Breakfast Matters

Breakfast has been dubbed the “most important meal of the day”. However, “breakfast is the most commonly missed meal of the day” says County Extension Agent [insert name here]. Recent research suggests that children who eat breakfast are more likely to have healthful nutrition behaviors and make healthy food choices such as eating more fruits and vegetables than those who do not eat breakfast. While breakfast is also important for academic performance and may help with maintenance of a healthy weight, fewer United States youth are eating breakfast. Here are a few ways you can make breakfast a part of your family’s daily routine.

First, be sure that as the parent you set a good example and eat a healthy breakfast every day. “Parents serve as role models for healthy eating behaviors to their children” says [insert name here]. Be sure that your children see you eat breakfast, make it a family activity.

Like any meal, breakfast takes planning. Prepare for breakfast as much as you can the night before. This might include slicing fruit, mixing frozen juice, or packing lunches for the next day at night so that you have time to prepare breakfast in the morning. Also include breakfast foods on your grocery list. Stock your kitchen with healthy breakfast options such as milk, juice, yogurt, fruit, whole grain cereals and breads, or hot cereals such as oatmeal and grits.

You might also need to wake up a little earlier to make sure you have time for everything you need to do. Your children may also need a few minutes after waking up before they are ready to eat breakfast. Even though this means you are up earlier, you and your children will feel better. You will have energy to start your day and will enjoy time together as a family before leaving the house for work and school.

Some ideas for a healthy breakfast include peanut butter on whole wheat toast, low-fat yogurt with granola, toasted waffles with fruit, bagels with cheese, grits, hard boiled eggs, or oatmeal with dried fruit or nuts. You might also try something unconventional such as rice and beans with fruit or a grilled cheese sandwich. Just remember, breakfast matters!

To learn more about healthy breakfast options, contact your local County Extension Agent at [insert contact information here].