

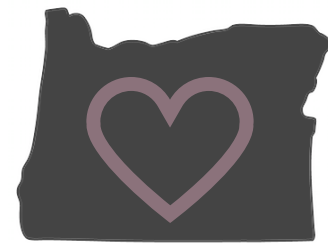
# OREGON

Volume 1

Issue 2

## Parenting Together!

March 2015



### INTRODUCTION

March is *National Nutrition Month*, which means it's a great time for your family to start eating healthier and exercising more! As a parent, what are some ways that you can help your children eat healthy and maintain active lifestyles? Here are a few tips and ideas to keep in mind as you work towards these goals.

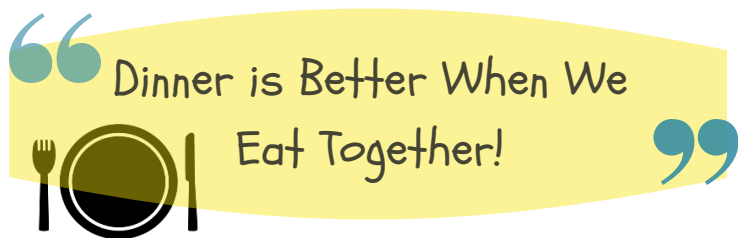


This series of newsletters is inspired and created just for parents. If you have suggestions, comments or ideas for future newsletters please share on our Facebook (Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative) or Twitter page (@OPECParentingEd).

### FAMILY MEALTIME

When families share meals together, everyone wins! Regular family dinners have been linked to lower rates of substance abuse and depression as well as higher grade point averages in adolescents. In addition, research shows that children who eat with their families at least 3 times per week are more likely to be in a healthy weight range.

There are many benefits to eating together, but we know it can be challenging when home schedules get busy! Here are some tips and resources to help out! →



### Eat as a Family!

- Turn your television off and silence cellphones to avoid distractions during family dinner time.
- Check out **The Family Dinner Project** (<https://thefamilydinnerproject.org>) for ideas on conversation starters, food & fun during mealtime.
- Ask your kiddos to be 'helpers' before and after dinner. This website offers age-appropriate suggestions for getting your children involved (<http://www.bbcgoodfood.com/howto/guide/guide-cookery-skills-age>).
- When schedules are tight, prepare an easy meal. Who says you can't eat cereal or a peanut-butter & jelly sandwich after 4pm?
- Can't make dinner work? Schedule breakfast together.

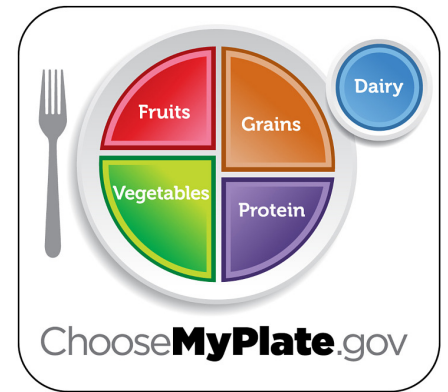


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## NUTRITION: Consider Portion Size

When it comes to deciding how much food to serve on your plate, take a look at [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov) for some useful guidelines on healthy portion sizes. One research study, published in *The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, found that the amount of food that parents serve themselves is directly related to the amount served to their children. In other words, if you are serving yourself larger portions, you are also more likely to be serving your child large portions of food - and your child is likely to eat it. So in honor of *National Nutrition Month*, let's make it a goal to eat healthy and move more! For fun recipes and activities that encourage healthy eating and activity, see the **GROW Healthy Kids** website: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/growhkc/family/newsletters>



## LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:

### At the Grocery Store!



When you bring your family together for a meal, remember to include a variety of nutritious (and delicious options). There are many resources available at [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov) that cover the five food groups that make up a healthy meal. Before you head out for groceries, spend some time making a list for the meals that you want to prepare, and if you are traveling to the grocery store with little ones, use this time together as a learning opportunity! Here are some ideas: →→→→→

### GROCERY STORE FUN!

- Ask your child to tell you the color of different fruits or vegetables. If your child is very young, you can point out the different colors for him/her.
- Play the same game as above, but add in questions about shape and size!
- Depending on your child's age, you can also start teaching numbers by asking him to count the number of items you have in your cart.
- Ask your child to be a helper by being 'in charge' of the grocery list. If your children are younger, you might have them hold the list for you, and then help them to cross off items.

## FUN WITH YOUR KIDS

### Healthy Snacking! Ants on a Log

Ingredients	Directions:
1 bunch celery	Chop celery into several sticks. Fill the
Peanut butter	inside of each stick with peanut butter.
Raisins	Line up raisins on peanut butter.

Find your local parenting resources at:  
[orparenting.org](http://orparenting.org)

THE COLLINS FOUNDATION  
THE FORD FAMILY FOUNDATION  
MEYER MEMORIAL TRUST  
THE OREGON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY

### REFERENCES

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