



## Healthy Meals, Healthy Families

### A Note from the Director

Healthy eating is essential to disease prevention and long term health for ourselves and our families. We all know that. Spending quality time with our children, like sitting down for family meals together, improves communication and strengthens our relationships. We know that too. Unfortunately, for many of us, our fast-paced lives have us rushing through a fast food drive-thru or just too tired to cook and enjoy the old-fashioned family dinner. In other cases, parents work the late shift, travel for work, or may even be incarcerated making shared mealtime impossible.

Many fast food restaurants have added healthier choices to their menus so if you have to eat out, choose healthier options and encourage your children to do so as well. It may require a little creativity and discipline to change old habits, but the new habits can improve your health, strengthen family relationships, and set children on the path of a healthy lifestyle. Here are two simple changes to get you started: 1) replace one soft drink a day with water; and 2) eliminate electronics during family mealtime. This month's newsletter also offers tips on budget-conscious healthy eating and ideas for enjoying meals together with family. We hope these resources

will be helpful to you and the families you serve.

Best Regards,

Robyn Cenizal, Project Director

## Tip of the Month

Your monthly tip to strengthen the relationships of those you serve. Share it - Post it - Pass it on!

As summer winds down and the school year picks up, it can be a tough time to focus on eating healthy. Healthy family meals can be a great opportunity to set a strong foundation for healthy families.

**Start the Day Right:** Eating breakfast has been associated with higher math scores and decreased psychosocial problems. Sweetened oatmeal can taste good and provide the sustained energy your kids (and you!) can use to help get you through the morning. Breakfasts with whole grains and protein – such as whole-grain cereal and milk or whole-grain toast with peanut butter can be a great way to jump start the day.

**Make It Affordable:** Often we think that healthy eating is expensive eating. Pre-planning meals and comparing prices can make family meal time affordable. The Resource Center [\*Strong Relationships, Strong Families\*](#) curriculum's "How to Eat Healthy on a Low Budget" handout had great tips for eating well for less!

## Featured Resources

The Resource Center's [Virtual Library](#) has collected more than 700 materials in a variety of formats including fact sheets, research-to-practice briefs, brochures, pamphlets, training resources, program reports or evaluations, and research materials.

Select the links below to view our featured August resources:

- **Family Nutrition: Parenting and Family Life (Library Resource)**

This fact sheet gives information for parents on how to parent their children in order to promote healthy eating patterns.

- **Table Time: How Parents and Kids Can Make Family Meals Count (Library Resource)**

Why are family dinners important? It isn't always easy to eat dinner together as a family. Research from the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) has found that when they asked teens and parents why they didn't eat dinner more often together, the two groups of people blamed each other.

- **The Impact of Incarceration on Food Insecurity among Households with Children (Library Resource)**

This study seeks to determine the role that parental incarceration plays on the probability of food insecurity among families with children and very low food security of children using micro-level data from the Fragile Families and Child Well Being Study. The study explores the link between incarceration and food insecurity and very low food security among children, families, and adults.



## Events

The Resource Center's [Events Calendar](#) offers a listing of Resource Center events and other national, regional, and community-wide events that might be of interest. Upcoming events include:

- **National Association for Welfare Research and Statistics 54th Annual Workshop (NAWRS) in Providence, RI, August 17-20, 2014**

The NAWRS Annual Workshop main objective is to promote the exchange of ideas on how research and statistical analysis can contribute to the development and administration of effective human services programs. The Resource Center will be exhibiting at this conference.

- **Community Action Partnership 50th Anniversary Annual Convention in Washington, DC, August 19-22, 2014**

The 50th year anniversary for the Community Action partnership comes together to showcase strengths, strategies, and achievements and share the very best practices in management, program, and capacity building. There is change ahead of us for the better as Community Action evolves, reinvents, and continues to strive toward excellence.

- **Webinar: Three Child Support Strategies to Increase Family Self-Sufficiency on Thursday, August 21, 2014, at**

## 2:00 PM EDT

On Thursday, August 21, 2014, at 2:00 PM EDT, the [Self-Sufficiency Research Clearinghouse \(SSRC\)](#) and the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE), Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services will be co-sponsoring the *Three Child Support Strategies to Increase Family Self-Sufficiency* webinar in recognition of Child Support Awareness Month.

## Feedback and Technical Assistance

If you have suggestions or wish to speak with a Resource Center staff member, please [contact us](#) and we will be happy to assist you. If you would like to request technical assistance, please submit a [Training and Technical Assistance Request Form](#) and our Technical Assistance Coordinator will contact you.

To learn more about the Resource Center visit us at [www.healthymarriageandfamilies.org](http://www.healthymarriageandfamilies.org)

The National Resource Center for Healthy Marriage and Families supports safety-net service providers as they integrate healthy marriage and relationship education skills into service delivery systems as part of a comprehensive, culturally appropriate, family-centered approach designed to promote self-sufficiency.

[Subscribe](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

Funding for this project was provided by the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Grant: 90FH0002. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families.