



SHOP SMART EAT WELL

Winter
2018

...a quarterly bulletin from the UC CalFresh Nutrition Education Program

Family Mealtime

Eating together as a family might sound like an unrealistic goal. But what if it would keep your kids from using drugs, alcohol, or tobacco, improve their behavior and attitudes, improve their nutrition, and help them make good grades? Would you try?

Research shows children who live in families that eat together five or more nights per week on a regular basis benefit in the following ways:

- **Nutrition and physical development** – kids eat more fruits and vegetables, get a wider variety of nutritious foods, have lower rates of childhood obesity, and make healthier choices when they are on their own.
- **Emotional development** – kids are better able to manage negative emotions, are at less risk of developing eating disorders, and have more positive interactions with others.
- **Social development** – kids learn important turn-taking skills, have improved communication skills, and learn appropriate ways to share thoughts, feelings, and opinions.
- **Academics** – kids are more likely to make A's and B's in school and they develop larger vocabularies, even more than those who read together with their parents.
- **Behavior** – kids are much less likely to use marijuana, alcohol, or tobacco or have friends who use these substances and are less likely to engage in other risky behavior.



For family mealtime to be a priority in your house, you have to make it work for your family's needs and schedules. There is no one formula for success, but the following

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Family Mealtime (continued)

steps will help make family mealtimes (breakfast, lunch, or dinner) in your house an enjoyable reality:

1. Plan meals ahead of time.
2. Schedule a set time for meals.
3. Involve all family members in the meal prep and clean up.
4. Turn off the TV and all other electronic devices, including phones.
5. Have pleasant conversation and leave discipline and other negative emotions for another time.



Family mealtimes do not have to be all or nothing. Even a few meals a week is better than nothing. In under an hour a day, you can improve your family's diet, food budget, and chances at success.

Source: <https://extension.usu.edu/foodsense/eat/together>

Refried Bean Soup

Serves: 4

*This quick and easy soup is perfect for weeknights.
Serve with whole wheat tortillas and a green salad.*

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil
- 1 large onion (1 cup chopped)
- 1 medium green bell pepper (1 cup chopped)
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) vegetable broth or fat-free chicken broth
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) Mexican-style stewed tomatoes
- 1 can (15.5 ounces) black beans
- 1 can (15.5 ounces) red kidney beans
- 1 can (15.5 ounces) refried beans
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- Black pepper to taste

Directions

1. Heat the oil in a 4½ quart soup pot over medium heat. Add the chopped onion and bell pepper to the pot, and cook for 2 to 3 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.
2. Add the garlic, broth, and stewed tomatoes and stir. Raise the heat to high.
3. Rinse and drain the black beans and kidney beans, and add them to the soup pot. Stir in the refried beans and cumin. Stir well.
4. Cover and let the soup come to a boil. Reduce the heat to low and stir occasionally for 5 to 7 minutes, or until ready to serve.

Optional toppings: grated cheese, chopped onions, cilantro, or sour cream

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This material was funded by USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP.