



# Family Pages

Winter 2011/2012

Delaware Opportunities Inc.  
Child Care Resource & Referral  
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## Connecting with Family at Meal Times

A meal together around the table can be a great way for your family to spend some quality time together. Following are some tips on making meal times a fun, positive experience:

**Create a routine.** Unwind before sitting at the table. Let your children help you cook, set the table, have a drink or something to nibble on. Try to eat dinner at about the same time each night. Give everyone a reminder such as, "15 minutes until we get ready for dinner."

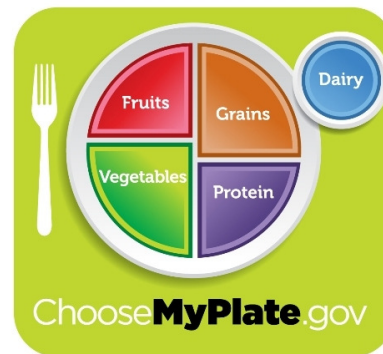
**Make it festive.** Make meal time fun and festive! Use a centerpiece made by your child, play soft music or dim the lights and light a candle (remember never leave children alone with lit candles).

**Be realistic.** A two year old may not sit for long. Even 5 minutes is an okay place to start. If you can't sit down for dinner every night, try one meal a day or 4 a week. Maybe breakfast is a better time for a family meal than dinner.

**Have everything on the table.** Keeping the food on the table will cut down on having to get up and down every other minute and will give you a chance to eat! It also gives young children a chance to practice serving themselves with your guidance. Try keeping extra paper towels for spills and cutting children's food in advance.

**Roses and thorns.** To keep the conversation flowing during meal times try playing the game Roses and Thorns. Everyone takes a turn describing a good thing that happened that day (rose) and a low moment or tough problem they had to deal with (thorn).

[www.family.go.com](http://www.family.go.com)



In June of 2011, the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) unveiled its new food icon, MyPlate. The icon is a departure from MyPyramid and serves as a quick, simple reminder to all consumers, built off the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for all Americans.

MyPlate offers a visual reminder to make healthy choices by reminding us to make half of our plate fruits and vegetables and shows us the other important food groups for a well-balanced meal: whole grains, lean proteins, and low fat dairy.

MyPlate is only the first step in a multi-year effort to raise awareness and educate consumers of every age. The USDA will work closely with First Lady Michelle Obama's Let's Move! initiative and other stakeholders to deliver tips and information necessary to adopt healthier eating habits balanced with physical activity.

Visit [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov) for information, tools, and "how-to" materials about healthy eating.



## Working on... Getting Children To Listen

### **Be clear and specific**

Try: "Put your toys in this basket."

Instead of: "Be a good boy and clean up."

Try: "Put on your jacket and hat."

Instead of: "Get ready to go."

For more Quick Tips for Parents visit Prevent Child Abuse New York at [www.preventchildabuseny.org](http://www.preventchildabuseny.org)

## Why Does High Quality Child Care Matter?



Every day, more than 1.5 million New York State children under age 6 are cared for by someone other than a parent. Choosing a quality early care and learning program is one of the most important decisions a family can make. Research tells us that:

- ★ Children who have high quality early childhood experiences have better social, language, attention, thinking and mathematical skills.
- ★ Fewer behavioral issues occur with children who have had higher quality child care.
- ★ Children develop best when they have stimulating activities that are right for their age and development.
- ★ High quality child care includes strong family engagement practices.
- ★ The most important part of high quality early care and learning is a trusting relationship with a warm, caring adult.

**QualitystarsNY** is a comprehensive initiative to ensure that young children—the 1.5 million New Yorkers under age 6- have the opportunity for high quality early learning experiences.

For more information on QualitystarsNY visit [www.winningbeginningny.org](http://www.winningbeginningny.org)

**Parent Network:  
News & Action Center**  
Gives you resources you  
need to be a great parent.

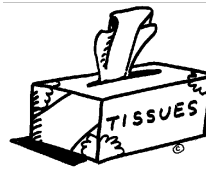


For more information visit  
[www.earlycareandlearning.org](http://www.earlycareandlearning.org)

**Child Care Aware  
Parent Network**  
Free Webinars

Child Care Aware Parent Network webinars are presented by child care experts to give you information about high-quality child care and other topics that are of interest to busy parents, grandparents, advocates and professionals.

Visit [www.ccaparentnetwork.org](http://www.ccaparentnetwork.org)



## The Flu: True or False

**A flu vaccine can't give you the flu.**

True! The flu vaccine cannot cause illness. The viruses in the vaccine are either killed (flu shot) or weakened (nasal spray vaccine), which means they cannot cause infection.

**Getting the flu vaccine in December or later is not too late.**

True! The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that people get vaccinated as soon as the vaccine becomes available and that vaccinations continue into December, January and beyond. Influenza activity usually peaks in February most years but disease can occur as late as May.

**Washing your hands is the best thing you can do to protect against the flu.**

False! CDC recommends a flu vaccine as the first and most important step in protecting against the flu. However, preventative actions like covering your cough and washing your hands are important everyday steps that can help stop spread the germs.

For more information and facts about the Flu visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/flu/>

## Tag-Team Drawings

**What you need:**

Paper  
Markers or crayons



**What to do:**

1. Each player sits at the table with their own marker and a piece of paper. At "Go," players have 30 seconds to begin a drawing (designate one player as the official timer).
2. When the time is up, everyone moves clockwise to the next paper, gives it a quarter turn, and has 30 seconds to continue drawing. (Testers found that having players move to the paper, rather than passing it, ensures that each paper gets the proper quarter turn.)
3. Play continues in this manner, with the paper being given a quarter turn by each new artist, until everyone has added to each drawing.

[www.familyfun.go.com](http://www.familyfun.go.com)



**Smooth Transitions to Child Care:**

*Leave a picture, a scarf with your scent, or some other "lovey" in your child's cubby or with your child's caregiver so your child has it when he or she needs reassurance.*

NACCRRRA's Daily Parent: Transition to and From Child Care