

CHILD-FAMILY CONNECTEDNESS

Family activities can promote bonding and help children lay the groundwork for future health and well-being. Sharing meals is a bonding activity that can also encourage good nutritional habits. In 2007, 45.8 percent of children under 18 years of age ate at least one meal every day with all other members of their household in the prior week while less than 5 percent of children did not share at least one meal with all the other members of their household. Sharing of meals varied by family income, with 58.2 percent of children living in households with incomes below 100 percent of the Federal pov-

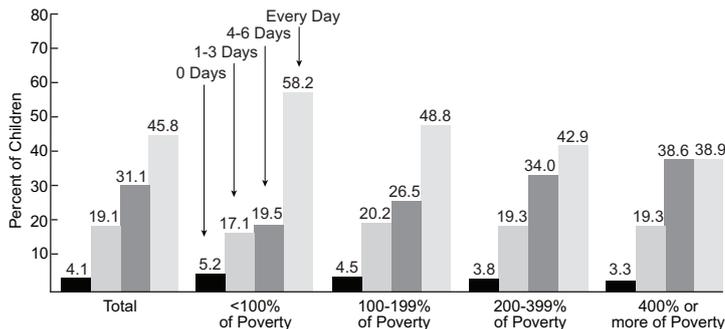
erty level (\$20,650 for a family of four in 2007) sharing meals daily compared to 48.8 and 42.9 percent of children living in households with incomes between 100-199 and 200-399 percent of the Federal poverty level, respectively, sharing daily family meals. Only 38.9 percent of children with household incomes of 400 percent or more of the Federal poverty level shared a meal every day with all other members of their household in the prior week.

In 2007, the parents of nearly 70 percent of children between the ages of 6 and 17 years reported that they could share ideas or talk about

things that really matter very well with their children. Less than one third (27.1 percent) reported that they could share ideas or talk about things that really mattered only somewhat well with their children and 3.1 percent reported that they could not share or talk about important issues well at all. This varied by age, with 75.4 percent of parents with children between the ages of 6 and 11 years reporting that they could share ideas and talk about important issues very well and 64.5 percent of parents with children aged 12-17 reporting the same level of communication with their children.

Frequency of Family Meals* Among Children, by Poverty,** 2007

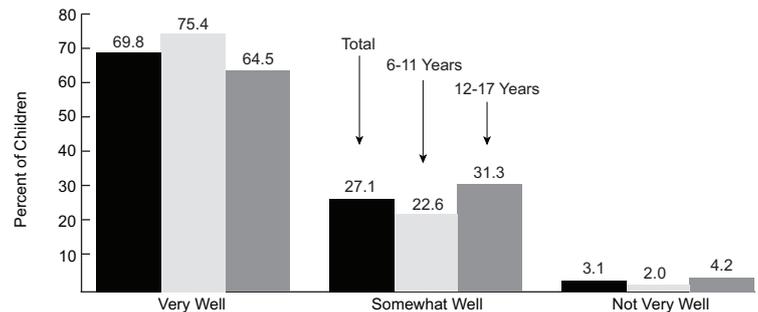
Source (I.8): Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Survey of Children's Health



*Number of days that the child ate a meal with all other family members living in the household. **The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services establishes poverty guidelines for determining financial eligibility for Federal programs; the poverty level for a family of four was \$20,650 in 2007.

Parents and Children Sharing Ideas and Meaningful Conversation,* by Age, 2007

Source (I.8): Health Resources and Services Administration, Maternal and Child Health Bureau and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Survey of Children's Health



*Based on parent report of how well they share ideas or talk about things that really matter with their children.