

Family meals



Family meals are an important part of living with a family. A recent survey showed that most American children and teenagers share a meal with their family at least four times a week. This is a very positive **sign**. This is because there are many benefits for families that dine together.

First, sharing a meal together can help a family stick together. **It** helps to reinforce each family member's **sense** of belonging. Family meals can teach younger people about their culture by eating traditional foods. Family members can also relax together during this time and enjoy each other's company. Routine socializing helps family members learn patience and respect for each other.

Family meals also play an important part in child development. Parents can **keep an eye on** their children's moods and emotions at this time. They can discuss problems. Studies show that eating together helps to reduce the risk that a child will smoke, get into fights, or commit suicide. Children who eat with their families are more likely to earn high grades and make more friends than those who do not eat family meals.

Through family meals, parents can also **ensure** that their children are eating healthy food. Children who eat together with their families are less likely to become obese. Families who dine together tend to eat more fruit and vegetables. These families also don't eat at fast food restaurants as often as families that do not eat a shared meal.



1. According to the article, how often do most American children and teenagers have a meal with their family?
 - a) less than four times a week
 - b) at least four times a week
 - c) at least five times a week
 - d) it does not say

2. The word “sign” in paragraph 1 could best be replaced with:
 - a) marks
 - b) indication
 - c) gestures
 - d) autograph

3. The word “it” in paragraph 2 refers to:
 - a) sharing a meal
 - b) relaxing together
 - c) helping a family stick together
 - d) reinforcing a sense of belonging

4. The word “sense” in paragraph 2 could best be replaced by:
 - a) grasp
 - b) merit
 - c) feeling
 - d) reason

5. The phrase “keep an eye on” in paragraph 3 could best be replaced with:
 - a) delay
 - b) create
 - c) monitor
 - d) restrict

6. The word “ensure” in paragraph 4 is closest in meaning to:
 - a) give up
 - b) show off
 - c) be certain
 - d) try harder

7. According to the article, what do families who eat together tend to eat more of?
 - a) fast food
 - b) unhealthy food
 - c) meat and fish
 - d) fruit and vegetables

Answers: 1. (b) 2. (b) 3. (a) 4. (c) 5. (c) 6. (c) 7. (d)