

Father's Are A Big Influence on Kid's Food Choices



Fathers who focus their efforts on family meal time are more likely to have healthy-eating children. Kids naturally look up to their dads, especially during those early formative years. They want to eat what dad does. If dad loves vegetables, fruit and low-fat dairy and encourages the children to eat them too, a [lifetime of healthy eating](#) is more likely to happen.

A study, conducted by Texas AgriLife Research, found that when dads chose to feed their families unhealthy food - for example, taking them to a fast-food restaurant - the message was that eating fast food was healthy.

"For years, we've heard that moms have the biggest impact on their kids' food choices, but with mothers becoming more involved in the workplace and fathers' roles becoming more involved in care giving at home, it's natural that kids will start to follow their father's lead, too," said Karen Ansel, a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association.

Lead author Alex McIntosh, a professor of sociology at Texas A&M University in College Station, in his study, demonstrates that the biggest influence on how often [children](#) eat out at fast food restaurants is the number of times fathers do.

Interestingly, children of fathers who place less value on family meal time tend to eat more frequently in fast-food restaurants.

When fathers take kids to have fast food, it is seen as a treat. The [McIntosh article](#) argues that mothers have less of an influence than fathers because of their different reasons for feeding their children unhealthy food. When mothers take their children for fast food, society views it as a matter of convenience or because she just doesn't have the time or desire to feed her kids healthfully.

Fathers who lead the family in nutritious food choices are truly super-heroes of health!

