Parents TALK... about feeding KIDS

I'm hungry.

You just had three snacks! If I give you something else, you won't eat dinner. I can't win.

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You CAN win! It seemed like my kids were always eating little snacks and never a meal. Now I give them healthy snacks, like fresh fruit or veggies and dip, at about the same time every day so that when it's time for dinner they're actually hungry again. This way I'm prepared with food that's healthy and filling, so everyone's satisfied.

I felt like I was losing control of what my four-year-old ate when I just let her graze all day long. So I started having regular meal and snack times. She can decide if she wants to eat what I give her, but I control what it is and when it is.

My five-year-old made our dinners miserable because he would say he wasn't hungry. So I started turning on the TV to keep him quiet. Pretty soon our meals were about TV instead of food. Now there's no TV at dinner and I time the snacks so that he's hungry when we are. Meals are much more pleasant now.

It says here that young children actually need to eat at least five times a day because their stomachs are small and they need energy for growth.