



A Newsletter for Parents of Young Children

WINTER 2016

## The Parent Line

## Let's Eat Together!

**With our busy lives,** we may struggle to spend direct, quality time with our loved ones. One very important and great way to do so is through family mealtime. Family dinners not only strengthen bonds and create lifelong memories, but they result in other benefits such as:

**Better school performance:**

Research shows that dinner time talk helps boost a child's vocabulary even more than reading out loud and is a strong predictor of high success scores.

**Better health:**

Children who eat family dinners tend to consume more fruits and vegetables and less sugar, fried foods, and soda.

**Increased self-esteem:** Studies have shown a strong link between children who eat dinner with their families and positive outlooks on the future.

**So what makes family mealtime so magical?** Because we don't often have the time in our schedules to do things together as a family unit, dinner is one of the most reliable and constant ways for us to connect and share with each other. It can also be a great chance to teach your child about healthy eating, trying new foods, and good table manners!

**Changing a routine takes time** and what works for one family might not work for another. Try to enjoy at least one family meal per week, see what works for your family, and plan from there. Hopefully, the small moments we share at the dinner table together can help us create even better and more meaningful connections away from the table.

THE PARENT LINE IS HAWAII'S PREMIER RESOURCE ON CHILD BEHAVIOR, CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND PARENTING SUPPORT [WWW.THEPARENTLINE.ORG](http://WWW.THEPARENTLINE.ORG)

The Parent Line Newsletter is published four times per year.  
For distribution information, please contact:  
O'ahu: (808) 526-1222; Neighbor Islands: 1-800-816-1222  
Email: [distributionctr@theparentline.org](mailto:distributionctr@theparentline.org)

Funded by Hawai'i Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health Branch (808) 733-4054  
David Ige, Governor | Virginia Pressler, M.D., Director of Health  
We provide access to our activities without regard to race, color, national origin (including language), age, sex, religion or disability. Write or call our Affirmative Action Officer at Box 3378, Honolulu, HI 96801-3378 or at (808) 586-4616 (voice) within 180 days of a problem.



### "Let's All Help!"

Helping out with the family meal is a great opportunity for children to feel important in their family. It's more time spent together, and your child learns from you even when tasks are not done perfectly. Here are some ways you can ask your child to help you:

- Pick flowers for the table
- Help with table setting
- Help with simple and easy meal preparation
- Clear dishes and clean the table
- Ask "What would you like to help me with?"

See what works for you and your child!

Source: USDA Food and Nutrition Service



### SPECIAL DAYS TO REMEMBER

December 7: Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day  
December 24: Hanukkah begins  
December 25: Christmas Day

January 1: New Years Day  
January 28: Chinese New Year

February 14: Valentine's Day  
February 20: President's Day

### Suggested Readings

Books Available at the State Libraries

#### Stone Soup

By Ann McGovern

#### Mind Your Manners!

By Diane Goode

#### Dinner with Olivia

By Emily Sollinger

#### Strega Nona

By Tomie dePaola

#### Gregory, the Terrible Eater

By Mitchell Sharmat

#### The Runaway Dinner

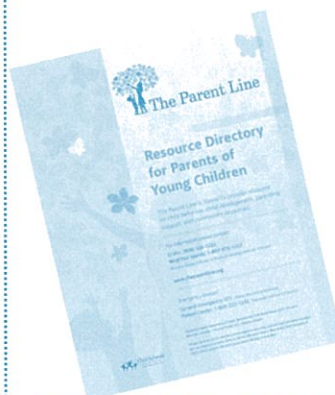
By Allan Ahlberg



## Resource Directory for Parents of Young Children

The Resource Directory for Parents of Young Children provides contact information to the many community organizations. It is Hawaii's premier resource on child behavior, child

development, parenting support, and community development.



If you would like a copy of the directory please call The Parent Line at 521-1222 or neighbor islands toll free 1-800-816-1222

You can also download the directory at [www.theparentline.org](http://www.theparentline.org)

### SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY Food Safety

Food borne bacteria are easily spread, invisible to the eye, and can survive in many places in our homes, including our own bodies! If we do not clean or handle our food properly, we can spread diseases. In order to fight off bacteria, we must follow safe practices:

**Always wash your hands** with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. Teach your child to properly wash their hands and practice making it a habit.

**Wipe down your counters** before preparing food and be sure to wash your cutting boards, dishes, and utensils with soap and hot water after preparing each food item and before starting to prepare the next food.

**Be sure to wash the towels** you use to clean the kitchen after each use in the hot cycle in the washing machine. Replace kitchen sponges often.

**Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly** before consumption by scrubbing them with a clean vegetable brush or rubbing them under running tap water.

Source:  
[www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov)

