fun. It is a time to share, connect and simply "be" together.

Maggie Macaulay, MS Ed, is the owner of *Whole Hearted Parenting*, a parent educator, speaker and coach, Director of Redirecting Children's Behavior™ South Florida and the 2008 AB WA Parent Educator of the Year. Maggie is a featured parenting expert on NBC 6. She can be reached at (954) 483-8021 or maggie_macaulay@msn.com.



as you dash from school to piano lessons.

Studies show that eating meals together is vitally important, particularly for teens. "Teens who regularly have meals with their family are less likely to get into fights, think about suicide, smoke, drink, use drugs, and are more likely to have later initiation of sexual activity, and better academic performance than teens who do not. Even after controlling for family connectedness, more frequent family meals have been found to be associated with less substance use, fewer depressive symptoms, and less suicide involvement, and with better grades" [National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University].

What your child is eating right now influences his eating habits as an adult. If your child is eating fast food now, he will most likely continue to

zagarra Orthodontics

Joaquin Zagarra DDS, MDS
Board Certified Orthodontist
25 years of Professional Experience

\$500 OFF
& FREE CONSULTATION!

With this Ad
Offer valid until Sept. 30, 2010

- We make beautiful, healthy smiles
- Experienced Doctor and Caring Staff
- High Technology Office
- Individualized Payment Plans

2711 Executive Park Drive, Suite 4. Weston, FL. 33331
P. 954.321.5600 F. 954.349.4739
www.doctorzag.com
zagarraorthodontics@gmail.com



Need Braces? Call Dr. Zag! 954.321.5600