

MEAL PLANNING

Conversation Starters With Your Kids



QUESTIONS TO ASK:

- BEFORE I GO TO THE GROCERY STORE, DO I PREPARE AHEAD OF TIME? HOW?
- WHY MIGHT I PARK NEAR A CART HOLDER?
- WHAT IS ONE ITEM THAT WE ARE GOING TO FOCUS ON TODAY?



5-6 Years **(Early Elementary School)**

Self talk/Conversation starters at the grocery store:

- Preparation: Why might I make a list before coming?
- How is this grocery store laid out and organized?
- Is it the same in every store?



In-Store Activities and Prompts

- Let your child lead as you enter the store. “As we walk into the store, I want you to try and tell me the name of the section that we enter at the store.”
- Move to the main aisle of the store and ask them to look around in all directions. “Do our eating habits affect how you move about the store? Why or why not?”
- Have your grocery in hand and let them check off the items as you go. “After we put each item in the cart, I want you to cross it off/highlight it.”

Get your children involved in meal preparation - areas that you can start:

- Discuss ingredients and menu ideas. “What is your favorite food item?”
- Talk about where to find recipes. “Is there a recipe we can find together and make?”
- Review your fridge and cabinets/pantry. “Help me think about the meals in our week. What things do we have in our fridge?”

7-10 Years (Late Elementary School)



Self talk/Conversation starters at the grocery store:

- Think about one produce item that you would like to eat. Is there more than one choice? Why or why not? (name brand, off-brand, organic). Why might there be more than one type of item? Is it in a different section? Are the prices the same?
- What does buying in bulk mean?
- What does name brand/on brand and off brand mean? How might this affect the price? The taste?

In-Store Activities and Prompts

- Stop just inside the entrance of the store and look around with your child. “How is the grocery store laid out and organized?”
- Look at some of the different store signage and price tags together. “What does unit price mean? Can you find a unit price tag? Tell me what you see.”
- Walk to an aisle with similar items that are packaged differently (eg. cheese in blocks versus grated). “Are all items packaged the same? How does this affect the price? Why would someone pay more?”

Get your children involved in meal preparation - areas that you can start:

- Discuss ingredients and menu ideas. “What is your favorite food item?”
- Talk about where to find recipes. “Is there a recipe we can find together and make?”
- Review your fridge and cabinets/pantry. “Help me think about the meals in our week. What things do we have in our fridge?”
- Talk pricing and storage strategy. “Does buying in bulk help you? Why or why not?”
- Discuss meal planning. “What does cooking in bulk mean? Why would someone want to make a lot of recipes at once or cook a lot of one ingredient at once?”