

## The Mealtime Matters Initiative Made a Difference!

Check out the survey results from the Greater Opportunities Chenango Head Start Program:

In March, we kicked off our Mealtime Matters Initiative with the goals of promoting healthy eating habits, recognizing the importance of eating together as a family, and increasing exercise among our Head Start and Early Head Start participants. Each family received educational materials and home visit lessons to help their child learn to set their place at the table using a placemat template, to engage in mealtime conversation and etiquette, and to increase their physical activity. Each child received their own MyPlate to help ensure that fruits, vegetables, grains, protein and dairy are being served at meals. Their caregivers received recipe books and other educational materials to encourage “cooking together” with their child.

Survey results reflected that 83% of families felt the initiative increased the amount of time their family eats together, 85% felt it increased conversation at mealtime, 81% indicated that it has increased their child’s physical activity and 88% are now eating healthier meals.

Some of the comments included:

“My child likes the plate and he talks about the pictures of the different foods that are on it, at mealtime.”

“We are actually enjoying mealtime now. The children are helping to set the table and prepare food.”

“We made the recipe from the child’s recipe book using celery, raisins and peanut butter”

