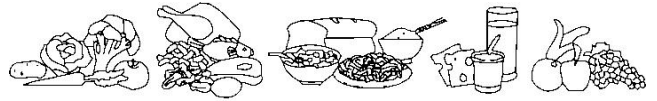


Food \$ense

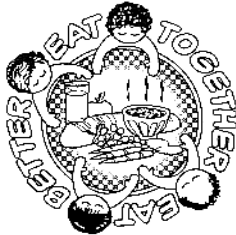


Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program

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^{UW}**EXTENSION**



Have Fun in 2009... Eat Together!

This is the time of year to start a great new tradition...family meals. Family meals are a time for families to get in touch with each other. Families come in all sizes, shapes and styles. A “family” is one or more adults (parent, grandparent or other) eating together with one or more children or teenagers.

Although nutritious food is important, children and teenagers report that what they like about family meals is the conversation. They like having time to share, find out what others have been doing and laugh. When adults, children and teenagers eat together...

- Children do better in school.
- Children have fewer behavior problems.
- Teenagers are less likely to use alcohol or drugs.
- Communication between children and adults improves.
- Children understand their family’s values and traditions.
- Meals are more nutritious and healthful.

These benefits are seen when three or more meals a week are eaten together. If you do not eat together now, start with just one meal a week and add more later. Look at your schedules to

see if family meals can replace other activities. You may need to have breakfast together instead of the evening meal.

Adults can make family meals a priority and expect children, teenagers and adults to eat together. They may complain at first, but if meals are pleasant, children and teenagers will begin to value the time together. Remember that the TV is not a family member, so turn it off! Also, take phone calls later.

If time’s an issue, make meals quick and easy. Simple foods served with love and laughter beat gourmet meals any day! Tuna sandwiches, an apple and milk can be just as healthful as hot food you worked for hours to prepare. Make and freeze extra food on the weekend for quick microwave meals.

Work toward happy, relaxing conversations at meals. Allow time for everyone to talk-children as well as adults. Save arguments for later. The benefit of having a healthy family is worth the effort of starting a family meal tradition.

Eat Better, Eat Together is a promotional program from Washington State University, Cooperative Extension, the Nutrition Education Network of Washington, and USDA Food and Nutrition Service.

Be a Germ Buster

Keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others. It is best to wash your hands with soap and clean running water for 20 seconds. However, if soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based product to clean your hands. Alcohol-based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast acting.



When washing hands with soap and water:

- Wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.
- Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue rubbing hands for 20 seconds. Need a timer? Imagine singing "Happy Birthday" twice through to a friend!
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet

When should you wash your hands?

- Before preparing or eating food
- After going to the bathroom
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has gone to the bathroom
- Before and after tending to someone who is sick
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After handling an animal or animal waste
- After handling garbage
- Before and after treating a cut or wound

Info from United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

EasyAlphabet Noodle Crockpot Stew

- 1/2 pound stew beef, or round steak, cut in 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 can (14 to 16 ounces) stewed tomatoes
- 1 can (8 ounces) tomato sauce
- 1 cup beef broth
- 1 envelope onion soup mix, or beefy onion
- 1 package frozen mixed vegetables, partially thawed
- 1/2 cup alphabet noodles, uncooked (or another noodle substitute)

Place the meat, the stewed tomatoes, tomato sauce, water and soup mix into slow cooker. Cover and cook on LOW for 7 to 8 hours. Turn to HIGH, add vegetables that have been partially thawed (You may run cold water over them to thaw), and noodles. Cover and cook on HIGH for 30 to 60 minutes or until vegetables and noodles are tender.

Snow Painting

Here's a fun activity that you can do in any kind of snow. It doesn't cost a lot of money or require a lot of equipment.



Supplies:

- Water bottle with sprayer for each color
- Food coloring
- Water
- Snow



- Put water into sprayer and add food coloring. Screw on sprayer and shake to mix color and water.
- Use sprayer to "paint" designs in snow drifts.

Set a goal for the new year: pick one idea from this newsletter that you want to try. What will help you achieve this goal? Who can help you do it? Keep track of your progress, and good luck!

Planning Meals with Variety and Balance

A healthy diet is a must to feeling well and enjoying life to the fullest. Eating too little from the grain, milk, vegetable, and fruit groups can leave you tired, more prone to illness and perhaps even at increased risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and osteoporosis. These tips can help you plan meals that are lower in fat and higher in fiber:

- Enjoy a variety of nutritious foods. Be adventurous. Try a new food each month, whether it is a new fruit, vegetable or grain product. You may find that you like it.
- Make half of your daily grain foods whole grains. Eat whole grain bread/buns/bagels/muffins, whole wheat pastas, and brown or wild rice.
- Eat more vegetables and fruits for a powerful punch of nutrients. Vary your vegetables. Choose fruit instead of juice. Include fresh, frozen, and some canned vegetables and fruits to increase your choices. Look for canned vegetables low in sodium. Watch out for added sugar and calories; buy canned fruit packed in juice or water instead of syrup.
- Eat more dairy products and other calcium-rich foods to keep bones healthy. Choose fat-free or low-fat dairy products. Not into dairy? Try calcium-fortified juice, fortified cereal, sardines, or tofu made with calcium.
- Buy lean cuts of meats like loins or rounds, or ground beef that is at least 90% lean. Bake, broil, poach, or roast instead of frying. Enjoy poultry, fish and seafood more often.
- Use salt, caffeine and alcohol in moderation.
- Cook with vegetable oil instead of lard and butter.
- Read nutrition facts labels to choose foods lower in saturated and trans fats.



Dear Sue Keeney ...

Meet Sue Keeney--your source of research-based information about nutrition and health! Readers of all ages like Sue's practical tips on eating for good health, stretching the food dollar

Dear Sue,

I'd love to get my children helping me in the kitchen when I'm getting meals ready. I know that it would help them form better eating habits.

Bea Ferronie

Dear Bea,

You're right. Letting your children cook or help you cook builds self-esteem, teaches many skills, gives them a sense of accomplishment, builds creativity, and helps them make smart food choices.



Children who help prepare a snack or meal are more likely to try it. And often family mealtimes are related to better school performance in children.

- Around ages 5 to 7, kids should be able to help collect ingredients, measure, pour and stir, and set a timer.
- By age 8 to 10, they may be able to preheat the oven, use the microwave and blender, and use a knife to slice or dice.
- Remember to follow kitchen safety rules—tie long hair back, wash hands, turn handles of pots inwards, keep counters clean, use separate spoons for tasting, and don't put sharp knives in a sink of dishwasher.

You'll be helping your children form good eating habits that will last a lifetime.

Sue

Save Money On Eating Out

Not going out at all would save the most money, but many families choose to enjoy an occasional meal away from home as a treat or special celebration. Using these tips can help you save money:

- Drink water instead of soda or other beverages. Compare \$1.25 per soda to .99 for a whole liter.
- Skip ordering dessert—way too expensive! You can have ice cream at home for less.
- Go out for breakfast or lunch instead of dinner—prices are usually lower.
- Look for coupons: Entertainment Books are a good source, or the Sunday paper.
- Find local restaurants with “kids eat free” nights.
- Order a dollar burger for each person and split a large order of fries between the family—it’s healthier too.
- If you’re too tired to “cook,” pick up a bake-at-home pizza, and serve with milk and apple slices at home.
- Split a dinner between two or more—the portions are usually large enough, and you don’t waste food.



Kids in the Kitchen

Hot Cocoa Mix

Cold kids will warm up fast!

Ingredients:

- 3 cups nonfat milk powder
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ cup nonfat dairy creamer

To prepare mix:

1. Measure ingredients into mixing bowl; stir well to combine.
2. Store in covered container or in re-closable plastic bag.

To prepare drink:

1. Fill a micro-safe mug $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water. Microwave for 2 minutes on high.
2. Measure $\frac{1}{3}$ cup mix and stir into hot water.

Helpful Hints:

This mix is easy to make and store, and costs a lot less than the kinds you buy. Kids love its creamy, chocolate flavor, and it makes a great warm drink for cold days. Keep a canister of mix ready as part of a healthy after-school snack.



WNEP education is supported by the USDA Food Stamp Program, UW-Extension and local partners. Food stamps can help provide a healthy diet. To find out more about food stamps, call 920.386.3760. To learn more about the Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program in Columbia or Dodge County, please contact:



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